
LESSON 3: FOOTPRINTS IN TIME

Students create a timeline mural illustrating 11 000 years of history along the Little Bonnechere River in the Ottawa Valley, Ontario.



Level: Grade 5

Subjects: Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, Language Arts, Computers

Estimated Duration: 2 to 4 40-minute periods.

MATERIALS

- 4-metre length of mural paper
- oil pastels, crayons, markers, construction/art paper
- class copies of the Little Bonnechere River timelines (River, Forest and People; pdf format, available online at <http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Spirits/English/Timeline/index.html>) or have students access this information online.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- contribute and work constructively in groups
- speak clearly when making oral presentations
- collect historical data and apply to a timeline spanning many centuries
- demonstrate an understanding of ways in which climactic changes affect the activities of human beings and plants over time (e.g., glaciers).
- demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships between early civilizations and the environment (e.g., with respect to food, shelter, clothing, cultural practices).
- examine how environment, society, and technology were related in early civilizations.
- communicate information about early communities, using media works, oral presentations, written notes and descriptions, drawings, tables, charts, maps and graphs

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Palaeo-Indian Period 9500 to 8000 BCE*

- Champlain Sea drains through a deep trench forming the Ottawa Valley
- boreal forests develop in this cool climate
- Palaeo-Indian hunters move northward into the southern Great Lakes basin

Early, Middle and Late Archaic Periods 8000 to 800 BCE

- climate becomes warmer
- Little Bonnechere River is sustained by rain and snow
- Archaic people make dugout canoes and copper tools

Woodland Period 800 BCE to 1600 CE†

- Little Bonnechere River is streamlined and tributaries form along its edges
- much of the Ottawa Valley is covered with pine, oak and poplar
- Woodland Indians make pottery

Historic Period 1600 to 1900 CE

- large fires burn the area every 80 years
- Algonquins live semi-nomadic lifestyle; Europeans arrive
- fur traders and loggers travel the Little Bonnechere River

1900 to Present

- river recovers
- aspen and poplar replaces the virgin pine
- loggers and settlers move away from the Little Bonnechere River

* BCE = Before Common Era

† CE = Common Era

Land OF THE *Spirits*

HOOK

Read the following passage to the class. Archaeological research shows that people may have arrived in the Ottawa Valley area 10 500 years ago. Discuss the fact that as Europeans, we have only occupied this land for such a short period of time compared to the various Native groups.

Dear Diary,

Tonight we saw a performance by a group of Algonquin dancers from Golden Lake First Nation. It was awesome! Their music and dancing made the hairs on the back of my neck tingle. I wanted to dance but was too shy. But then they said people could dance with them because it wasn't their sacred music. So we all danced and had lots of fun!

My parents talked to a woman named Dorothy. She is an Algonquin Elder from Pikwakanagan on nearby Golden Lake, which means she is wise and people respect her. They asked her how long Native people have lived on the Bonnechere. "For a long, long, time." She looked at me, smiled and said, "I'll show you."

She picked up a stick and drew a line in the sand. She took 11 steps along the line. She said, "Each step is 1000 years. During my first the Ottawa Valley was part of a great sea. Glaciers were not far away, and mastodons roamed the land near Toronto. In Paleo-Indian times Natives hunted caribou for food."

"My next seven steps cover the Archaic Period of our history. We made dugout canoes and copper tools. I take two more steps to travel the early Woodland Period when Native people made pots for the first time. If you cut my last step in half, in the first half, Natives become farmers and live in more permanent villages, in the second half Europeans come to North America for furs, loggers come and cut down the forests, settlers come to farm and you come to talk to me here tonight." I said, "Wow! Native people have been here a long, long time!"

Alex

(From page 9, *Discover the Spirits of the Little Bonnechere: A Cultural Heritage Activity Book for Youth*, Friends of Bonnechere Parks 1998; available from the electronic bookstore of www.bonnecherepark.on.ca).

PROCEDURE

1. Prior to lesson prepare a 4-metre length of mural paper as follows:
 - trace 11 footprints across the bottom length of the mural paper
 - label the footprints from 9000 BCE to 2000 CE (Key: 1 footprint = 1000 years)
 - colour the footprints by period (1 red, 7 orange, 2 yellow and 1 green).
2. While introducing the Teacher Background information, write key dates on the mural paper in the appropriate footprints.
3. Divide class into five groups. Assign each group a time period.
4. Direct students to the Little Bonnechere River, Forest and People timelines in print or electronic format (<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/spirits/English/Timeline/index.html>).
5. Students can also use the following resources to conduct research (publications available from the online bookstore at www.bonnecherepark.on.ca):
 - Spirits of the Little Bonnechere, A History of Exploration, Logging and Settlement, 1800 to 1920*, Roderick Mackay, Friends of Bonnechere Parks, 1996
 - Discover the Spirits of the Little Bonnechere — A Cultural Heritage Activity Book for Youth*, Sandy Stephenson, Friends of Bonnechere Parks, 1998
 - Visiting the Spirits Exploring the Hidden Heritage of the Little Bonnechere River* online exhibit (visit: <http://www.bonnecherepark.on.ca/html/programs/resources.html>)
 - Walks of the Little Bonnechere River*, Roderick MacKay and Mark Stabb, Friends of Bonnechere Parks, 2002
6. Once their research is complete, ask students to plot (using text, diagram, illustrations and photographs) information onto the appropriate historic period on the Footprints in Time mural.
7. Ask students to individually present their findings to the class.

EXTENSIONS

Students can create a similar timeline for any geographic region in Canada or the world.