

Grade 5

Lesson 4

Apologies for Past Wrongs



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A full list of contributors to *Bamboo Shoots: Chinese Canadian Legacies in BC* can be found at www.openschool.bc.ca/bambooshoots.

Images included in this lesson:

- Page 3: Premier Christy Clark delivering the apology to BC's Chinese Canadians
Province of British Columbia, Formal Apology to Chinese Canadians,
Image I4007857328_31d70b63c2_o
- Page 14 (1): The Formal Apology from the BC Government to BC's Chinese Canadians, 2014
Province of British Columbia, Formal Apology to Chinese Canadians,
Image I4194520435_4609bdc3d_o
- Page 14 (2): The Formal Apology from the BC Government to BC's Chinese Canadians, 2014
Province of British Columbia, Formal Apology to Chinese Canadians,
Image I4007911007_c20a030428_o

Lesson Plan

Theme

- Chinese Canadians faced discrimination and racism throughout BC's history, in a variety of ways.
- There are a variety of perspectives on whether current governments should be required to apologize for historical wrongs.

Focus Question

Should current governments take responsibility for historical wrongs?

Activity / Task

In this lesson the students will decide if present-day governments should take responsibility for historical wrongs against Chinese Canadians. The students will also consider the various ways in which governments can take responsibility for historical wrongs. This activity will conclude with a U-shaped discussion.



Objectives

Students will develop understanding of the ethical reasons why present-day governments are apologizing for past wrongs.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to make an ethical judgement on whether present-day governments should apologize for past wrongs, through developing arguments backed by evidence, identifying counter-arguments, taking a position, and engaging in discussion.

Historical Thinking Competency

- Making reasoned ethical judgments about controversial actions in the past and present after considering the context and standards of right and wrong (ethical judgment).

Core Competency Focus

- Critical Thinking: Analyze and critique.
- Communication: Connect and engage with others.

Lesson Preparation

Time Frame: Two classes

Teacher Backgrounder:

For this lesson, you may want to familiarize yourself with injustices done to other groups (e.g., Residential schools, Japanese internment, etc.). See Additional Resources for more information.

Note: Although this lesson includes a mini-lesson on how to craft an argument, it would be beneficial for students to have knowledge and experience in forming an argument prior to this class.

Materials:

Blackline Masters and Rubrics are included at the end of this lesson plan. Other support materials, as well as an editable version of the lesson plan, can be found in the Grade 5 Teaching Materials on the website

www.openschool.bc.ca/bambooshoots

- Time Shuffle game
- Historical Backgrounder:
BC Apology to Chinese Canadians for Historical Wrongs – 2014
- Blackline Master 1: BC Apology to Chinese Canadians
- Blackline Master 2: Stating a Position for U-shaped Discussion
- Blackline Master 3: Justifying and Reflecting on U-shaped Discussion
- Rubric 1: Self-assessment – Forming an Argument
- Rubric 2: Assessing a U-shaped Discussion

Vocabulary

discrimination:
unjust treatment
of people based
on race, age, or
sex

racism:
prejudice or
discrimination
against people
based on their
race

Lesson Sequence

The “Hook” (Suggested Introduction)

1. Ask the students to consider an event that occurred in their life that they thought was unfair, or an event in which they were hurt, injured, or treated badly. Was an apology given? If so, how did it make them feel?
2. Tell the students to imagine the following: You won your school's speech contest and were asked to represent your school at the city-wide speech contest finals. But the organizers had provided your teacher with the wrong date, and you missed your chance to compete. You never heard from the organizers and were never offered an apology, explanation, or second chance. Ask the students these questions:
 - » How would this have made you feel?
 - » What would have been the appropriate response in this situation?
 - » Would an apology from the contest organizers have helped you feel better?
3. Inform the students that the federal and provincial governments have apologized for actions taken in the past that were deemed to be unfair (e.g., creation of Residential Schools, Japanese Internment during World War II, etc.). Also explain that both the federal and BC provincial governments have apologized to Chinese Canadians for wrongs committed in the past.

Part A – Making an Argument

- I. Tell the students that they will be creating arguments as to whether governments should or should not take responsibility for historical wrongs against Chinese Canadians.

Explain that there is a difference between arguing and making an argument. An argument is a claim supported by evidence. Arguments are used to change others' opinions or points of view, to bring about action, or to have others accept an explanation of an issue or problem.

In order to make an argument, the students need to:

- » **Make a claim:**
What do you believe to be true? What should or shouldn't be done?
- » **Use evidence to support the claim:**
What are the facts, examples, and observations?
- » **Identify counter-arguments:**
What might others say about your arguments? Where are the flaws or weaknesses in your argument?

Have the students practise making arguments with topics such as:

- junk food in the cafeteria
- video games
- skateboarding on school-grounds

Part B – Reviewing the Apology to Chinese Canadians

1. In groups, have the students consider the historical events that were unjust to Chinese Canadians. They will do this by reviewing the classroom timeline of events or by replaying the Time Shuffle game. Have the groups list events that have been hurtful or damaging to Chinese Canadians, or that are worthy of a government apology. The students will share their list of events with the rest of the class.
2. First in small groups, and then as a class, invite the students to provide as many answers as they can to the following question: What actions can governments take to make up for past wrongs?
 - official apologies
 - financial compensation to victims and families
 - education projects to raise awareness and prevent similar mistakes from happening again
 - memorials and commemorations to raise awareness
3. Hand out Blackline Master 1: BC Apology to Chinese Canadians. This is the BC provincial government's apology given by Christy Clark in May 2014. Either read the apology to the class or show this CBC video clip of Premier Clark delivering the apology.

Chinese Community gets apology from BC for historical wrongs:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/chinese-community-gets-apology-from-b-c-for-historical-wrongs-1.2643938>

(1:49)

4. Ask the class the following questions and record the answers on the board.
 - » What reasons does the Premier offer for apologizing to Chinese Canadians?
 - » How does the Premier acknowledge the contributions by Chinese Canadians in her apology?

Explain to the students that when we judge actions and people in history we have to remain mindful of:

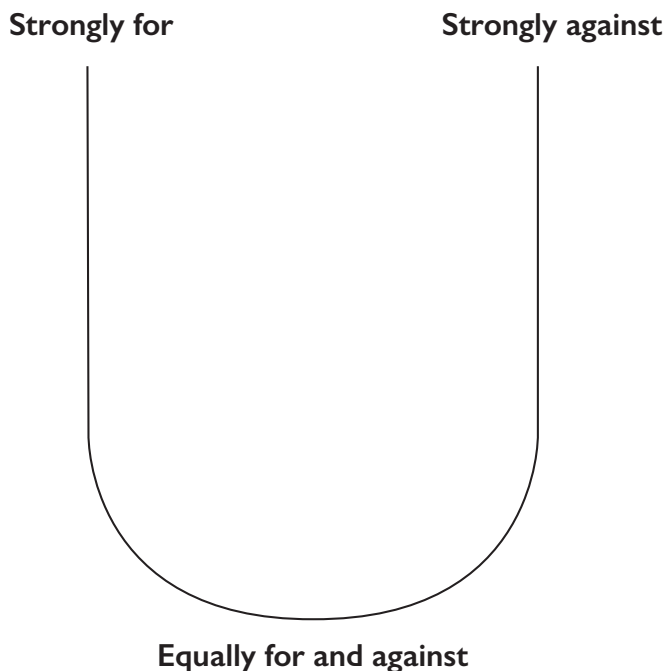
- What people thought and believed at the time.
- What we believe now.
- Our responsibility to remember injustices of the past and the legacy of these injustices today.

Part C – Taking a Position

1. Have the students take one of the following three positions on the issue of government responsibility for historical wrongs against Chinese Canadians:
 - The government should apologize for all past wrongs committed against Chinese Canadians and offer financial compensation to the victims and their families.
 - The government should apologize for some past wrongs committed against Chinese Canadians and offer to fund educational projects and memorial campaigns.
 - The government should not apologize for past wrongs committed against Chinese Canadians.
2. Have the students fill out Blackline Master 2: Stating a Position for U-shaped Discussion. Tell the students to create arguments in favour and against their position on whether governments should apologize for past wrongs against Chinese Canadians. The students gather evidence for their arguments from the timeline and activities from previous lessons. This enables them to consider the historical context and experiences of Chinese Canadians in BC's history.

Lesson Conclusion:

1. Arrange the students into a U-shape based upon their position in the argument. Those who are neither strongly for or against the argument should sit along the joining curve of the U-shape.



2. Have the students take part in a U-shaped discussion. Each side has a turn to argue their position and to suggest government action or inaction on the issue of historical wrongs.
3. After hearing the various positions and arguments, ask the students if they would change their position on the issue. The students may wish to physically move to a new position on the U-shaped continuum to indicate their changed position on the issue.
4. Have students complete Blackline Master 3: Justifying and Reflecting on U-shaped Discussion. The students end the lesson with a reflection on what they think is the most appropriate course of action for governments.

Assessment Options:

- Rubric 1:
Self-assessment – Forming an Argument
- Rubric 2:
Assessing U-shaped Discussion

Extension Activities:

- The students write a letter to their Member of Parliament expressing an argument for or against government action on historical wrongs.
- The students examine or compare the memorialization of other groups' contributions and/or hardships or struggles to that of Chinese Canadians. For example, they can compare Canadian First Nations, Indo-Canadians, and Japanese Canadians to Chinese Canadians.

Additional Resources

Where are the Children?

Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools

<http://wherearethechildren.ca/>

Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools

<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1100100015649>

CBC Television: Japanese Canadians: The Long Journey Home

<http://www.cbc.ca/player/Digital+Archives/War+and+Conflict/Second+World+War/Japanese-Canadian+Internment/ID/1415158429/>

(Video 9:15)

Internment and Redress: Japanese Canadians

<http://www.japanesecanadianhistory.net/GuideExcerptsForSocialStudies11.pdf>

The 7 C's of Argumentation

http://www.uen.org/core/languagearts/writing/downloads/7C_argumentation.pdf

Blackline Masters

Blackline Master 1

BC Apology to Chinese Canadians

Blackline Master 2

Stating a Position for U-shaped Discussion

Blackline Master 3

Justifying and Reflecting on U-shaped Discussion

BC Apology to Chinese Canadians

Today we express our sorrow and regret for historical provincial government practices that were once considered appropriate. While the governments which passed these laws and policies acted in a manner that was lawful at the time, today this racist discrimination is seen by British Columbians—represented by all members of the legislative assembly—as

unacceptable and intolerable. We believe this formal apology is required to ensure that closure can be reached on this dark period in our province's history. The legislative assembly's apology today signifies our deepest regret for the hardship and suffering our past provincial governments imposed on Chinese Canadians.

The entire Legislative Assembly acknowledges the perseverance of Chinese Canadians that was demonstrated with grace and dignity throughout our history while being oppressed by unfair and discriminatory historical laws.

Moreover, we acknowledge the overwhelming contribution by Chinese Canadians to British Columbia's culture, history and economic prosperity.



On behalf of the Province of British Columbia, and on behalf of the entire legislative assembly, we sincerely apologize for the provincial government's historical wrongs. We are sorry for the discriminatory legislation and racist policies enacted by past provincial governments. We will ensure that this never happens again.

Stating a Position for U-shaped Discussion

Initial position: Where along the U-shaped continuum did you first place yourself?

<div><div><div>Strongly for</div><div><div></div></div><div>Strongly against</div></div></div>	<div><div>Explain the reasons for your initial choice:</div><div></div></div>
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Justifying and Reflecting on U-shaped Discussion

Name: _____

Interesting arguments: What two arguments from classmates caused you to wonder about or rethink your position?

Position on the U-shaped Continuum:	Position on the U-shaped Continuum:
Reasons:	Reasons:

Final Position: Did you change your position on the U-shaped continuum? In which direction did you shift? What caused you to make this shift? If you did not shift along the continuum, what additional arguments or evidence reinforced your position and caused you to stay with your original position?

<input type="checkbox"/> I changed my position. <input type="checkbox"/> I did NOT change my position.	Reasons for remaining in the same position or for changing my position:
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Justification for your final position: List the three most powerful reasons that support your final position on the issue.

Reason 1:

Reason 2:

Reason 3:

Reflection

In your opinion, what is the most appropriate course of action for governments to address historical wrongs?

Assessment Rubrics

Rubric 1

Self-Assessment – Forming an Argument

Rubric 2

Assessing U-shaped Discussion

Self-Assessment – Forming an Argument

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Developing	Beginning
I made a claim and used facts and evidence to support my claim to form a strong argument.	4	3	2	1
I developed strong arguments for and against my position.	4	3	2	1
I provided strong reasons to justify my final position.	4	3	2	1

Assessing U-shaped Discussion

Use the following scale to score student performances:

4 = Sophisticated Understanding

3 = Extensive Understanding

2 = Basic Understanding

1 = Partial Understanding

N/A = Not Demonstrated

Background Knowledge	Open-mindedness	Reasoned Judgment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate use of relevant facts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> open to considering a variety of views willing to rethink view and position based on new evidence or arguments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses evidence to reach an informed decision considers criteria when making a decision.
4 3 2 1 N/A	4 3 2 1 N/A	4 3 2 1 N/A

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