

Aboriginal Highways

Lesson Overview:

The ocean was a very important transportation link for coastal Aboriginal peoples in what eventually became North America. It remains a vital transportation waterway to this day. In the past, most villages and temporary camps were situated at the water's edge. Small and large dugout cedar canoes were the main form of moving people and goods from place to place. Coastal Aboriginal people were remarkably proficient at building canoes and at operating them in sometimes dangerous conditions such as high winds and large waves. In this lesson, students will appreciate how the Aboriginal peoples and modern-day travelers and fishers experience the benefits and challenges of British Columbia's water-bound "highways".

Grade Level:

4 - 5

Time Required:

Two 60-minute classes

Curriculum Connection:

British Columbia and Yukon Integrated Resource Packages:

- Grade 4 Science (Water); Social Studies (Society and Culture)
- Grade 5 Social Studies (Environment).

Link to Canadian National Geographic Standards:

Essential Element #1: The World in Spatial Terms

- Location of major human and physical features on Earth

Oceans Scope & Sequence Standard #1: The World in Spatial Terms

- Location of nearby bodies of water and watersheds

Essential Element #2: Places and Regions

- Physical and human characteristics of places and regions within the province and Canada

Essential Element #4: Human Systems

- Development of transportation and communication networks.

Oceans Scope & Sequence Standard #4: Human Systems

- The role of the oceans in the migration of human populations, trade and human settlement patterns.

Geographic Skill #2: Acquiring geographic information

- Make and record observations about the physical and human characteristics of places.

Geographic Skill #4: Analyzing geographic information

- Use maps to observe and interpret geographic relationships.

Additional Resources, Materials and Equipment Required:

- Small scale marine charts of coastal British Columbia
<http://www.vancouvermarina.com/marinamap.htm>
<http://www.maptown.com/canadiannautical/>
- Copies of the “Aboriginal Highways Critical Challenge” activity sheet
- Copies of the “Benefits and Challenges” organizer
- Qa’atuwa’as (video following historic canoe trip to Bella Bella)
- Copies of the Qa’atuwa’as “Video Focus Questions”
- Copies of the “Peer Presentation Rubric”

Main Objective:

Students will be able to connect human settlements and culture to the importance of the ocean as a transportation system.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- List at least three ocean-connected attributes that all coastal peoples shared.
- List several challenges faced by both pre-European contact Aboriginal peoples and modern travelers on coastal waters.
- Describe some of the benefits and challenges of using the ocean as a “highway”, for both Aboriginal peoples in the past and for present-day people working and traveling on the ocean.

The Lesson: Part One

	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
Introduction	<p>Ask students how they got to school today. What types of vehicles and routes were used? Teacher or student volunteer may keep track of list on the board.</p> <p>Teacher may do a quick pre-learning assessment by asking what background knowledge students have on this topic. For instance, there may be Aboriginal students in the class who can add to the discussion.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>15 minutes</i></p>	<p>Discuss ways of traveling to school: car, bus, bicycle, walk, etc., as well as routes used. Students (or teacher) list these on board.</p>
Lesson Development	<p>1) Distribute mind map templates to students. Use a mind map on a transparency and overhead projector to brainstorm different ways that students travel, what forms of transportation they use and what kinds of “highways”, streets and roads they use. Photocopy final collaborative brainstormed transparency for each student, or ask students to transcribe the collaborative effort using their own mind maps.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>15 minutes</i></p> <p>2) Distribute “Critical Challenge” sheet with a marine chart of coastal British Columbia and the “Aboriginal Highways Benefits and Challenges” activity sheet. Assign students into small groups. Monitor students as they work through these activities.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>25 minutes</i></p>	<p>1) Offer ideas on travel modes, highways, etc. Transcribe these ideas onto a mind map template provided. (As a homework extension, students take the mind maps home and have siblings and parents add ideas).</p> <p>2) Students break into small teacher-assigned groups to tackle the critical challenge. Group members work together to record their thoughts and findings.</p>
Conclusion	<p>Explain that in the next session students will have the opportunity to share their ideas with the whole class. Ask students to choose one or two interesting facts to share with the class.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>5 minutes</i></p>	<p>Groups will begin deciding which one or two main points they would like to share in the follow-up session.</p>

The Lesson: Part Two

	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
Introduction	<p>Show a 15-minute selection from the video Qa'atuwa'as (about the historic canoe trip up the coast to Bella Bella).</p> <p>Optional: Hand out "Focus Questions" for video prior to viewing.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>25 minutes</i></p>	<p>Watch the video. Try to empathize with the characters and to imagine how it would feel to be in their place in the ocean-going canoes. Share feelings and thoughts on this with the class.</p>
Lesson Development	<p>1) Ask students to bring out their mind maps and tables and review ways of transport and highways used in present-day British Columbia.</p> <p>2) Choose a spokesperson from each group to report on one aspect of their small group findings from last class. (Choosing a spokesperson at the last minute encourages all students in each group to participate from the beginning since they will not know if s/he may be the person chosen).</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>30 minutes</i></p>	<p>1) Share ideas and add any new ideas. Review using individual mind maps for visual cues.</p> <p>2) Share thoughts, ideas and feelings according to the critical challenge questions. Students assess their peers using the "Peer Assessment Rubric" to provide positive feedback.</p>
Conclusion	<p>Commend each group for its contributions. Assist students in summarizing their findings and ideas, and help them relate their findings back to what they watched in the video.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>5 minutes</i></p>	<p>Share and relate thoughts and ideas back to the video.</p>

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Lesson Extension

Plan a follow-up field trip to a local Aboriginal resource to connect what was discovered in the lesson to something and/or someone that students can see and hear. A few examples of excellent resources include:

On Vancouver Island:

- Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre (www.quwutsun.ca/)
- Royal B.C. Museum (www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/)
- Nanaimo and District Museum (www.nanaimo.museum.bc.ca/)

On the B.C. Mainland:

- UBC Museum of Anthropology (www.moa.ubc.ca/)
- 'Ksan Historical Village and Museum (www.ksan.org)
- Museum of Northern B.C. (www.museumofnorthernbc.com)

The above resources and local Aboriginal Band Offices may be contacted in order to arrange school visit by a Band member.

Suggested Assessment: Part One

- Use the Peer Assessment Rubric to assess teamwork during “Critical Challenge”.
- Observe participation during the initial introduction, brainstorm and conclusion.
- Students may submit the “Critical Challenge” worksheet.

Suggested Assessment: Part Two

- Observe participation as students share their feelings about the ocean-going characters in Qa’atuwa’as.
- The knowledge-sharing session can be assessed for the students’ listening abilities.
- Students could perform a self-assessment of their work in small groups.

Aboriginal Highways Benefits and Challenges

Coastal Aboriginal peoples often traveled by water along “Aboriginal Highways”. List the benefits and challenges people experienced traveling this way.

Benefits	Challenges

Peer Presentation Assessment

Presentation Title: *Aboriginal Highways Critical Challenge*

Presenter's Name: _____

Your Name: _____ **Date** _____

	Underdeveloped	Competent	Well developed
Use of notes	Notes were relied upon throughout the entire presentation. 1	Student was distracted by the notes or read too much from them. 3	Student effectively used notes while speaking. 5
Speaking to the audience	Student rarely looked at the audience and was directed away from them. 1	During half the presentation the student faced the class and looked at the audience. 3	The student faced the class and looked at the audience throughout the presentation. 5
Strong Voice	Almost nothing the student said could be heard by the audience. 1	Most people in the audience could hear much of what was said. 3	The entire audience could hear the student's every word. 5
Information	The information shared had little relevance to the topic and had little interest for the audience. 1	The information shared was mostly relevant to the topic and was of basic interest for the audience. 3	The information shared was very relevant to the topic and was of great interest for the audience. 5
One thing I appreciated about your presentation was...			
TOTAL			/20