



Leading the Way

A three-part unit plan for the National Library of Canada's *Passageways: True Tales of Adventure for Young Explorers* website

Part 1



This teaching strategy is the first of a three-part unit plan, though it can be used separately. In this lesson, students will become familiar with the *Passageways* website. The lesson

leads students through the website and requires that they read to find answers to a series of questions. Students will become acquainted with some of the general aspects of exploration, as well as the terms used. They will move from one thematic section to another, and visit the introductory page of one explorer in each theme. The time required for this lesson is one 50-minute session. Students can work as a class, in pairs or in groups.

The National Library of Canada's *Passageways* website provides young learners with an idea of what it was like to venture into uncharted territory and face unknown dangers. Written and structured for children, the website is designed to be easy to use either in the classroom or at home.

Subject/Age

Social Studies (History) and Language Arts
Ages 8-13 (Grades 4-6)

Learning Outcomes (WCP) Objectives (QC)

Learning Outcomes (APEF) Expectations (ON)

Social Studies Outcomes for this project (History):

In completing this project, students will:

- Identify at least two motivations for exploration
- Identify the routes taken by explorers in the drive to reach the Pacific
- Identify significant accomplishments of at least three explorers
- Draw conclusions based on a variety of evidence
- Navigate the *Passageways* website to find information

Language Arts Outcomes for this project:

R (Reading):

- Identify the main point in short documents

These Language Arts Outcomes correspond to:

- WPC GO - R: 3.2
- Quebec objectives - 2.1 (reading)
- APEF CGO - 5.1

Student Demonstration of

Students will determine key motivations for the exploration of



Learning

Canada and identify the important accomplishments of various explorers. Students will identify the key points in short non-fiction documents and formulate conclusions based on the evidence. They will organize and write a short report on the Northwest Passage.

Materials/Resources Required

Computers with access to the Internet
Map or globe
[Student Worksheet 1](#)
[Teacher Answer Sheet 1](#)
[Extension Activity 1](#)

Web Links

National Library of Canada's *Passageways: True Tales of Adventure for Young Explorers* website
www.nlc-bnc.ca/2/3/index-e.html

Other useful websites on explorers:

Discoverers Web
www.win.tue.nl/~engels/discovery/cook.html

Virtual Museum of New France
www.civilization.ca/vmnf/vmnfe.asp

The Canadian Encyclopedia Online (Historica)
www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/

Instructional Procedures

- Students will need to be familiar with common navigation tools and browsers (e.g. how to use the “back” button, how to open and close windows). They will also need to be familiar with the use of a mouse and Windows/MacOS operating systems.
- It will be useful for students to have a general background in Canadian history; in particular, to know that Canada is a young nation that was first settled by First Nations peoples and then settled by Europeans, who began mapping it.

Enhancing Students' Interest

Photocopy parts of a large map: Europe, Africa and China. Highlight the coastlines so that they are easily visible. Arrange the three pieces on the board as they would have appeared on the map.

Tell the children that they live in Europe in the 15th century and that they have learned of a rich land full of treasure called



China. Are they interested in going?

Tell them that they could go around Africa, but that there are pirates and other enemies along the way. Everything else is unknown. Ask:

- How they would get to China -- would they fight the pirates or try to find a new way?
- What dangers might they expect to find along the way?
- How long do they think it would take to get there (an average trip around Africa took three years)?

Explain to the students that they will be learning about people who did exactly the same thing, and that they faced more dangers than the average Canadian can imagine: cold, starvation, scurvy, unfamiliar people, wild animals, and much more.

Small-Group Work

- Familiarize the students with the basic navigation on the NLC website by showing them how to reach the *Kids' Page* and the *Passageways* site. Point out the links on each page (e.g. glossary, explorers index, etc.).
- Distribute the handouts and read the introduction as a class. Go over the basic procedure by answering the first two questions with them.
- Once they have finished this demo, students should be able to follow instructions and answer the questions in pairs or in small groups, according to their ability and the availability of computers.

Key Questions:

- Who were the first people in Canada?
- Who explored Canada?
- What is the Northwest Passage? Why was it so important?
- Where can you find the meanings of difficult words? How can you get there?

Extension

See [Extension Activity 1](#).

Evaluation

Marks from Student Worksheet 1, Extension Activity 1 and Assessment Criteria. See Teacher Answer Sheet 1.