



Presenting... the Prime Ministers of Canada

A Teaching Strategy for Use with the National Library of
Canada's *First Among Equals* Website

It is important that students learn about the lives and accomplishments of Canadian prime ministers, as these leaders are a part of our heritage. It is also important that students begin to understand how political power is gained and used.

In this project, students will conduct research about Canada's prime ministers on the National Library of Canada's *First Among Equals* website and make a presentation about their findings.

Subject/Age

Social Studies (History, prime ministers) and Language Arts
Ages 12-15

**Learning Outcomes (WCP)
Objectives (QC)**

**Learning Outcomes(APEF)
Expectations (ON)**

Social Studies Outcomes for this project (History):

In completing this project, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of how diverse groups and individuals have contributed to the historical, cultural, and economic development of Canada by:
 - Identifying the main characteristics of one prime minister's life and term in office, in some detail
 - Comparing the accomplishments of several prime ministers

Arts Outcomes for this project (Drama):

- Interpret ideas drawn from sources, and communicate these through drama techniques

Language Arts Outcomes for this project:

R (Reading):

- Explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and their own experience

W (Writing):

- Communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes and to specific audiences

O/V (Oral and Visual Communication):

- Listen to and communicate connected ideas and opinions clearly, concisely and appropriately
- Contribute and work constructively in groups

These Language Arts Outcomes correspond to:

- WCP GO - **R:** 3.2; **W:** 3.3; **O/V:** 4.4, 5.1
- Quebec objectives - 3 (**Reading**); 1 (**Writing**); 4, 1 (**Oral**)
- APEF CGO - **R:** 6; **W:** 9; **O/V:** 2, 2.1



Student Demonstration of Learning

Students will conduct research about prime ministers on the National Library of Canada's *First Among Equals* website and present their findings to their peers.

Materials/Resources Required

Computers with access to the Internet
Materials for presentations: card, scissors, glue, paper, etc.
Student Handout
Assessment Sheet

Web Links

The National Library's *First Among Equals Children's Site* (for ages 9 to 11):
URL: <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/primeministers/kids/>
The National Library's *First Among Equals* website (for ages 12 and up):
URL: <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/primeministers/>

Instructional Procedures

Students will need to be familiar with common Web navigation symbols, tools and terminology (e.g.: search, back, home page, etc.).

Enhancing Students' Interest

Ask which prime ministers the students can name. Specifically:

- Which prime minister do they think was the most important in history? Why?
- What makes a person important or special?

Small-Group Work

As a class, go to the National Library's *First Among Equals* website. (It is encouraged to explore the site as a class in order to offer general comments on some of the site's content and features.)

- Each group chooses (or is assigned) three prime ministers to research.
- Students can record information on the Student Handout or in their books.

Based on the findings of their research, each group selects a Prime Minister of interest to them to present to the class. It is recommended that educators encourage the selection of as great a variety of prime ministers as possible.

Students prepare a short presentation to the class on that prime minister. The use of multi-media or other techniques is encouraged, including overheads, posters and computer presentations.



In addition, students may wish to use dramatic techniques. For example:

- A simulated interview with the “prime minister”.
- A fictional debate that conveys the information.
- A rap song (or any other kind).

Cue cards with important information could be used to help the audience.

Individual Work

After viewing all the presentations, each student completes the Prime Ministers Presentation Response Sheet on the Student Handout.

The class set of completed Prime Ministers Presentation Response Sheets should be presented, shared and discussed in a form that suits class needs and resources.

Possible Extension

- Students can write a short speculative paper on what qualities they would show if they were prime minister, and what actions they would take in governing Canada.

Notes on Enriching this Activity
