

My appointment date & time: _____

Great Canadian History Mysteries

What is a Historical Investigation?

A Historical Investigation is a problem-solving activity that requires you to develop and apply the research skills of a historian to an interesting historical topic of your choice.

You will be required to search for, select, evaluate, and use evidence to reach a reluctant conclusion.

You will learn by **doing** history, by digging into the past to answer questions and solve problems, and learn critically about history itself:

- What makes a good historical interpretation?
- How can we decide what evidence is the most convincing?
- What makes an event historically significant?



Goals:

- To raise questions and to gather solid evidence and to gather solid evidence in support of your answers.
- To go beyond the facts presented in class and examine the historical record for yourself.
- To consult documents, journals, diaries, artifacts, historic sites, works of art, quantitative data, and other evidence from the past, and to do so imaginatively-taking into account the historical context in which these records were created and comparing multiple points of view of those on the scene at the time.
- To consider and use the 6 Historical Thinking Concepts to analyze historical events.

Planning

1. Start by identifying a general area of interest. Read, read, read!
2. Narrow it down to a specific question or area of investigation.
3. Choose a working title (in the form of a question) that may be changed or refined as you go.
4. Gather your source evidence (minimum of 5).
5. Take notes from resources, gathering evidence and diverse opinions.
6. Ensure accurate referencing.
7. Analyze evidence and write the investigation.

Remember—this is not just a research project. You are finding and presenting evidence/proof to help support what you are investigating.

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Procedure

Step 1: Become a Detective

1. Choose a historical event you want to understand better.
2. Introduce the historical scene under investigation.
3. Provide background information and context.
4. Develop an engaging question to guide your inquiry.



Tips:

- State the **topic** of the investigation in the form of a question.
- Define the **scope** of the investigation– the “what”, identify relevant aspects or areas of study to be explored, and indicate the timeframe.
- Explain the **method** of the investigation–the “how”, the way in which you are going to tackle the investigation.
- If you are looking at something we covered in class, you must go deeper into the investigation and find information other than what was previously presented in class.

Step 2: Investigate the Evidence

Find and provide primary and/or secondary sources used to crack the case. These documents may include text files, images, audio or video clips (minimum 5). Be sure to complete the Works Cited information.

This section should only include the facts, no analysis. Include a consideration of different viewpoints when appropriate.

Tips:

- Literal Source Questioning: What are the literal aspects of the documents?
- Looking for Point of View & Perspective: What is the point of view?
- Looking at the Context: How did historical circumstances shape the source?
- Assessing the Significance of a Source: What can be learned from this piece of evidence?
- Corroboration: How do different pieces of evidence compare?

Step 3: Search for Clues

Develop a set of questions for your Detective’s Log to help guide your analysis of the evidence. Provide a critical evaluation of the sources.

Step 4: Cracking the Case

Present your answer, along with a rationale rooted in the evidence, to the initial question. Additionally, you are encouraged to develop and enter new questions that have arisen during the process for future investigation.

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Historical Thinking Concepts to Consider

You must complete 4 different Historical Thinking Concept charts to include in your Detective's Log

Establish Historical Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does this event have serious, long-lasting consequences for many people?• Does this event reveal or shed light on long-lasting or emerging issues?• What would Canada be like today if this event had never happened?• How did this event impact the economy, politics, and/or makeup of Canada?
Use Primary Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is this an authentic source?• In what context/circumstances was the source created?• What does this source tell us about the time period?
Identifying Continuity & Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What changed before and after the event, and what stayed the same?• Are these changes for the better or for worse?
Analyze Cause & Consequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What triggered this to happen?• What were the short-term and long-term consequences of the event?• What were the direct and indirect consequences of the event?
Take Historical Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why did this person act the way that they did?• What viewpoint was taken by both sides?
Consider the Ethical Dimensions of History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If this event took place today, would people judge it differently?• What were the major values that existed during this time period that allowed this event to occur?

Final Product

You will present your findings in the method of your choice. Be sure to include your evidence in your final presentation.

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Evaluation

Plan of Investigation

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0	There is no plan of the investigation, or it is inappropriate.
1	The research question, method and scope of the investigation are not clearly stated.
2	The research question is clearly stated. The method and scope of the investigation are outlined and related to the research question.
3	The research question is clearly stated. The method and scope of the investigation are fully developed and closely focused on the research question.

Summary of Evidence

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0	There is no relevant factual material.
1-2	There is some relevant factual material, but it has not been referenced.
3-4	There is relevant factual material that shows evidence of research, organization, and referencing.
5-6	The factual material is all relevant to the investigation and it has been well researched, organized, and highly referenced.

Evaluation of Sources

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0	There is no description or evaluation of the sources.
1	The source is described but there is no reference to their origin, purpose, value, and limitation.
2-3	There is some evaluation of the source but reference to origin, purpose, value, and limitation may be limited.
4-5	There is evaluation of the source and explicit reference to origin, purpose, value, and limitation.

Analysis

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0	There is no analysis.
1-2	There is some attempt at analyzing the evidence presented.
3-4	There is analysis of the evidence presented and references are included. There may be some awareness of the significance to the investigation of the source evaluated. Where appropriate, different interpretations are considered.
5-6	There is critical analysis of the evidence presented, accurate referencing, and an awareness of the significance to the investigation of the source evaluated. Where appropriate, different interpretations are analyzed.

Final Product

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0-1	Content is minimal. Uses other people's ideas.
2-4	Product includes essential information about the topic. Uses other people's ideas, but there is little evidence of original thought.
5-7	Product includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good. Product shows some original thought. Work shows new ideas and insights.
8-10	Product covers topic thoroughly and in-depth with detail. Subject knowledge is excellent. Product shows a large amount of original thought. Ideas are creative and inventive.

Works Cited

/5

Works Cited is provided and is formatted correctly