TEACHER RESOURCE PACKAGE

LESSON PLANS

CANADIAN AND WORLD STUDIES

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Canada & the Commonwealth
Common links: partnership and diversity

INTENDED GRADE LEVEL/SUBJECT AREA
- Grade 9 - Applied/Academic
- Canadian Geography
- Grade 10 - Applied/Academic
- 20th Century Canadian History

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTCOMES
Students will:
1. Define “The Commonwealth”
2. Locate Commonwealth countries on a map
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the diverse nature of the countries within the Commonwealth family
4. Develop an awareness of the pros and cons of foreign aid
5. Participate in a group activity which develops a greater awareness of the social and economic conditions in a variety of Commonwealth countries

CONCEPTS
- The Commonwealth of Nations
- Canada and the Commonwealth
- Foreign Aid within the Commonwealth family

RECOMMENDED TIME FRAME
- Between two and three 75-minute periods

LESSON ONE:
INTRODUCTORY READING AND QUESTIONS
- This lesson serves as an introduction to the Commonwealth, to Canada’s involvement in the Commonwealth family and to the pros and cons of foreign aid
- The reading and accompanying questions are in “Worksheet Lesson 1”

LESSON TWO:
“COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING (CHOGM)”
- This lesson is in the form of a jigsaw/group exercise
- The information for nine (9) Commonwealth countries is attached
- The activity is ideally designed for five (5) countries, however, the number of countries participating and the number of students per country may vary
- Teachers may choose countries or allow students to choose
STEP 1: HOME COUNTRY GROUPS (20 MINUTES)

- It is important to have the same number of students in each of these groups
- Students are placed in “home country” groups
- Each student receives a package with information on their own country and “Worksheet Lesson 2”
- The categories on “Worksheet Lesson 2” can be defined as follows:
  1. TOTAL AREA – the amount of land the country covers in square kilometers
  2. LIFE EXPECTANCY – average age at death
  3. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT/CAPITA – the total value of all goods and services produced in one country in one year, per person
  4. LITERACY – percentage of the population able to perform basic reading and writing skills
  5. UNEMPLOYMENT – percentage of the population that is willing and able to work but does not have work
  6. INFANT MORTALITY – number of deaths for every 1000 births

STEP 2: CHOGM (50 MINUTES)

- During this phase, students leave their “home country” as Heads of Government and represent their country at the CHOGM (one Head of Government per country in each group)
- Each Head of Government makes a presentation to the group
- At the completion of the presentations, each Head of Government should have:
  - labeled each country on their map
  - completed “Worksheet Lesson 2”
- At this time, the teacher explains the terms “developed” and “developing” countries
- CHOGM groups answer questions #1 and #2 of the “CHOGM Task”

STEP 3: HOME COUNTRY GROUPS (20 MINUTES)

- Students answer questions 1 and 2 of the “Home Country’s Task” in groups

STEP 4: HOME COUNTRY GROUPS (20 MINUTES)

- “Home country” groups prepare a brief presentation in response to step #3 and submit one written response per group
THE COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth is an association of 54 independent member countries. These countries are found in all continents and all oceans.

The Commonwealth includes some of the world’s biggest countries and some of its smallest. India for example, has over 900 million people, while Nauru, a small island in the Pacific Ocean has only 8000 inhabitants. Canada is one of the four most developed countries in the Commonwealth.

There are 1.7 billion people in the Commonwealth. That is more than one quarter of the population of the whole world. Commonwealth members are some of the world’s most developed countries and some of the poorest. Some of the most developed are Australia, Britain (comprised of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), Canada and Singapore. Some of the poorest are Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Tanzania.

The family of Commonwealth countries work together to build a better world for themselves. They help each other to make their economies stronger, to improve their systems of government and to improve the skills of their people.

The Commonwealth is committed to specific ideals which it endorses throughout the family of member countries. These ideals include:

- Democracy
- Just and honest government
- Human rights and justice for all
- Economic development and war on poverty
- Peace

Aside from working to achieve these common ideals, Commonwealth countries share the use of a working common language, English. They also have many common traditions, such as law, government and education. The origins of the Commonwealth lie in the British Empire and all members of the Commonwealth family recognize Queen Elizabeth II as Head of the Commonwealth.

CANADA’S ROLE IN THE COMMONWEALTH FAMILY

As one of the most developed countries in the Commonwealth, Canada plays a very important role. Around the world Canada is seen as a leader in providing its people with the things that really matter in life. Canada’s popularity has been reinforced by the financial and technical aid it gives to developing countries.

Arguments exist for and against Canada providing foreign aid to developing nations. Some arguments in favour of Canada providing aid are:

- We live on the same planet and have a responsibility to help those less fortunate than ourselves
- Most people who receive our aid did not choose to be poor. Their problems are a product of war, climate change, or of destructive governments
- Foreign aid is like an investment in the future. We cannot expect an immediate return on this investment. However, countries that break out of poverty will be better customers for our trade in the future.
Some arguments against Canada providing foreign aid are:
- Canada has enough economic problems of its own. We have unemployed people and a large government debt. We should look after our own first.
- Canadians have worked hard to develop our country. Along the way there was poverty and struggle. Developing countries have to be more patient.
- Canada should not be obliged to help out countries which are poorly managed. Those countries should work harder and use their resources more efficiently.

**FAMILY OF NATIONS**

The modern Commonwealth is a family of countries. Canada believes the Commonwealth family is important because of its non-threatening, supportive and responsive attitudes to the members needs. Within the Commonwealth, family members can build bridges and help find answers to difficult questions and conflicts.

Every two years the Commonwealth Heads of Government meet at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). At these meetings, decisions are made by consensus and all voices are equal.

**QUESTIONS**

1. How many nations and people make up “The Commonwealth”?

2. Which specific ideals does the Commonwealth endorse throughout its’ family of countries?

3. Give two advantages and two disadvantages of Canada providing aid to less developed countries. Which side do you support? Why?

4. How is the modern Commonwealth like a “family of nations”? 
## THE COMMONWEALTH FAMILY OF NATIONS

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<tr>
<th>Capital City</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
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