



HS

# Historical Significance

Name: Ms Martin

Date: June 3 / 16

Primary or secondary source (page numbers, if relevant):

The Diaries of Louis Riel

Event or person (or people) that is historically significant in this source:

Riel, his lawyers, prosecutors

Brief description:

Riel's diaries offer insight into his mental stability during the Northwest Resistance & his trial for treason

Criteria: In what ways is this event or person historically significant?	Does it apply? (Y/N)	In what way does this event or person meet the criteria?
Resulting in Change	yes	Helped bring issues the Métis had to light
Profundity: How were people affected by the event or person?	yes	Riel led the NW R and became a spokesperson (or martyr) for the Métis
Quantity: How many people's lives were affected?	yes	The Métis people
Durability: How long-lasting were the changes?	yes	1885 - present
Revealing	yes	
How does this event or person help us to understand the past?	yes	The diaries show us what Riel was thinking / feeling
Resonant or Relevant	yes	
How does this event or person shed light on issues or problems that concern us?	yes	The mistreatment of the Métis

Of what larger story or argument might this event or person be a part?

Riel was charged & executed. The Métis demanded better treatment. Riel became known as the Father of Manitoba.

How might the historical significance of this event or person change over time?

People's opinion on Riel & his actions changed from viewing him as insane to understanding him a bit better.





# Analyze Cause and Consequence

Historic event: The trial of Louis Riel

Who was involved? Riel, the metis

Rating: 1-minimal effect 2-moderate effect 3-major effect

Causes/factors	Role played by cause or factor (indicate whether underlying/ long-term contributing factor or short-term/ impending was the cause of event)	Consequence or effect of cause/factor	Rating		
			1	2	3
1869-70 Red River Resistance	Riel leads the Metis of MB against Canadian government	Riel is banished to United States	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Execution of Thomas Scott 1870	Turns opinion against Riel	English Canadians turn against Riel	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Northwest Resistance 1885	Riel leads the Metis in the NWR.	Riel arrested & charged with treason	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
			<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





E

## Use Primary Source Evidence: Photographs/Images

Image type:	Photograph
Date:	1885
Artist/Photographer:	O.B. Buell

What is shown in the image? (Provide a detailed description.)

During Riel's trial, he is allowed to address the jury in his own defense.

What was the purpose of the image?

To document Riel speaking at his trial

What point of view or position does the artist illustrate or photographer represent?

As an observer in the trial, watching Riel speak.

What impressions does the image portray?

It shows Riel, well presented & well-dressed.

What are your responses to the image?

To me, it looks like he knew what he was doing. It doesn't look like he was insane.

Does the image raise any questions, show apparent contradictions, or omit something obvious?

It raises the question as to whether he was insane or not...

Is the image a credible source? Explain.

Yes. It is now owned by Library & Archives Canada.

What is the historical context of the image? (What events were occurring at the time?)

This photograph was taken near the end of the trial.

In what ways does the analysis of this image contribute to your understanding of the past?

It helps to argue that Riel was not in fact insane.





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## Use Primary Source Evidence: Document

Title: Louis Riel's Diary.

Type of document: Diary

Author: Louis Riel

Source: WWW.OURROOTS.CA

Date: June 3/16

What was the purpose of the document, and who were the intended readers?

From the time he was exiled to Montana until his execution, Riel kept a diary - partly to document what was happening, partly to act as a confession.

What was the historical context of the document? (What events were occurring at the time?)

- exile in Montana (1884)
- Imprisonment (1885)
- Northwest Rebellion (1885)
- trial (1885)

What historical facts are given in the document?

Discusses his time in the States, being called back to lead the NWR, his arrest, imprisonment + trial.

What viewpoints or opinions do(es) the author(s) express?

Riel certainly sounds like he could be insane. There is a lot written about how God is telling him things.

Is the document biased? Give examples

No - it is his personal account.

Is the account credible? Why or why not?

yes - these are his own words

In what ways does the information in this document contribute to your understanding of the past?

It makes me question what is going on in his mind.





HP

## Take Historical Perspectives

Person, group, or society in question:

Louis Riel - Treason Trial 1885

Time period and location:

1885 - Regina

Decision or action to be analyzed:

Why the trial should not be in Winnipeg.

What was the historical context in which the decision or action was taken?

- Relevant beliefs, customs, values, and world views of the time:

Riel was a nuisance to the Canadian government

- Relevant circumstances surrounding the person, group, or society:

Riel had led 2 uprisings against the government + Macdonald wanted to ensure he be found guilty + executed

Was there disagreement or controversy over the decision/action taken at the time? Who might have disagreed and why?

If the trial had been held in Winnipeg, half the jury might have been Métis, which could have helped to have him found not guilty.

How do you think a person affected by the decision/action might have felt at the time?

The Métis + Manitobans would have been angry. Having the trial moved ensured Riel would be found guilty + executed.

Would the decision/action be different if it were to happen in another period or in the present? Why or why not? Explain.

I think so, yes. Firstly, medical knowledge + testing has improved, so we'd have a better understanding of his mental state.

Nowadays, people wouldn't tolerate such an unjust and biased trial to occur.





## ED Understand the Ethical Dimensions of History

Historical action/issue to be analyzed:

Charging Riel with high treason.

Relevant details (date, individuals/groups involved, rationale ...):

After Riel was arrested after the NWR, PM. John A Macdonald had him tried with high treason (an old British law) so that he would face the death penalty, rather than with the Canadian treason law that did not allow the death penalty.

What was the historical context in which the action/issue took place?

What other events were taking place?

2 Metis Rebellions had occurred. Macdonald + the government sought to get rid of Riel so that no more uprisings would <sup>NOT OCCUR.</sup>

→ Last Spike of CPR - Nov 7 1885, Chinese Head Tax imposed, Pottlatch outlawed.

What did people think about the action/issue at that time (who supported/opposed it, why)?

When the verdict was read, the foreman of the jury cried. The jury asked the judge for mercy. I think this shows that they were hesitant to have him executed.

Considering our current values and ideas of right and wrong, was the action appropriate?

No. It seems as though Macdonald would do anything to get rid of Riel (including having the trial moved). It seems obvious that all of these actions were carried out in order to have Riel executed.

Does the action/issue affect us today? Do we have a responsibility as citizens to make reparations for what are now perceived to be mistakes of the past? Explain.

Riel is now viewed as a martyr in the eyes of the Metis + of Manitobans



**E****Analyze Secondary Sources**

Title: <i>Heritage Minutes: Louis Riel</i>		Type of Document: <i>Video</i>
Purpose of Document: <i>explore Riel's last thoughts before he was executed.</i>		
Author(s): <i>Heritage Minutes</i>		Date of Publication: <i>Unknown</i>
	Strengths	Weaknesses
Source is reliable.	<i>Part of Historical Minute series</i>	<i>Kind of corny at times</i>
Facts are accurate and complete.	<i>Uses Riel's own words + other</i>	<i>would have been nice to know why he was found guilty.</i>
Strong evidence is cited to support conclusions.	<i>none</i>	<i>none</i>
Is there conflicting evidence in the source? In other sources?	<i>none</i>	<i>none</i>

Conclusions about the value of this secondary source as a reliable account of an historical issue or event:

*I appreciate hearing Riel's words and reasons for his behaviour, as well as the voice of the woman explaining his importance to the Metis people.*