

CROSS CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RCMP

By Marilena Murgan

EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Expand their knowledge of the historical significance of the RCMP;
- Assess contributions that the RCMP has made to various parts of Canadian society, including law enforcement, community engagement, and cultural preservation;
- Demonstrate an understanding of how the seven transferable skills (critical thinking and problem solving; innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship; self-directed learning; collaboration; communication; global citizenship and sustainability; and digital literacy) are used in various language and literacy contexts;
- Apply the knowledge and skills needed to interact safely and responsibly in online environments, use digital and media tools to construct knowledge, and demonstrate learning as critical consumers and creators of media.

KEY CONCEPTS AND THEMES

RCMP, Indigenous Peoples, Canadian Identities, Diversity, Inclusivity

KEY VOCABULARY

Mounties, Federal Police Force, National Police Force, Peace Officer, Border Integrity, Law Enforcement, Emergency Response, Canadian Firearm Program, K9 Unit

GRADES

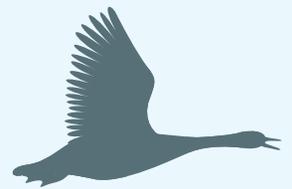
9-10

DURATION

10-12 classes

SUBJECTS

Social Studies
Language Arts
History
Visual Arts
Drama



MATERIALS REQUIRED

- [Riding Through History website](#)
- Prepared **Worksheets #1-3**
- Paper, pencils, markers, and other media for creating posters
- Computers or devices with Internet access for conducting research and creating presentations (e.g. Google Slides, Prezi, PowerPoint, etc.)
- Props for presenting drama skits



BACKGROUND

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) is Canada's federal and national law enforcement agency. Established in 1873 as the North-West Mounted Police, it was originally tasked with maintaining order in Canada's western frontier. The RCMP now has a broad mandate, providing policing services at all levels of government across the country, with the exception of certain regions where local forces are in place. The force is known for its distinctive Red Serge uniforms and wide-brimmed Stetson hats, symbolizing its deep-rooted history and tradition in Canadian culture.

Scan the QR code to access all the links in this lesson plan



STEP ONE: CONNECT

CONNECT WITH STUDENTS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES

What do you know about the RCMP?

Write the word “RCMP” on the board or show a picture of an RCMP officer. Ask students to form a **Sharing Ideas Circle** and discuss what they know about the RCMP and its role in Canadian society. The teacher will participate in the discussion and provide additional information and examples as necessary, while also clarifying any misconceptions.

CONNECT STUDENTS WITH EACH OTHER

What did you learn about the RCMP?

Distribute **Worksheet #1** and inform students that they will be participating in a **Think-Pair-Square** activity. This is a variation of the traditional Think-Pair-Share method, adding an extra level of collaboration. Here's how it works:

- 1. Think:** Students write on **Part A** of their worksheets the main things they learned about the RCMP through the Sharing Ideas Circle. They will record their answers individually for a set amount of time. This encourages them to engage with the material on their own and formulate their thoughts.
- 2. Pair:** After the thinking period, each student pairs up with a partner to discuss their ideas. They will share their thoughts, explain their reasoning, and listen to their partner's perspective. Then together the students will respond to the additional questions for **Part B** of the worksheet. This fosters peer learning and communication skills.
- 3. Square:** Next, each pair joins with another pair, forming a group of four students. They share their individual ideas with the group, discuss any differences or similarities

To ensure that everyone has a chance to share their ideas, the students will use the Round Robin Strategy in their groups of four. With this strategy, each student is given a specific amount of time to share their learning. Once their time is up, the next student in the group gets a turn. This process continues until every student has had a chance to speak, thus ensuring that everyone gets a fair opportunity to participate.

using the questions in **Part C** as a guide, and collectively come to a consensus or deeper understanding of what they heard in the Sharing Ideas Circle. This expands the discussion and encourages collaborative learning.

The Think-Pair-Square strategy promotes active engagement, respect for the speaker, peer interaction, and deeper understanding through multiple levels of discussion and collaboration.

STEP TWO: LEARN TOGETHER

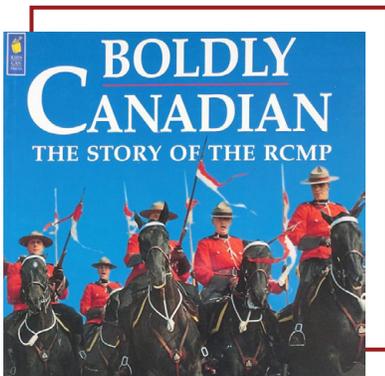
CONNECT STUDENTS WITH THE RCMP THROUGH A SELECTION OF RESOURCES.

Begin by explaining to students that the RCMP is Canada's federal and national police force. Show images or videos depicting RCMP activities, then engage the class in a brief discussion about law enforcement in Canada.

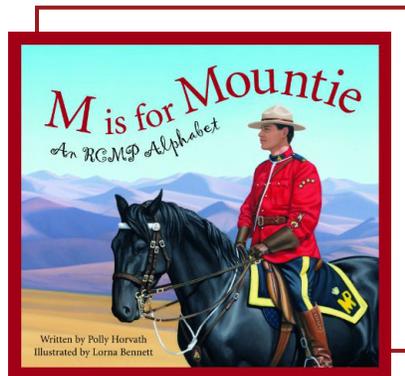
Distribute **Worksheet #2**. Explain to students that they will be reading book(s) about the RCMP, then sharing their learning with their peers. This activity uses the **Jigsaw Strategy**, which is a cooperative learning technique that involves dividing a class into small groups, with each group focusing on a different book or section of a book. Here's how it works:

1. Selection of Material: Choose a book that is suitable for each student's reading level, taking into consideration Multi Language Learners (MLL) and students with Individual Education Plans (IEP). Suggested books include:

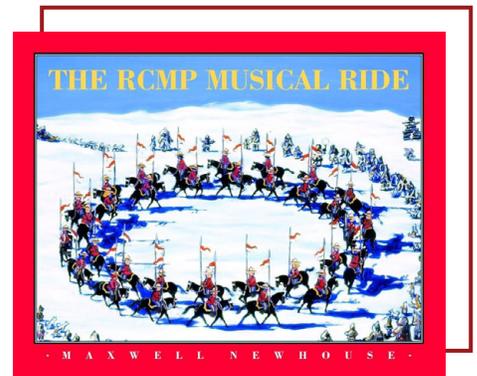
- *Boldly Canadian: The Story of the RCMP* by Joann Hamilton-Barry
- *M Is for Mountie: An RCMP Alphabet* by Polly Horvath, illustrated by Lorna Bennett
- *The RCMP Musical Ride* by Maxwell Newhouse



Boldly Canadian: The Story of the RCMP
by Joann Hamilton-Barry



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The RCMP Musical Ride by Maxwell Newhouse

2. **Formation of Expert Groups:** Divide the class into groups, with each group assigned a specific section or aspect of the book to focus on. For example, if the book has five chapters, there would be five expert groups, each responsible for summarizing and understanding their assigned chapter or specific number of pages.
3. **Individual Reading:** Students within each expert group read their assigned section of the book independently. Using **Part A** of their worksheets they will take notes, highlight key points, and ensure they understand the content thoroughly.
4. **Expert Group Discussion:** After reading, students within each expert group come together to discuss their assigned section, recording notes on **Part B** of the worksheet as they do so. They share their insights, summarize the main points, and clarify any confusing parts. This process helps deepen their understanding of the material and allows them to become “experts” on their assigned section.
5. **Formation of Jigsaw Groups:** Once the expert groups have thoroughly discussed their sections, students reorganize into new groups called jigsaw groups. Each jigsaw group consists of one member from each expert group, ensuring that there is representation from each section of the book in every group.
6. **Sharing of Knowledge:** In their jigsaw groups, students take turns teaching their peers about their assigned section of the book. Each student shares the main points, key insights, and any relevant information from their expert group discussion.
7. **Discussion and Synthesis:** As students present their findings, the jigsaw group engages in discussion, asks questions, and synthesizes the information from all sections of the book. Using **Part C** of their worksheets, the group will then work together to create a poster that showcases their learning. This collaborative process allows students to gain a comprehensive understanding of the entire text and encourages teamwork and communication skills.

The Jigsaw strategy promotes active engagement, peer teaching, and a deeper understanding of complex texts by breaking them down into manageable sections and fostering collaborative learning.



The RCMP training academy in Regina, SK.

Credit: Lund, Chris. 1957. Library and Archives Canada.



The RCMP Musical Ride unit in dome formation.

Credit: Blouin, Guy. EO11175999. 1953. National Film Board of Canada / Library and Archives Canada.

STEP THREE: EXPLORE

EXPLORE THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE RCMP

Provide an overview of the history of the RCMP, including its establishment in 1873 as the North-West Mounted Police using the videos and timeline on the [Riding Through History website](#). Emphasize the RCMP's role in maintaining law and order in Canada's vast and diverse regions.

Discuss key historical events in which the RCMP played a significant role, such as the [Klondike Gold Rush](#), the Winnipeg General Strike, or the creation of Canada's national parks system. Use the **Think-Pair-Share Strategy** to promote active engagement, peer interaction, and deeper understanding of concepts.

- Think:** The teacher presents one topic to the students, and gives them time to individually think about their response and to write their ideas on sticky notes. This encourages students to reflect on the topic, organize their thoughts, and generate ideas independently.
- Pair:** After the thinking period, students pair up with a partner to discuss their thoughts and responses. They take turns sharing their ideas, listening to each other, and asking questions for clarification. This peer interaction fosters communication skills, collaboration, and the exchange of perspectives.
- Share:** Finally, the teacher facilitates a class-wide discussion where pairs share their ideas, insights, and solutions with the entire group. Students have the opportunity to hear from their peers, compare different viewpoints, and contribute to a collective understanding of the topic. The teacher can also provide feedback, summarize key points, and address any misconceptions that arise during the sharing phase.

Resource links:

- www.rcmp1873.ca
- www.klondike1896.ca

STEP FOUR: DEBATE

For this step, students will engage in a **Structured Debate** in the classroom. This is an effective way to encourage critical thinking, analysis, and communication skills.

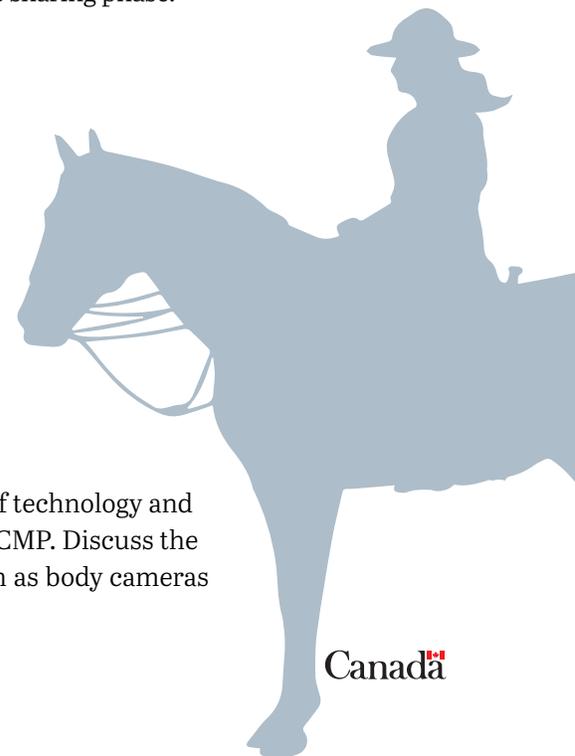
Examples of topics for debate include:

- **Technology and Innovation in Policing:** Debate the role of technology and innovation in modernizing policing practices within the RCMP. Discuss the benefits and challenges of adopting new technologies such as body cameras and security cameras.



Members of the NWMP in Dawson City, 1900.

Credit: Goetzman, H. 1900. Library and Archives Canada.



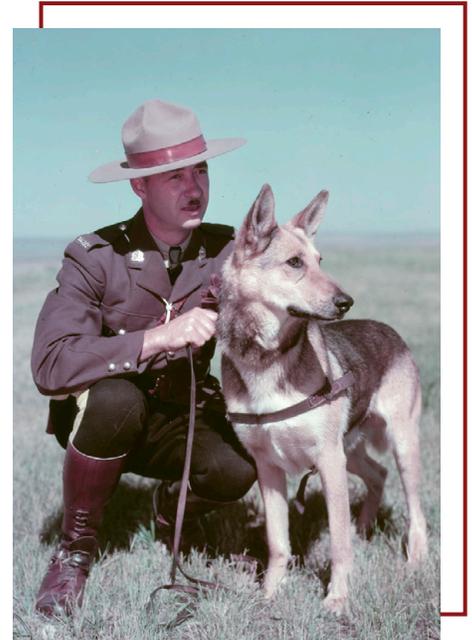


- **The Role of Police in the Community:** Debate the importance of having police officers in communities and the role they play in keeping neighborhoods safe. Discuss how police officers help people during emergencies, enforce laws, and promote community well-being.
- **Traffic Safety and Road Rules:** Debate the importance of following traffic laws and regulations to ensure road safety. Discuss the role of police officers in enforcing traffic rules, educating the public about safe driving practices, and reducing accidents.
- **Emergency Preparedness and Public Safety:** Debate the significance of emergency preparedness and the role of police officers in responding to emergencies such as natural disasters or accidents. Discuss the importance of following safety procedures and cooperating with law enforcement during emergencies.
- **Positive Interactions with Police Officers:** Debate the ways in which children can have positive interactions with police officers in their communities. Discuss the importance of respecting authority, seeking help from police officers when needed, and building trust and cooperation with law enforcement.
- **Police Dogs and their Roles:** Debate the roles and responsibilities of police dogs (K9 units) in law enforcement. Discuss how police dogs are trained to assist officers in tracking suspects, searching for drugs or explosives, and providing support during search and rescue operations.

By exploring these topics through debate, students can gain a deeper understanding of the diverse roles and responsibilities of the RCMP in Canada.

Structured Debate format:

1. **Topic Selection:** The teacher or the students select a thought-provoking topic. This topic should have multiple viewpoints that students can debate.
2. **Formation of Teams:** Students are divided into teams, with each team representing a different perspective or stance on the topic. For example, if the topic is about the pros and cons, one team might argue for its benefits while another team argues against it.
3. **Research and Preparation:** Each team researches their assigned position thoroughly using information from books, websites, and other reputable sources. They gather evidence, statistics, and arguments to support their viewpoint.
4. **Constructing Arguments:** Teams work together to craft persuasive arguments based on their research. They outline their main points, anticipate counterarguments, and prepare rebuttals.
5. **Debate Format:** The debate is structured with specific time limits for each segment, such as opening statements,



An RCMP constable posing with a police dog.
Credit: Royal, Frank. 1948. National Film Board of Canada / Library and Archives Canada.

rebuttals, cross-examination, and closing arguments. The teacher moderates the debate to ensure fairness and adherence to the rules.

6. **Debate Day:** Teams present their arguments in front of the class, alternating between affirmative and negative sides. Each team member has the opportunity to contribute to the debate.
7. **Rebuttal and Cross-Examination:** After the initial arguments, teams engage in rebuttals where they respond to the points made by the opposing side. They may also cross-examine each other to challenge their opponent's evidence and reasoning.
8. **Closing Arguments:** Teams conclude the debate with closing statements summarizing their key points and reiterating why their perspective is valid.
9. **Reflection and Discussion:** After the debate, the class reflects on the arguments presented, evaluates the evidence, and discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each position. This encourages critical thinking and helps students understand different viewpoints.

STEP FIVE: EMPOWER

EMPOWER STUDENTS TO MAKE MEANING OF THE CURRENT ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF RCMP

Present information about the various roles and responsibilities of the modern RCMP, including:

- Law enforcement and crime prevention
- Helping remote Indigenous communities
- Border security and counterterrorism efforts
- Cultural preservation and community engagement initiatives

Students will then each create a map that illustrates the roles of the RCMP in their community.



RCMP officers patrolling the waters on Great Bear Lake, NWT.

Credit: Man, Felix H. PA-150352. 1933. Library and Archives Canada.

STEP SIX: ANALYZE AND ADVOCATE

ANALYZE RESOURCES

Divide students into small groups and assign each group a specific aspect of the RCMP's contributions to research further (e.g. RCMP involvement in missing persons cases, Indigenous relations, international peacekeeping missions, the role of Indigenous communities to the RCMP, etc.).

ADVOCATE

Groups will present their findings to the class through presentations or posters, drama skits, videos, or computer presentations (e.g. Google Slides, Prezi, Canva, PowerPoint, etc.).



An RCMP officer speaking with residents at an outpost in Nunavut.

Credit: Harrington, Richard. PA-129940. 1949- 1950. Library and Archives Canada.

STEP SEVEN: REFLECT

Lead a class discussion on the significance of the RCMP's contributions to Canadian society. Encourage students to reflect on how the RCMP's role has evolved over time and its impact on diverse communities. Ask students to consider the challenges and controversies faced by the RCMP and how the organization can contribute positively to their communities.

Optional Extension Activity: Assign students to write a reflection essay on the role of law enforcement in their community, drawing connections to the lessons learned about the RCMP's contributions.

STEP EIGHT: EXIT TICKET

Distribute **Worksheet #3** and have students answer the following questions:

1. What are the key points covered in this lesson?
2. Why is it important to recognize and appreciate the contributions of organizations like the RCMP to Canadian society?



***Marilena Murgan** is an educator with more than 20 years of experience in various subject areas across all grade levels. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Physics and Chemistry, a Bachelor of Education, and a Master of Education in Curriculum Studies. Marilena's main goal as an educator is to make school fun and to include all students in the journey of learning!*



RUBRIC

Assessment	Level 1 (50-59%)	Level 2 (60-69%)	Level 3 (70-79%)	Level 4 (80-89%)	Level 4+ (90-100%)
Knowledge and Understanding	Student demonstrated a limited knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.	Student demonstrated some knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.	Student demonstrated a good knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.	Student demonstrated a great knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.	Student demonstrated an outstanding knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.
Thinking and Inquiry	Student's planning and processing skills were not evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with limited proficiency.	Student's planning and processing skills were somewhat evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with some proficiency.	Student's planning and processing skills were evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with good proficiency.	Student's planning and processing skills were very evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with great proficiency.	Student's planning and processing skills were extremely evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with outstanding proficiency.
Communication	Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with limited proficiency.	Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with some proficiency.	Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with good proficiency.	Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with great proficiency.	Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with outstanding proficiency.
Application	Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with limited proficiency.	Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with some proficiency.	Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with good proficiency.	Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with great proficiency.	Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with outstanding proficiency.

ONE POINT RUBRIC

Areas That Glow	Self-Assessment	Areas to Grow
	<p>The students will complete the One Point Rubric based on the Teacher's Five Point Rubric with the purpose of improving their work.</p>	
	<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p>	
	<p>Thinking and Inquiry</p>	
	<p>Communication</p>	
	<p>Application</p>	

