



In Quarantine: *Life and Death on Grosse Île, 1832-1937*

Educational Resources

Activity 2

Understanding What Happened at Grosse Île

Students will re-enact a Royal Commission to examine the Grosse Île tragedies of the middle of the 19th century. They will determine whether these events could have been prevented or minimized, as well as who is responsible for them.

Learning Outcomes

Teachers may use outcomes below as criteria for a rubric or an assessment tool.

Students will:

- locate, organize, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and offer opinions on research;
- identify the roles and responsibilities of parties directly and indirectly involved in the crisis at Grosse Île;
- demonstrate an appreciation for societal values and limitations of the time.

Instructions

1. Teachers will review and discuss the "Situation" section of Handout 2.1 with students. Each student will receive a copy to help guide his or her research.
2. The class will divide into four "witness groups," i.e., the British government; the Canadian government; landlords/shipowners/captains; and the administrators of Grosse Île.
3. Each witness group will assign its members different readings, using the corresponding group readings (Handout 2.3a, Handout 2.3b, Handout 2.3c, or Handout 2.3d).
4. Using Handout 2.2, each group will assign readings to each group member. They may also use the Activity Resources section to find further research sources.
5. Each group member will summarize and analyze his or her information. Each group will prepare a collective testimony for the Royal Commission, using Handout 2.4a and Handout 2.4b.

6. Witness groups must appear before the "commissioners" (the rest of the class) to present their testimony. They must be imaginative in their defence and anticipate questions from the commissioners. They may take turns speaking, or choose one member of the group to speak on their behalf.
7. The commissioners must critically analyze and question the testimony of each witness group, using Handout 2.5a.
8. At the end of the testimonies, in groups or individually, students will discuss the evidence, write recommendations, and prioritize the responsibility for the tragedy to the different witness groups, using Handout 2.5b.