



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 2

This teaching strategy is the second of a three-part unit plan, though it can be used separately. It is intended for use with the *Passageways* website, which has been created with a simple, linear structure. This lesson leads students through the site and requires that they read to find answers to a series of questions about a specific explorer. The questions follow the flow of information on the site, and are intended to familiarize students with the basic biographical information relevant to research about historical figures. Students may present their findings to the class at the next session. The time required for this lesson is one 45-minute session. Students can work as a class, in groups or in pairs.

The National Library of Canada's *Passageways* website provides young learners 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 significant biographical information for one explorer, including:
 - o Year of birth
 - o Where the explorer went
 - o The explorer's goal and whether or not he succeeded
 - o The legacy of the explorer
- 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 GCO - 5.1

Student Demonstration of Learning

Students will conduct research using brief, historical documents to extract key biographical information on an individual



explorer. They will organize information from their research to write a short, biographical report.

**Materials/Resources
Required**

Computers with access to the Internet
Map or globe
[Student Worksheet 2](#)
[Extension Activity 2](#)

Web Links

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

Other useful sites on explorers:

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

Virtual Museum of New France
www.civilisations.ca/vmnf/vmnff.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 it is a young nation that was first settled by First Nations peoples and then settled by Europeans, who began mapping it.

Enhancing Students' Interest:

If this is the first lesson being used with the *Passageways* website:

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 they might expect to find along the way?
- How long they think it would take to get there (an average trip around Africa took three years)?

Explain 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.

If this is not the first lesson being used with the *Passageways* website:

Discuss some of the answers from the previous lesson. Ask students which explorer they thought was the most interesting. Why? Explain that each explorer was interesting in a different way, and that all made invaluable contributions to the opening and mapping of Canada.

Small-Group Work

- If not already done, familiarize the students with the basic navigation on the NLC site by showing them how to reach the Kids' Page and the *Passageways* website.
- Distribute the handouts and read the introduction as a class. Assign each group of students an explorer to research. Go over the basic procedure by answering the first two questions with them. Point out the links on each page (e.g. glossary, explorers index, etc.).
- Once they have completed 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.
- Students can make a presentation of their findings in the next class.

Key Questions:

- o How many researched explorers were searching for the Northwest Passage?
- o How many were looking for an overland route to the Pacific?



- o How many died while exploring?
- o How many succeeded in finding their goal?
- o How many were friendly with First Nations peoples?

- Discuss the reasons for the results.

Extension

See Extension Activity 2.

Evaluation

Marks on Student Worksheet 2, Extension Activity 2 and Assessment Criteria.

**Notes on Enriching This
Activity**
