



## Was the Canadian Dream a Myth or a Reality?

In this overarching critical challenge, students determine the degree to which the dreams that immigrants had of Canada matched the realities they encountered once here. Students (in groups of two to four) complete a three-panel display. Panel one (“Creating the Dream”) focuses on how the image of Canada was shaped by push factors as well as pull factors, the latter of which included marketing by Canadians. Panel two (“Confronting Reality”) depicts the realities faced by people newly arrived to Canada. Panel three (“Completing the Dream”) evaluates the degree to which immigrants were successful at realizing their dreams and suggests the most important factors that contributed to their success. Five critical challenges guide students’ examinations of primary documents as they complete their panel displays:

1. **Shaping Dreams:** Which push or pull factors contributed the most to shaping immigrants’ dreams?
2. **Marketing Canada:** How effective was the marketing of Canada in shaping the dreams of immigrants?
3. **The Great Canadian Ad Scam:** To what degree was Canada accurately portrayed by those who marketed it?
4. **Supports and Barriers to Realizing Dreams:** What were the two most important factors that contributed to immigrants realizing their dreams? What were the two greatest barriers?
5. **Dreams Realized or Shattered?:** Which immigrants were most likely to realize their dreams?

### Overall Expectations

- Develop an understanding of the degree to which push and pull factors shaped immigrants’ images of Canada
- Determine the degree to which these images of Canada aligned with reality
- Identify the most significant factors that led to immigrant dreams being realized or disappointed
- Make reasoned judgments supported by available evidence

[Complete list of historical sources](#)

## Critical Challenge 1

### Shaping Dreams

Create three headlines -- that might have appeared in a newspaper of the assigned time period -- that clearly reflect the push or pull factors that contributed most to shaping immigrants' dreams as they left their homelands for Canada.

### Historical Sources

### Synopsis

This critical challenge invites students to create headlines that accurately reflect the most significant push and pull factors that shaped the dreams of those moving to Canada. By examining primary source materials, students will uncover a range of factors that shaped immigrant dreams. The headlines created in this exercise can be used as part of panel one of their displays, "Creating the Dream."

### Suggested Activities

**Step 1:** Inform students that several factors influenced people's desires to leave their homelands and rebuild their lives in Canada. Often these factors contributed to defining their dreams of their new life. Immigrants may have been searching for freedom from persecution, from poverty, or from oppression. All of these are push factors that drove people from their homes. In some cases, the promise of free land, a sense of adventure, or economic opportunities motivated people to uproot themselves. These are pull factors that drew immigrants to Canada.

**Step 2:** Provide students with a variety of primary documents that discuss the motivations of immigrants for leaving their homelands for Canada. Instruct pairs to read a few of these documents and to list the various reasons, separately, on individual cards.

**Step 3:** Working collectively, ask the class to share their insights by grouping their cards together under headings such as "Freedom," "Economic Opportunity," etc.

**Step 4:** Students individually create three effective headlines based on the clusters created by the class. The headlines should capture the most powerful factors that led people to leave their homelands for Canada.

## Critical Challenge 2

### Marketing Canada

Assess the effectiveness of the way Canada was marketed. Compare the four most powerful images, slogans and/or statements used to extol the virtues of Canada with the dreams of immigrants who chose to come to this country.

#### Historical Sources

### Synopsis

In this critical challenge, students are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of government campaigns to market Canada. Students examine the relationship between the images, slogans and statements used to promote Canada and the dreams that immigrants had regarding Canada. The images, slogans and statements about Canada and the statements of immigrants that are gathered in this critical challenge can be used to create panel one of their final displays, "Creating the Dream."

### Suggested Activities

**Step 1:** Inform students that, during many periods in Canadian history, the government actively encouraged immigration to Canada through aggressive marketing campaigns in selected countries. These marketing campaigns sought to highlight the virtues of Canada in an effort to entice desired immigrants. In this challenge, students select four powerful images, slogans, and/or statements used by the government to market Canada. They then determine the effectiveness of these marketing efforts by evaluating the degree to which the marketing of Canada influenced the dreams that immigrants brought with them.

**Step 2:** Provide students with samples of marketing efforts (such as posters, letters and newspaper ads) that were used to attract immigrants. Using a fishbone graphic organizer (Document 2.1), ask students to identify six features of Canada that were marketed to immigrants. These six features can be recorded in the boxes on the fishbone.

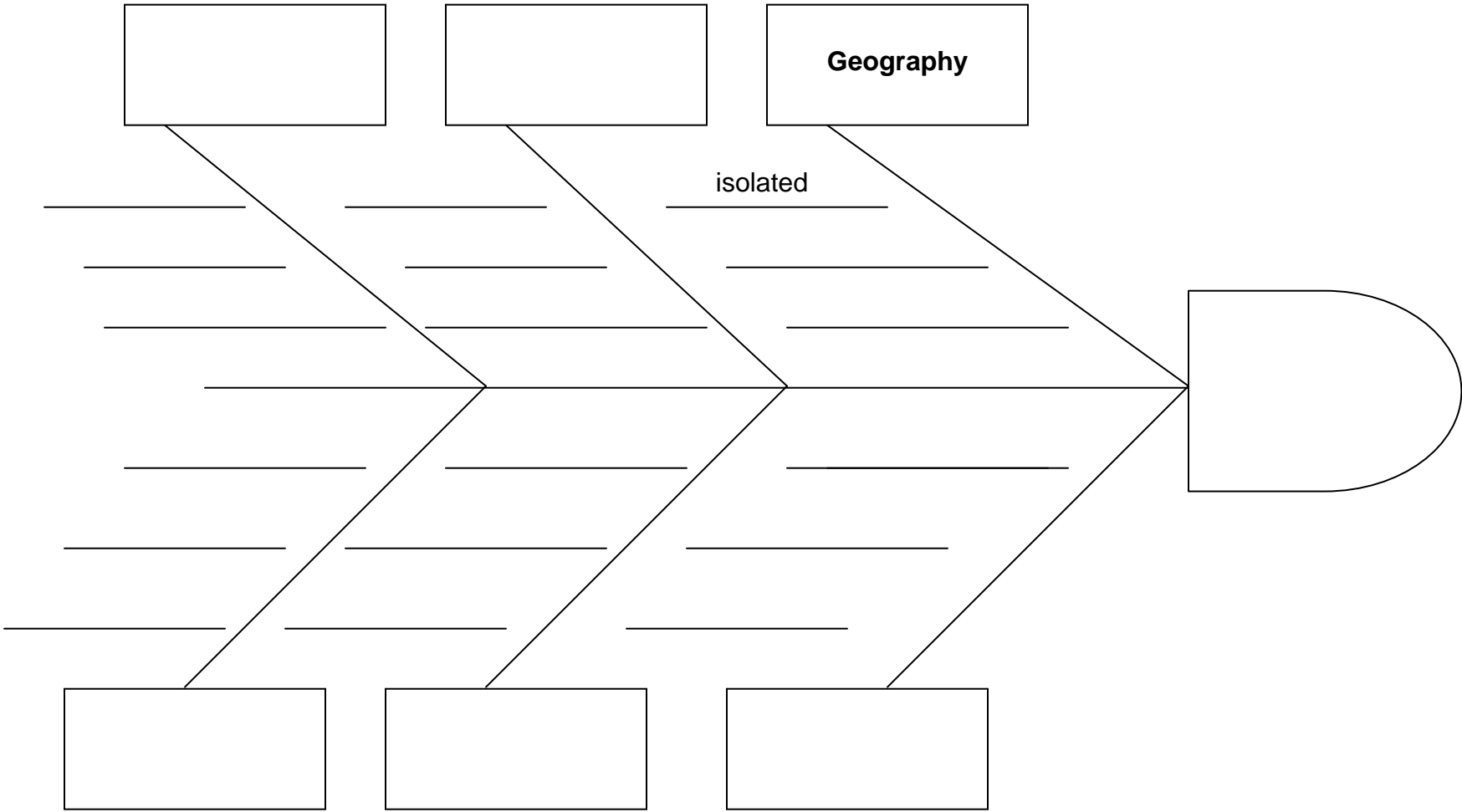
**Step 3:** For each feature, instruct students to find three specific examples of how this feature was "sold" to immigrants. Students are to record these examples on the lines of the fishbone.

**Step 4:** Invite students to compare the features of Canada that were marketed to immigrants with immigrants' expectations of Canada (see "Shaping Dreams"). Infer how effective the marketing of Canada was in shaping the dreams of immigrants.

**Step 5:** Instruct students to select four images, slogans or statements used in the marketing of Canada and, for each, find a quote from an immigrant that suggests these images, slogans or statements did or did not influence their dreams of Canada.

**Step 6:** Finally, students should create a headline for panel one of their displays that answers the question: How effective was the marketing of Canada in shaping the dreams of immigrants?

Document 2.1  
Fishbone Graphic Organizer



## Critical Challenge 3

### The Great Canadian Ad Scam

Create a visual that accurately captures the relationship between the image of Canada portrayed in marketing campaigns and the reality encountered by new immigrants to Canada.

#### Historical Sources

### Synopsis

This critical challenge invites students to consider the relationship between the images of Canada created by government marketing efforts and the realities encountered by new immigrants. Students will draw conclusions about the degree to which Canada was accurately portrayed by marketers.

### Suggested Activities

**Step 1:** Inform students that the purpose of this critical challenge is to have them assess the degree to which Canada was accurately portrayed by its marketers. They will need to consider whether marketing campaigns exaggerated certain aspects of life in Canada and avoided mentioning others. This challenge builds on the previous challenge, “Marketing Canada,” in which students considered how Canada was marketed. Now, they will compare this marketing to the realities encountered by immigrants.

**Step 2:** Provide students with primary documents (such as diaries and letters) that provide insight into the welcome immigrants received upon arrival, their perceptions of Canada once they arrived, and the initial challenges they faced. Instruct students, in pairs, to identify the two or three most significant challenges or insights into Canada identified in the primary documents. These could include immigrants’ reactions to the climate or geography, the economic opportunities available to them, and the welcome they received from other Canadians.

**Step 3:** Determine the degree to which immigrants were likely to have known about certain features of Canada from marketing done in their homelands. Features of life in Canada for students to consider include:

- racism
- harsh winters
- long distances between established communities and the land provided to immigrants

- difficulty of finding employment.

Students will need to carefully read their primary source materials in search of evidence.

**Step 4:** Invite students to share their findings with the class by stating the degree to which Canada was accurately marketed. Students should support their positions with evidence from the primary sources they consulted.

**Step 5:** Based on the conclusions they have drawn, students select three features of Canada from which to create a visual. Their projects will represent how each feature was portrayed in marketing and how these portrayals compared to the realities confronted by new arrivals to Canada.

## Critical Challenge 4

### Supports and Barriers to Realizing Dreams

Select four powerful statements from primary sources. Combined, these statements should clearly reflect the two most important factors affecting immigrants' realization of their dreams, as well as the two greatest barriers.

#### Historical Sources

### Synopsis

This critical challenge asks students to consider the factors that had the greatest impact on whether immigrants were able to realize their dreams. Considering a variety of factors, from race and religion to economic status, students will determine what most influenced the nature of the immigrant experience in Canada.

### Suggested Activities

**Step 1:** Remind students that immigrants from diverse backgrounds chose to make Canada their home and that they achieved their dreams of life in Canada with varying degrees of success. While some people flourished in their new home, others encountered barriers that either delayed the realization of their dreams or shattered them all together. Inform students that their challenge is to identify the two most important factors contributing to immigrant success and the two greatest barriers.

**Step 2:** Assign students primary documents to examine. Instruct them to look for evidence of what factors contributed to immigrant success in Canada (such as government support, community support, family support and economic opportunity). Instruct students to also look for the barriers or hurdles immigrants had to overcome (such as racism, poor land, harsh climate and isolation). To assist students in their analysis of the primary sources, ask them to complete the "Both Sides Now" template (Document 4.1).

**Step 3:** Students share their findings with the class. The teacher can compile the factors identified by students on a large version of the "Both Sides Now" template.

**Step 4:** Considering all the evidence compiled by the class, students individually arrive at a decision and provide reasons for their selection of the two most important factors in success and the two greatest barriers to success.

**Step 5:** Finally, students should select four powerful statements from the primary sources to support their conclusions. These statements can be incorporated into panel three of their displays.



## Document 4.1

Both Sides Now		
Evidence of Factors Contributing to Immigrant Success		Evidence of Factors Preventing Immigrant Success
	<p><b>Question:</b></p> <p>What were the two most important factors that contributed to immigrants realizing their dreams? What were to the two greatest barriers to realizing their dreams?</p>	
<b>Decision:</b>		
<b>Reasons:</b>		
<b>Powerful Statements:</b>		



## Critical Challenge 5

### Dreams Realized or Shattered?

Create profiles of the immigrants most and least likely to realize their dreams, considering economic status, religious background, education/skill level, race and gender.

#### Historical Sources

### Synopsis

Many new immigrants to Canada flourished in their new home but others faced significant challenges to realizing their dreams. Were the challenges faced by immigrants systemic barriers to success or were they merely the challenges everyone faces when starting out in another country? This critical challenge asks students to consider the nature of the most significant challenges immigrants faced in achieving their dreams to determine who was more likely and who was less likely to succeed. The profiles created for this challenge can be used on panel three of their final displays, "Dreams Realized?"

### Suggested Activities

**Step 1:** As the final activity, instruct students to reflect on the primary documents they have read and the conclusions they have drawn. Ask students to brainstorm a list of reasons why immigrants' dreams may not have been realized within their first 10 years in Canada. Invite students to create a profile of the immigrant most likely to succeed and a profile of the immigrant least likely to succeed. Students may wish to use the following headings to guide the creation of their profiles:

- gender
- religion
- social class
- economic status
- ethnicity
- occupation
- education
- family ties or relationships

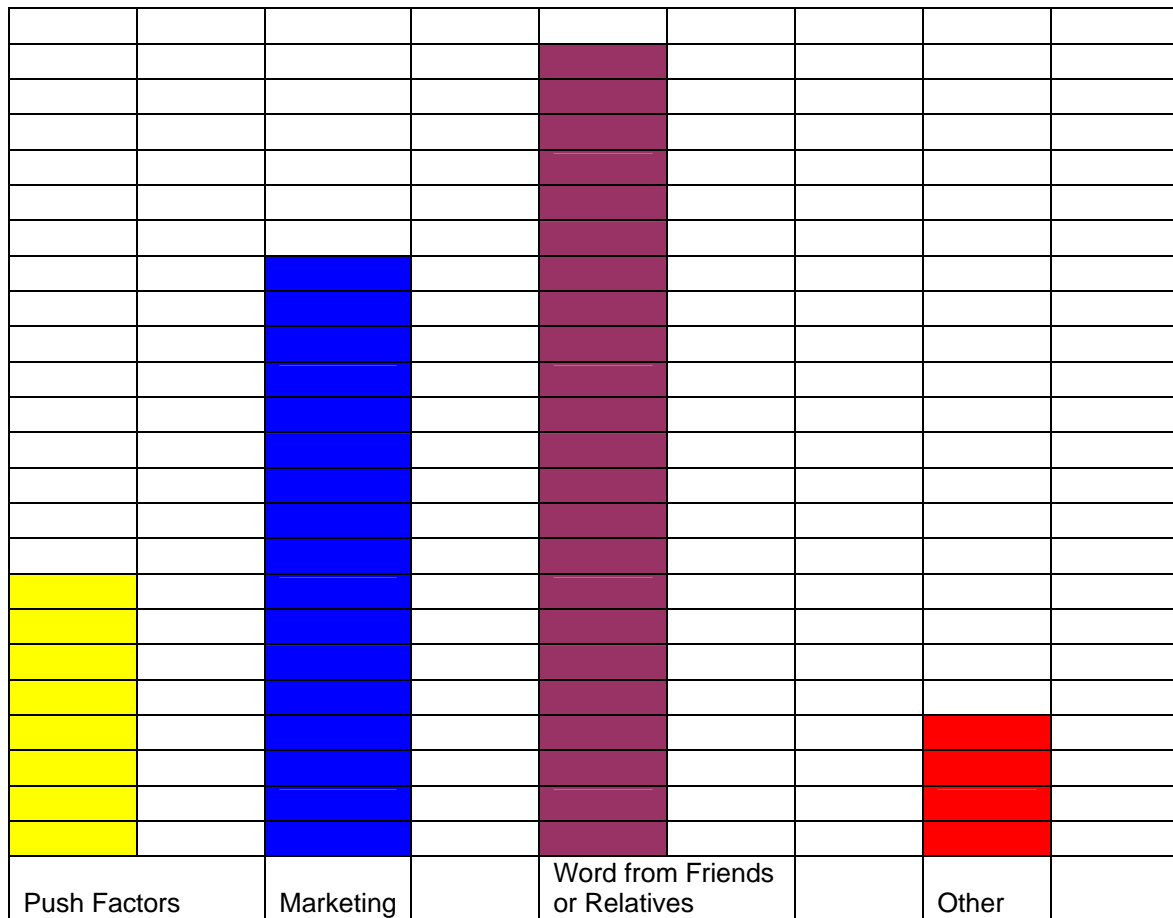
**Step 2:** Ask students to test their hypotheses by reflecting on the primary documents they have read and by reading other primary documents, looking for evidence that either supports or refutes the elements in their profiles. Students compare their profiles with what the primary sources tell them about the factors contributing to immigrant success or failure in Canada.

**Step 3:** Students should select or draw and label a relevant visual to illustrate their conclusions and place this on panel three of their displays, along with the profiles. Relevant visuals include: a cartoon, a poster, or a photograph.

## Panel 1

### Creating the Dream

Which factor contributed most to the images that immigrants formed of Canada: marketing, push factors at home, contact from friends or family who had already gone to Canada, or something else? Students may use the graph below to record the results they find in the [sources](#).



## Panel 2

### Confronting Reality

To what degree did the reality of Canada match the images of Canada that immigrants brought with them? Students may find evidence in the sources to support their choice.

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Exact Match	Close Match	Some Important Differences	Many Important Differences	Fraudulent Portrayal
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## Panel 3

### Dreams Realized?

To what degree did immigrants achieve the success they hoped for?



Dreams Realized



Dreams  
Partially Realized



Dreams Unrealized

Criteria that could be used to assess the effectiveness of the three-panel display include:

- Effectiveness at capturing the stages of dreams, realities, and adjustments
- Use of colour, space and design to communicate key ideas
- Accurateness of information presented on the panel
- Consistency of conclusions with evidence

## Culminating Critical Challenge

As students complete each of these critical challenges, they will gather and create the various components of their panel displays. When they have completed the challenges, students should prepare a sketch indicating how each element of the panels will fit into the whole, and how titles, subtitles and colour can best be used to create an effective display.

As well, the display is to include two “Dear Canada” letters that reflect the broad conclusions drawn by the student about the immigrant experience; one letter should capture the ideas of Canada that immigrants brought with them and the other should address the degree to which immigrants were able to realize their dreams. Openings for these letters might be: “Thank you, Canada, for ....” or “Shame on you, Canada, for ....” Issues for the students to consider when adopting an appreciative or accusatory tone could include:

- Did Canadians welcome or resist immigration?
- Did the Canadian government support or hinder the abilities of immigrants to adjust to Canada?
- Were the promises made by marketers of Canada consistent with the realities that immigrants experienced?
- Were new immigrants valued for their skills and talents?
- Were new immigrants treated with respect and dignity?

Students may be encouraged to adopt a persona -- such as a domestic, a mother of a young family, a child immigrant, or a farm labourer -- and write all letters from this person’s perspective.