

ASSESSING PROGRESS AND DECLINE IN A TIMELINE

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Activity Description: Assess historical events in a timeline in terms of progress and decline.

Historical Thinking Concept(s): Continuity and change

ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS

Launch the inquiry

- Explain to students that over time many aspects of our lives change but other aspects stay the same (continuity). Invite students to identify aspects of their lives (e.g., relationships, home life, school life, diet, hobbies, physical appearance) that have changed and remained the same since they began elementary school, and ask students to share these with their classmates.
- Inform students that change and continuity can be both positive and negative. Over time, change does not always lead to progress and continuity does not always lead to stagnation or decline.
- Ask students to identify an example of a change in their life that had both positive and negative outcomes. For example, getting older (change) resulted in more freedom (positive) but also led to more chores (negative). Ask students to share their examples.
- Invite students to identify an example of a continuity in their life that had both positive and negative outcomes. For example, every Friday night your family eats pizza (continuity), which is your favourite food (positive), but you haven't had the opportunity to try other types of food you might enjoy (negative). Ask students to share their examples.
- Explain to students that in this activity they are going to assess historical events in a timeline in terms of progress (positive) and decline (negative). The purpose of this activity is to help students understand that both continuity and change can have desirable and undesirable outcomes. For example, a coal-fired power plant provides electricity that improves the quality of life of a community (progress) and is also harmful for human health and the surrounding environment (decline).

Introduce and model thinking strategy

- Display one SIT card, read the text on the front and back of the card, and ask students the following inquiry question: Is this historical event an example of progress or decline? Invite students to share their conclusions, evidence, and reasoning.
- Distribute the Assessing progress and decline BLM to students and provide examples of different types of progress and decline
 - Economic progress or decline: Were people better or worse off in terms of wealth or the ability to generate wealth?
 - Legal progress or decline: Were people treated more or less fairly under the law? Did they gain or lose legal rights?
 - Political progress or decline: Did people have more or less influence in how political decisions were made?
 - Social progress or decline: Did people's quality of life and social standing improve or get worse?
- Explain that when assessing progress and decline it is important to consider the different types of positive and negative impacts the event had on different groups of people over time.
- Model how to use the Assessing progress and decline BLM to assess progress or decline for the historical event featured on the SIT card.

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ACTIVITY

INSTRUCTIONS

Practise thinking strategy and check understanding

- Distribute three SIT cards to students and ask them to organize the cards into a timeline, with the earliest event at the far left and most recent event at the far right. Direct them to leave plenty of space above and below the cards. Ask students to read the text on the front and back of the cards, and use the Assessing progress and decline BLM to assess whether the events on the cards are examples of progress, decline, or neither.
- Events that improved people's lives students should be moved above the timeline depending on the degree of progress (+1, +2, +3). The higher the progress rating, the higher up it will be moved on the timeline. Events that featured neither progress nor decline (0) should be left where they are, and events that worsened people's lives should be moved below the timeline depending on the degree of decline (-1, -2, -3).
- Invite students to share their conclusions about whether each historical event led to progress or decline, and their evidence and reasoning about why.
- Ask students to use the assessment criteria on the Assessing understanding of progress and decline BLM to self- or peer-assess their ability to assess historical events in terms of progress and decline. Invite students to share any questions or confusion they may have about progress and decline. Ask students to think about what they may have overlooked or what they might do differently next time.

Apply learning

- Select specific cards for students to assess in terms of progress and decline. For students with limited knowledge of the historical events featured on the cards, consider starting with a limited number of events, or choose events that students are already familiar with before introducing cards about new events.
- Ask students to organize the cards in chronological order using one of three game play options (competitive, cooperative, individual) <https://tc2.ca/sit-game-play/>
- Invite students to assess each event in terms of progress and decline and to record their ratings and evidence on the Assessing progress and decline BLM. Remind students to move their cards above or below their timeline depending on the degree of progress or decline.
- Teachers can use the prompts in the Supporting teacher assessment: Assessing progress and decline document to make observations about students' learning, initiate conversations with students about their learning, and assess students' demonstrations of learning.

Reflect and assess thinking

- Invite students to reflect on the following questions and discuss with others:
 - What overall conclusions can you make about progress and decline in your timeline?
 - Which events featured the greatest progress and the greatest decline?
 - Were your progress and decline ratings more similar or different from other students?
 - Why were your ratings different than others?
 - How has your thinking about progress and decline changed as a result of this activity?
 - Why is understanding progress and decline important for understanding history?

Extend understanding

- Teachers can use the following strategies to extend students' understanding of progress and decline:
 - Ask students to assess historical events they have not learned about.
 - Increase the number of events that students are asked to assess.
 - Have students work alone, in pairs, or in small groups.
 - Invite students to select an ethnic (e.g., Indigenous), gender (e.g., women), or social group (working class) and assess progress and decline of multiple events from that perspective.

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Assessing progress and decline

- Economic progress or decline: Were people better or worse off in terms of wealth or the ability to generate wealth?
- Legal progress or decline: Were people treated more or less fairly under the law? Did they gain or lose legal rights?
- Political progress or decline: Did people have more or less influence in how political decisions were made?
- Social progress or decline: Did people's quality of life and social standing improve or get worse?

Historical event	In what ways and for whom was the event progress?	In what ways and for whom was the event decline?	Overall assessment To what extent did the event improve or worsen people's lives?
	Evidence:	Evidence:	+3 +2 +10 -1 -2 -3 Evidence:
	Evidence:	Evidence:	+3 +2 +10 -1 -2 -3 Evidence:
	Evidence:	Evidence:	+3 +2 +10 -1 -2 -3 Evidence:
	Evidence:	Evidence:	+3 +2 +10 -1 -2 -3 Evidence:
	Evidence:	Evidence:	+3 +2 +10 -1 -2 -3 Evidence:
	Evidence:	Evidence:	+3 +2 +10 -1 -2 -3 Evidence:

Assessing understanding of progress and decline

I can explain what progress and decline are and why they are important for understanding history.

Evidence:

I've got it  I'm still working on it

I can identify positive (progress) and negative (decline) aspects of historical events.

Evidence:

I've got it  I'm still working on it

I can explain how historical events have positive (progress) and negative (decline) impacts on different groups of people.

Evidence:

I've got it  I'm still working on it

I can make reasoned ratings about the positive (progress) and negative (decline) aspects of historical events, supported by relevant evidence.

Evidence from sample answer:

I've got it  I'm still working on it

Supporting teacher assessment: Assessing progress and decline

The table below provides suggestions to support teachers in making observations about student learning, initiating conversations with students, and assessing student learning.

Observation What teachers should look and listen for when observing students.	Conversation Questions for teachers to initiate conversations with students.	Demonstrations of Learning Criteria for assessing student learning products or demonstrations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do students identify positive (progress) and negative (decline) aspects of historical events? • Do students explain how historical events have positive (progress) and negative (decline) impacts on different groups of people? • Do students make reasonable ratings about positive (progress) and negative (decline) aspects of historical events supported by relevant evidence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are progress and decline? • Are progress and decline important for understanding history? • What are the positive (progress) and negative (decline) aspects of this historical event? • Would all groups have considered this event as progress or decline? • What evidence supports your progress and decline ratings? • Are your ratings justified by the evidence you provided? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students identify positive (progress) and negative (decline) aspects of historical events. • Students explain how historical events have positive (progress) and negative (decline) impacts on different groups of people. • Students' ratings about positive (progress) and negative (decline) aspects of historical events are reasonable and supported by relevant evidence.