

In this sample unit, students undertake activities involving selected primary and secondary sources to support six critical thinking tasks—one for each of the six foundational concepts of historical thinking.

Assessing Simon Fraser’s legacy

The tasks in this unit focus on Simon Fraser’s exploration of the Fraser River in 1808. For demonstration purposes, we have designed the activities as though the lessons are taught in the order in which they are presented. When using these lessons with a class, you may want to select from among them or re-order them. However, when adapting these lessons, ensure that students have the tools they need to address the tasks presented to them.

Historical Concept	Critical Challenge
Historical significance	<i>What was the most significant event in Fraser’s journey?</i>
Evidence and interpretation	<i>Based on the additional sources, propose at least five revisions to the account of Fraser’s journey to reflect your conclusion about the expedition.</i>
Continuity and change	<i>To what extent did Fraser change as a result of his experiences?</i> <i>To what extent did Indigenous reactions to Europeans change as a result of their experiences with Fraser?</i>
Historical perspective	<i>Why did various Indigenous peoples respond to Fraser as they did in the three identified incidents?</i>
Cause and consequence	<i>Based on their experiences with Fraser, how might Chief Whattlekainum and his people react to further visits from these “sky-people”?</i>
Ethical judgment	<i>How should Simon Fraser be remembered—as a gifted negotiator or a lucky bully?</i>

Launch the unit inquiry

Introduce the overarching unit task

Tell students that Simon Fraser was a famous Canadian explorer. Among other forms of recognition, a major river and a university have been named after him. Display the C. W. Jefferys drawing, *Simon Fraser descending the Fraser River, 1808* (Student Activity Sheet #1) on a projector and use *Map of the Fraser River* (Student Activity Sheet #2) to trace Fraser’s route. Indicate that in 1808 Fraser travelled by water and over land for approximately 800 kilometres on his round trip from Fort George (now Prince George, British Columbia) to what is now Point Grey in Vancouver. The ultimate point of the activities is to determine the contemporary reputation or legacy Simon Fraser deserves. *How should Simon Fraser be remembered—as a gifted negotiator or a lucky bully?* After a brief discussion of students’ preliminary impressions, explain that answering this question requires students to learn the facts of his journey and think through a number of critical tasks.

Critical Task 1: Historical significance

Introduce the first critical challenge

Invite students to imagine they have been asked to select a single scene for use in creating a Heritage Minute capturing a significant incident during Fraser's journey in 1808. Explain that their critical thinking task is to decide the following question: *What was the most significant event in Fraser's journey?*

Explain or review the following (or other) criteria for determining historical significance:

- the event was *prominent* at the time (Was it a noticeable event then?);
- it had notable *consequences* (Did it affect the rest of the trip and beyond the trip?);
- it influenced the *subsequent profile of the event* (Is it emblematic? Does it reveal something crucial about Fraser or the journey?).

Introduce criteria for significance

If students have not worked with these criteria, invite them to identify several significant events in their own lives and explain if and how each criterion applies. You may want to use the chart *Comparing significance* (Student Activity Sheet #3) to structure this task. Ask students to list the events in order of significance and to explain their ranking. The assessment rubric found in *Assessing the rankings* (Assessment Sheet #4) may be used to provide feedback to students.

Distribute *Fraser's journey* (Briefing Sheet #5). As students work in small groups to read the briefing sheet, ask them to circle or underline any events that may be significant about Simon Fraser's journey. When finished this task, students are to summarize six incidents on the chart, *Looking for significance* (Student Activity Sheet #6) and explain each event's significance, referring to the appropriate criteria. For example, in the first paragraph, the briefing sheet states: *Fraser decided the Indigenous people he*

Student Activity Sheet #3
Comparing significance

Assessment Sheet #4
Assessing the rankings

Identify relevant evidence	Well-developed		Underdeveloped	
	Identifies five key pieces of evidence with clear explanations for each criterion.	Identifies three pieces of evidence for each criterion, but evidence is not clearly explained.	Identifies two pieces of evidence for each criterion, but evidence is not clearly explained.	Identifies one piece of evidence for each criterion.
Explanation:				
Justifies rankings	Justifies for each ranking with a clear explanation of the event's significance.	Justifies for each ranking with a clear explanation.	Justifies for each ranking with a clear explanation.	Justifies for each ranking with a clear explanation.
Explanation:				

Event | Event

Event	Event

Explanation:

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Briefing Sheet #5
Fraser's journey

Student Activity Sheet #6
Looking for significance

Describe six events and explain their significance in light of the following factors:

- Was prominent at the time (Was it a noticeable event then?)
- Had notable consequences (Did it affect the rest of the trip and beyond the trip?)
- Influenced subsequent events (Is it emblematic or revealing about Fraser?)

Summary of incident	Possible significance

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had met were correct in saying that the river was not passable for canoes. On June 10, they built a scaffold to store their canoes and buried the equipment they could not carry with them. Fraser and his men set out on foot, carrying packs weighing 80 pounds (36 kilograms) each.

This statement might be recorded as follows:

Summary of incident	Possible significance
<p>Fraser decides to leave his canoes and equipment behind and to proceed on foot.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Very little prominence at the time, although he may have agonized over the decision;</i> • <i>Notable consequences: for the rest of his journey, Fraser would be dependent on Indigenous peoples for any more canoes he needed.</i> • <i>Revealing: shows Fraser's willingness to heed the advice of Indigenous peoples.</i>

Select the most significant incident

Once students have identified six incidents, each group is to select one or two that appear more significant than the rest and prepare a brief justification. Discuss each group's recommendations and try to reach consensus as a class on three candidates for the most significant event of Fraser's journey. Individually, students are to assess and rank order each of the short-listed events. You may want to use the chart on Student Activity Sheet #3 to structure this task and the rubric on Assessment Sheet #4 to assess student responses. Ask students to write a paragraph explaining which event is most significant, considering its intended use in a Heritage Minute.

Discuss theories about Fraser's journey

Critical Task 2: Evidence and interpretation

Explain to students that historians do more than present facts; they construct historical narratives that explain events. When historians use information to support a historical conclusion, it becomes evidence. This means any particular piece of information about the past becomes evidence only in response to a historical theory or issue. Brainstorm possible overall conclusions that explain how Fraser was able to complete his exploration of the river. These may include:

- Simon Fraser was successful in his journey because he was able to depend on Indigenous peoples for food, directions, and support.
- Simon Fraser relied more on his diplomatic skills than force to earn the co-operation of Indigenous peoples.
- Simon Fraser's arrogance, assertiveness and self-assuredness enabled him to descend the river that bears his name.
- It was a very dangerous mission, and Fraser was lucky to return home without injury to himself or others.

Present the additional sources

Draw students' attention to the fact that they have derived their knowledge of Fraser's trip exclusively from one secondary account (Briefing Sheet #5). Discuss the problems of doing this (for example, facts are limited, it is difficult to tell whether the account is accurate, it may represent only one perspective). After a short discussion, distribute three additional sources:

- selected excerpts from *Fraser's diary* (Briefing Sheet #7)
- a *primary account by Jules Quesnel*, one of Fraser's lieutenants on this trip (Briefing Sheet #8)
- a *secondary twentieth-century textbook account* by Tony Cashman (Briefing Sheet #9).

Explain to students that the words "Indians" or "Natives" often appear in documents written at this time. While these terms appear in historical documents, these terms are generally viewed as inaccurate and disrespectful.

Introduce the next critical challenge

Explain that the students' next critical thinking task is as follows:

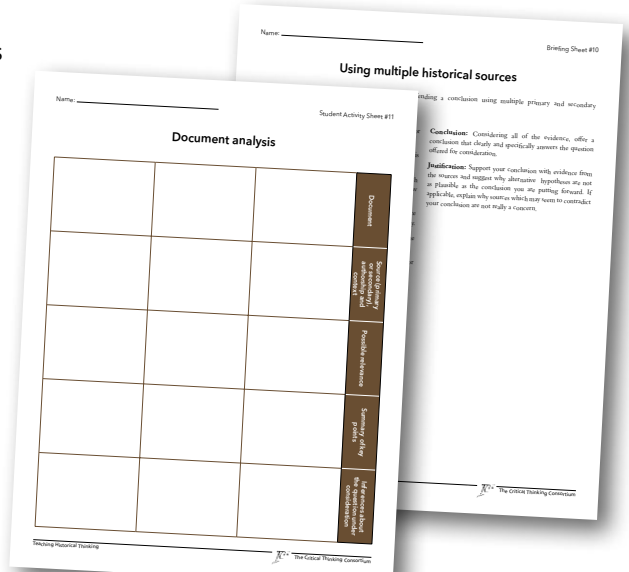
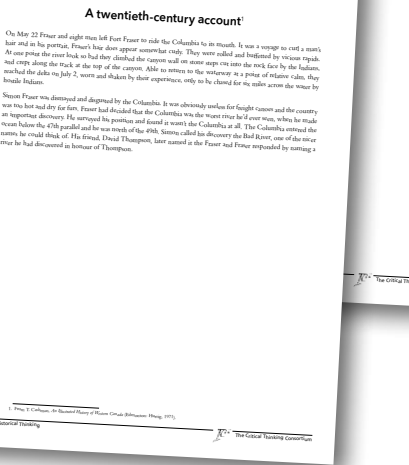
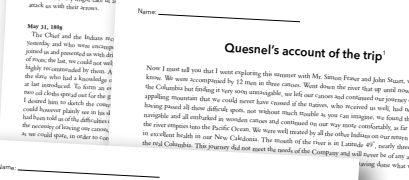
Based on the additional sources, propose at least five revisions to the account of Fraser's journey to reflect your conclusion about the expedition.

Explain that students will be expected to read the additional sources, reach a conclusion that is supported by the evidence, and then propose at least five changes to the initial account of the journey presented on Briefing Sheet #5.

Analyze the additional sources

To support students in their analysis of the additional resources, review the following guidelines found in *Using multiple historical sources* (Student Activity Sheet #10) and suggest that students use the chart in *Document analysis* (Student Activity Sheet #11) to record their ideas:

- **Type of source:** Identify whether each is a primary or secondary source.



Look for corroborating or contradictory evidence

- **Summary of ideas:** Paraphrase or list in point form what is actually reported in each document.
- **Authorship:** Consider who authored or created each document and what is known about the person or group. How might this affect the information presented?
- **Context:** Try to identify a purpose and an intended audience for each document. Consider how this might affect credibility.
- **Inferences:** Draw inferences from each source about the question you are trying to answer.
- **Corroboration:** Check whether any of the sources support or challenge the inferences drawn.
- **Conclusion:** Considering all of the evidence, offer a conclusion that clearly and specifically answers the question offered for consideration.
- **Justification:** Support your conclusion with evidence from the sources and suggest why alternative hypotheses are not as plausible as the conclusion you are putting forward. If applicable, explain why sources that may seem to contradict your conclusion are not really a problem.

After students have completed a preliminary analysis of the three additional sources, encourage them to look for corroboration and inconsistencies between these and the initial account. As an example, draw students' attention to the discrepancies in the reported number of people on the trip:

- Quesnel states: *Now I must tell you that I went exploring this summer with Mr. Simon Fraser and John Stuart, whom I believe you know. We were accompanied by 12 men in three canoes.*
- Fraser's diary for May 22, 1808, offers a different number: *Having made every necessary preparation for a long voyage, we embarked at 5 o'clock A.M. in four canoes at Fraser's River [probably the Nechako River]. Our crew consisted of nineteen men, two Indians, Mr. Stuart, Mr. Quesnel and myself, in all twenty-four.*
- Cashman's account is different yet again: *On May 22 Fraser and eight men left Fort Fraser to ride the Columbia to its mouth.*

Discuss how such confusion could occur over what seems to be a straightforward piece of information. Which account should be believed? Invite students to suggest which source overall seems most credible and why.

Direct students in groups to propose approximately six additions or changes to the account provided on Briefing Sheet #5 that make the account more accurate and supports students' conclusions about Fraser's journey. You may want students to use the chart *Revising the account* (Student Activity Sheet #12) to identify their proposed changes in the left-hand column and record their evidence for these recommendations in the right-hand column. Arrange for students to share their recommendations.

Propose their recommendations

Revising the account

Proposed conclusion about Fraser's journey: _____

Additions or changes to the account	Evidence to support recommendations

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Critical Task 3: Continuity and change

Introduce
the next
critical
challenge

Suggest to students that first encounters between peoples can set the pattern of relationships for many years to come. How Fraser dealt with the challenges presented to him by his contact and dependency on the peoples he met was crucial to the success of his journey. In this lesson students will consider two questions:

To what extent did Fraser change as a result of his experiences?

To what extent did Indigenous reactions to Europeans change as a result of their experiences with Fraser?

Construct
start-of-trip
description
of Fraser

Divide students into groups to identify at least five traits that describe Fraser at the beginning of his journey. Students may use evidence from the opening descriptions of any of the sources and also from subsequent comments that implied he was changed by certain occurrences. Distribute copies of the chart *Before and after descriptions* (Student Activity Sheet #13) for students to record the traits at the start of the trip and their evidence for attributing these traits to Fraser. Encourage students to provide more than one piece of evidence for each trait. You may want to use the rubric found in *Assessing the descriptions* (Assessment Sheet #14) to provide students with feedback on their responses. Invite groups to share and discuss their findings with the class.

The top sheet, 'Before and after descriptions', is a table with two columns: 'Before the trip (start)' and 'Supporting evidence'. The bottom sheet, 'Assessing the descriptions', is a rubric with four columns: 'Exemplary', 'Good', 'Satisfactory', and 'Remedial'. It includes sections for 'Revealing details of the descriptions', 'Possible explanations for identifying changes and comments', and 'Explanation'.

Construct
end-of-trip
description
of Fraser

When students have shared their findings, and, if desired, revised their description of Fraser at the start of his journey, direct each group to develop an end-of-journey profile. Encourage students to look for differences in Fraser, but also to note where certain traits have remained constant throughout the journey. Direct students to use the bottom half of Student Activity Sheet #13 to record the traits and supporting evidence. Student Activity Sheet #14 may be used to assess these responses. Again provide an opportunity for students to share their findings with others in the class.

Summarize
findings
about Fraser

Ask students to discuss their conclusions to the following question:

To what extent did Fraser change as a result of his experiences?

Present the
second task

Explain to the students that their concluding task in this lesson is to address the following question:

To what extent did Indigenous reactions to Europeans change as a result of their experiences with Fraser?

Prepare descriptions of Indigenous reactions

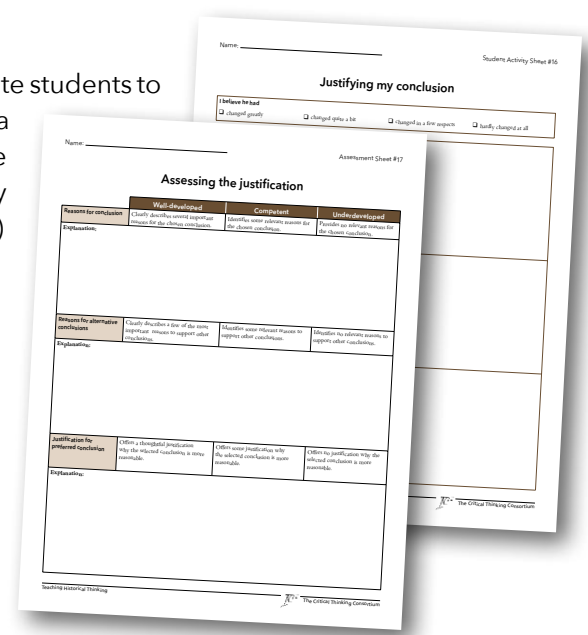
Invite students to construct a start-of-trip description of Indigenous reactions to Fraser. Organize students into groups of five. Arrange for them to re-read all of the accounts of Fraser's journey (Briefing Sheets #5, 7, 8 and 9) as well as *An Indigenous account* (Briefing Sheet #15). Distribute copies of the chart *Before and after descriptions* (Briefing Sheet #13) and invite students to record the reactions of the various Indigenous peoples from the beginning of the journey until Fraser reaches the river's delta and the Musqueam people.

When students have shared their descriptions, direct each group to develop a return visit description of the reactions of the Indigenous peoples. Encourage students to note consistencies and changes among reactions towards Fraser (and Europeans) on his return trip to Fort George. Students should use the bottom half of Student Activity Sheet #13 to record their observations and supporting evidence. Assessment Sheet #14 may be used to assess these responses. Again provide an opportunity for students to share their findings with others in the class.



Summarize their findings

Based on their comparative descriptions invite students to prepare a one-page response that includes a clear conclusion about the extent of change in Indigenous reactions (for example, they changed greatly, they hardly changed at all) and to explain with reference to specific evidence why they have reached this conclusion and not other conclusions. You may want to use the chart *Justifying my conclusion* (Student Activity Sheet #16) to structure this activity and the rubric found in *Assessing the justification* (Assessment Sheet #17) to assess student responses.



Critical Task 4: Historical perspective

Introduce
the next
critical
challenge

Remind students that when studying historical events, we want to understand why people (as individuals and groups) acted as they did. To do this, we must learn about their motivations or intentions and also about the circumstances, cultural beliefs, and societal values that would likely have influenced them. Select three events from any of the accounts of Fraser's journey. These might include the following:

- twelve hundred members of an Indigenous community (at what is now Lytton) shook Fraser's hand;
- Indigenous people (near what is now Hope) refused to lend him a canoe;
- Indigenous people in canoes shouted and swung their clubs but did not attack Fraser's group.

Present students with the following question:

Why did various Indigenous peoples respond to Fraser as they did in these three incidents?

Brainstorm
possible
explanations

As a class or in groups, invite students to conjecture possible actions for the behaviour of the Indigenous people in the three incidents (for example, perhaps their motivation for shaking hands was friendship, politeness, curiosity, or deference to strangers). Encourage students to be as specific as possible (for example, instead of saying simply that the Indigenous people wanted to be friendly, explain what might evoke this desire). Direct students to look for broader economic, cultural, and religious factors to explain why they acted in these ways. Invite students to identify evidence that might support each proposed explanation. You may want students to use the chart found in *Explaining their actions* (Student Activity Sheet #18) to structure this activity.

The activity sheet is titled "Explaining their actions" and includes a name line and "Student Activity Sheet #18". It contains three identical sections for "Incident #1", "Incident #2", and "Incident #3". Each section has a table with two columns: "Possible explanation" and "Evidence".

Incident #1	Possible explanation	Evidence

Incident #2	Possible explanation	Evidence

Incident #3	Possible explanation	Evidence

Consider an
Indigenous
account

Draw students' attention to the fact that many of the sources of information about Fraser's trip have been recorded by people of European ancestry. Assign students, in pairs, to reread the view of Fraser's trip found in *An Indigenous account* (Briefing Sheet #15).

Decide on
the most
plausible
explanation

After accumulating evidence to support each explanation, invite students to determine the major motivation or factor that explains why the Indigenous people acted as they did in each of the three identified incidents. Remind students that the major influence they propose must be supported by the historical evidence and must plausibly be seen to be more influential than other factors. Ask students to write a paragraph for each incident in which they justify their conclusion in light of these two criteria.

Critical Task 5: Cause and consequence

Introduce the critical challenge

In a previous briefing sheet (Briefing Sheet #15), students read descriptions of Chief Whattlekainum and his people's perspectives on their interactions with Fraser and his men. Using this as a starting point, invite students to consider the following question:

Based on their experiences with Fraser, how might Chief Whattlekainum and his people react to further visits from these "sky-people"?

Brainstorm possible effects

As a class or in groups, invite students to conjecture possible effects of their initial encounter on Indigenous peoples' attitudes to Europeans. Encourage students to be as specific as possible about likely consequences. Direct students to look at broader factors (for example, social, economic, and religious or spiritual factors) that explain why it might produce this effect. Invite students to identify supporting evidence for each predicted reaction to a subsequent visit by Europeans.

Decide on the most likely consequence

After accumulating evidence to support each scenario, invite students to determine the most likely response of Indigenous peoples to subsequent visits. Ask students to write a paragraph justifying their anticipated scenario in light of two criteria:

- It is consistent with the accepted facts.
- It is plausible, given what is known generally about the people and the time.

Critical Task 6: Ethical judgment

Introduce the culminating critical challenge

Introduce the final critical thinking question:

How should Simon Fraser be remembered—as a gifted negotiator or a lucky bully?

Explain that this question invites students to use all of the information and insights accumulated in the previous activities to develop a position on how Fraser deserves to be remembered in history. Does he warrant the honours that have been bestowed upon him? Students' overall judgment should take into account varying perspectives, including Simon Fraser's, Indigenous perspectives, and our own perspective on his lasting accomplishments and shortcomings.

Introduce criteria for judgment

Discuss with students the criteria to consider when formulating their assessment of Fraser:

- core values we currently admire in leaders and heroes;
- values that may have prevailed in the historical period.

To help students think about each of these criteria, briefly discuss the following questions:

- As a person of his time, what kind of assessment would we offer?
- Exclusively considering current standards, how admirable do his actions appear today?

Introduce the task

Announce to students that they will be expected to explain their position by participating in a U-shaped discussion. This strategy offers an alternative to the traditional two-sided debate. Instead of an adversarial either/or format, direct students to formulate a position along a continuum from talented diplomat to lucky bully. Allow time for students to develop a precise position on the reputation that Fraser deserves. You may want to invite students to use *Self-assessment of discussion* (Assessment Sheet #19) to help them prepare for the discussion.

Self-assessment of discussion

Assessment Sheet #19

	Exemplary	Good	Satisfactory	Developing	Remedial
Historical knowledge • accurate use of historic facts	I am able to refer to some present facts, dates, with accuracy.	I am able to refer to relevant facts, most dates with accuracy.	I am able to refer to relevant facts, usually with accuracy.	I am able to refer to a limited number of relevant facts.	I am able to refer to one or no relevant and accurate facts.
Open-mindedness • open to considering a variety of issues • willing to rethink previous based on new evidence or argument	I discuss carefully consider all viewpoints presented.	I really consider most viewpoints presented.	I occasionally consider a variety of viewpoints presented.	I seldom consider other viewpoints.	I don't or never consider other viewpoints.
Reasoned judgment • am willing to discuss and/or defend a position • consider others when making a decision	I am able to discuss and/or defend a position while evidence or argument is relevant.	I usually consider the position while evidence or argument is relevant.	I occasionally consider the position while evidence or argument is relevant.	I seldom consider the position while evidence or argument is relevant.	I don't or never consider the position while evidence or argument is relevant.

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Hold the U-shaped discussion

Arrange the class in a U-shape. Students with polar views (either strongly endorsing Fraser or very critical of Fraser) seat themselves at either tip of the U; students with mixed opinions sit at appropriate spots along the rounded part. Begin by asking students at each tip of the U to state their position and offer a few reasons only. If there is an imbalance in strong support for one side or the other, locate yourself (temporarily) in a polar position to get the discussion going. Alternate from side to side, as students from all parts of the U offer their views. Stress that students are not to try to convince others, but to explain why the position they are sitting in is the most defensible one for them. At several stages in the discussion, encourage students to physically move along the spectrum if they have heard reasons that cause them to shift their intellectual position on the issue. The goal of the U-shaped discussion is to encourage students to endorse positions provisionally and to listen to others in an attempt to figure out the most defensible personal stance along a continuum of possibilities. Invite students to use Assessment Sheet #19 to self-assess their performance, and you may want to use *Assessing a U-shaped discussion* (Assessment Sheet #20) to assess this activity.

Assessment Sheet #20

Use the following scale to write student performance: 4 = Exemplary 3 = Good 2 = Satisfactory 1 = Developing R = Reasonable

Student Names	Background knowledge - process the information - assess the reliability of sources	Open-mindedness - open to alternative views or views - willing to rethink own and partner's stand on one side of an argument	Reasoned judgment - use evidence to reach an informed decision - consider reasons when making a decision
Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R
Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R
Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R
Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R
Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R
Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R
Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R
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Comments	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R	4 3 2 1 R

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Concluding essay

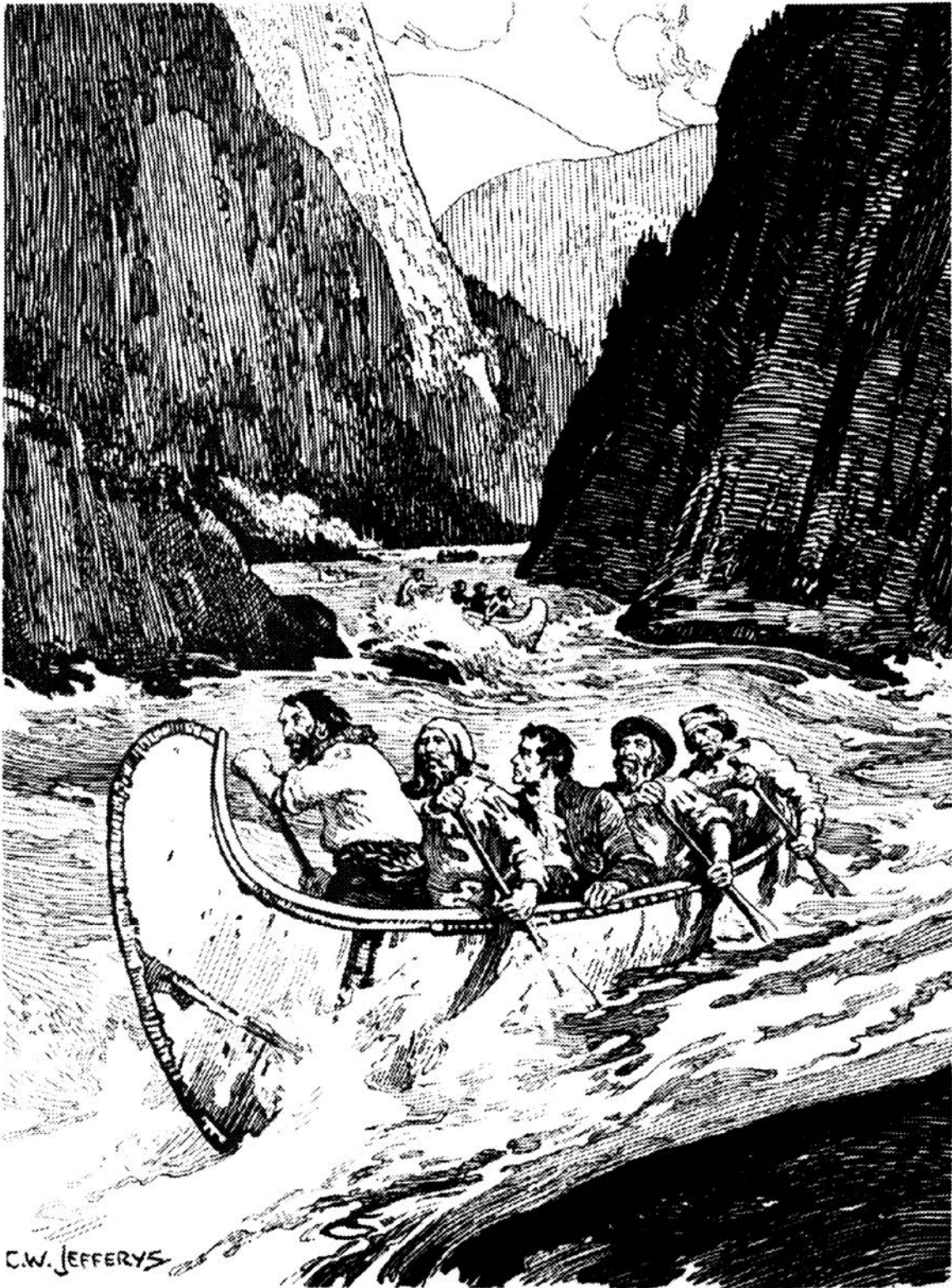
OPTIONAL: If desired, direct students to prepare a short essay justifying their precise position on the issue. Encourage students to address possible counter-arguments that they may have encountered during the U-shaped discussion.

Extension

Apply to other explorers

Use some of the activities suggested here to guide students' inquiries into other European explorers of Canada. Assign groups of students to research and assess the achievements of a particular explorer both from the explorer's perspective and from the perspective of those who travelled with or encountered the explorer. Each group is to share its findings with the rest of the class, which then considers who was the most admirable Canadian explorer.

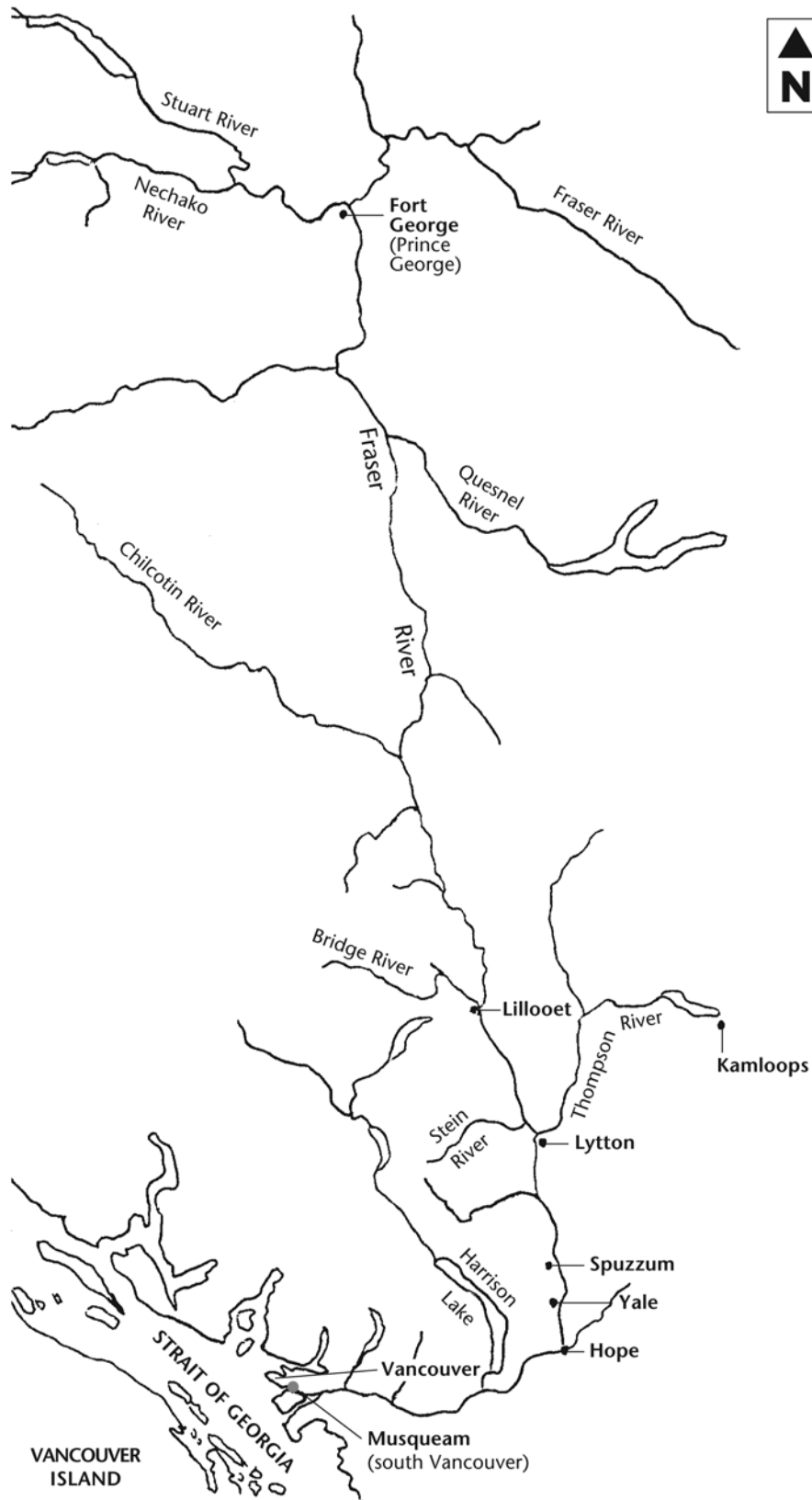
Simon Fraser descending the Fraser River, 1808



C.W. JEFFERYS

From the Imperial Oil Collection

Map of the Fraser River



Comparing significance

	Event	Event	Event
<p>Prominence at the time</p> <p>Immediate recognition: Was it noticed at the time as having importance?</p> <p>Duration: How long did it exist or operate?</p>			
<p>Consequences</p> <p>Magnitude of impact: How deeply felt or profound was its impact?</p> <p>Scope of impact: How widespread was its impact?</p> <p>Lasting nature of impact: How long-lasting were its effects?</p>			
<p>Subsequent profile</p> <p>Remembered: Has it been memorialized?</p> <p>Revealing: Does it inform our understanding of a historical issue? (Is it emblematic of a condition or period?)</p>			

Ranking	Event	Explanation
1st		
2nd		
3rd		

Assessing the rankings

	Well-developed	Competent	Underdeveloped
Identifies relevant evidence	Identifies a few key pieces of relevant evidence for each criterion.	Identifies obvious pieces of evidence for each criterion, but overlooks some important considerations.	Identifies very little evidence for each criterion.
Explanation:			
Justifies rankings	Justification for each ranking shows thoughtful consideration of the most important factors.	Justification for each ranking touches upon some key factors.	No plausible justification is given for any of the assigned rankings.
Explanation:			

Fraser's journey¹

In the early morning of May 28, 1808 Simon Fraser with twenty-three men in four canoes left Fort George. His instructions from his superiors at the North West Company were to find a route from the interior of British Columbia to the Pacific Ocean along the river which Fraser imagined to be the Columbia River. Day after day they encountered obstacles as they paddled down the river. The river was a continuous series of rapids and the carrying places were extremely dangerous or very long. The places where they had to carry their canoes to get around the rapids were so rough that a pair of moccasins was worn to shreds in one day. Fraser decided the Indians* he had met were correct in saying that the river was not passable for canoes. On June 10, they built a scaffold to store their canoes and buried the equipment they could not carry with them. Fraser and his men set out on foot, carrying packs weighing eighty pounds each. In his diary, Fraser wrote that they experienced “a good deal of fatigue and disagreeable walking” but he and his men continued on their journey.

Soon they met Indians who told them ten more days would bring them to the sea. One villager said that he had been to the sea and had seen “great canoes” and white men. When Fraser and his party proceeded, many of the locales walked with them. Two days later, at a large village (near present day Lillooet), Indians told them that the river was navigable from their village to the sea, whereupon Fraser bargained for two canoes. At another village (now Lytton) the people were so friendly that Fraser was called upon to shake hands with twelve hundred of them. In return he and his men were well fed and were able to get two additional canoes.

Despite what the Indians had said about the river being navigable, the explorers soon found their way blocked by numerous rapids. Two canoes were lost. More canoes were obtained from the natives*. During this time, the explorers toiled over the roughest country they had ever seen:

We had to pass over huge rocks assisted by the Indians . . . As for the road by land, we could scarcely make our way with even only our guns. I have been for a long period among the Rocky Mountains, but have never seen any thing like this country. It is so wild that I cannot find words to describe our situation at times. We had to pass where no human being should venture; yet in those places there is a regular footpath impressed, or rather indented upon the very rocks by frequent travelling.

Besides this, steps which are formed like a ladder . . . furnish a safe and convenient passage to the Natives; but we, who had not the advantage of their education and experience, were often in imminent danger when obliged to follow their example. [extract from Fraser's Journal]

At Spuzzum, Fraser was much impressed by a number of totem poles, each fifteen feet high and “carved in a curious but rude manner, yet pretty well proportioned.” Friendly Indians living in large frame houses presented them with roast salmon. Near where the town of Hope now stands, they were entertained at a large village where there was a huge community house built of cedar planks. Some Indians warned that the natives of the coast were “wicked” and would attack them, but Fraser would not alter his plan. When these Indians refused to lend him a canoe Fraser took one by force. For a short while canoes from the village followed them, their occupants waving weapons and shouting war songs, but Fraser and his men ignored them. Soon after, another group came at them “howling like wolves” and swinging war clubs, but they did not attack Fraser's group. Fraser ordered his men to paddle farther along to a second village, but the behaviour of the Indians forced them to turn back. On July 2, near Musqueam (what is now south Vancouver), Fraser decided to return up the river in order to secure provisions before attempting to resume his descent to the ocean. This was the farthest distance reached by the explorers. Fraser's reception by the natives he encountered on his return up the river was far from friendly—one group seized a canoe and began to pillage the baggage. Fraser forced a canoe from them and left a blanket in return. For several days hostile Indians followed them. They finally reached friendly villages and were guided over rough bridges and swaying ladders by natives who “went up and down these wild places with the same agility as sailors do on board a ship.”

Fraser finally arrived back at Fort George on August 6. Although Fraser had not accomplished his purpose of exploring the Columbia River, his voyage did clear up the confusion between the Fraser River and Columbia River that existed among European fur traders.

1. Adapted from M. G. Parks. Undated. “The descent of the Fraser River” in *Discoverers and Explorers in Canada—1763–1911* (Portfolio II #4), illustrated by Charles W. Jefferys and published by Imperial Oil Ltd.

* Please note that the words “Indians” or “Natives” often appear in documents written at this time. While these terms appear in historical documents, these terms are generally viewed as inaccurate and disrespectful. Though these terms are still used in some Government of Canada government documents and legislation, it is now more accurate and respectful to use the name of the specific group of people or nation.

Looking for significance

Describe six events and explain their significance in light of the following factors:

- *Was prominent at the time* (Was it a noticeable event then?)
- *Had notable consequences* (Did it affect the rest of the trip and beyond the trip?)
- *Determined subsequent profile* (Is it memorable or revealing about Fraser?)

Summary of incident	Possible significance

Selections from Fraser's diary

The following are a few of the entries in the diary that Fraser kept as he travelled the Fraser River.¹

May 28, 1808

Having made every necessary preparation for a long voyage, we embarked at 5 o'clock A.M. in four canoes at Fraser's River [probably the Nechako River]. Our crew consisted of nineteen men, two Indians*, Mr. Stuart, Mr. Quesnel and myself, in all twenty-four.

May 30, 1808

These Indians have heard of fire-arms, but had never seen any, and they evinced [showed] a great desire of seeing ours and obtaining explanations as to their use. In compliance, we fired several shots whose reports astonished them so as to make them drop off their legs. Upon recovering from their surprise, we made them examine their effect. They appeared quite uneasy on seeing the marks on the trees and observed that the Indians in that quarter [local region] were good and peaceable, and would never make use of their arms to annoy white people; yet they remarked that we ought to be on our guard, and proceed with great care when approaching villages, for, should we surprise the Natives*, they might take us as enemies, and, through fear, attack us with their arrows.

May 31, 1808

The Chief and the Indians recommended to our attention yesterday and who were encamped on a hill to the left, soon joined us and presented us with dried salmon and different kinds of roots; the last, we could not well relish [like the taste], though highly recommended by them. After enquiring repeatedly for the slave who had a knowledge of the country below, he was at last introduced. To form an estimate of his capacity, I had two oil cloths spread out for the ground of a chart upon which I desired him to sketch the country towards the sea. . . . We could however plainly see in his sketch a confirmation of what had been told us of the difficulties of the navigation and, thereby, the necessity of leaving our canoes, with as much of our baggage as we could spare, in order to continue our journey by land.

June 1, 1808

Numbers of the Natives came to see us in the course of the day and remained. They assured us that the navigation for a

certain distance below was impracticable, and advised us to leave our canoes in their charge and proceed on our journey by land to a great river that flows from the left into this communication. The country they said consisted of plains, and the journey could be performed with horses in four or five days; thence we should have smooth water all the way to the sea. But going to the sea by an indirect way was not the object of the undertaking. I therefore would not deviate and continued our route according to my original intention.

June 3, 1808

. . . Last night a 4th Indian, who seemed to be well acquainted with the river, promised to accompany us, but this morning declined, saying he was afraid of the rapids; another brought us a pistol which Mr. Quesnel lost yesterday while on horseback; this was a piece of honesty we hardly expected, though, I must say, that during the whole time we were there, and although many things were let loose and scattered about us in such a manner as to afford all opportunity to the Natives, nothing went astray . . .

June 9, 1808

The Indians of this place drew a chart of the river below which represented it to us as a dreadful chain of apparently insurmountable difficulties; at the same time they blamed us for venturing so far with our canoes and for not passing by land, as advised by the old chief of a former occasion, asserting that this communication [the Fraser River], both by land and by water, would in some places be found impracticable to strangers, as we should have to ascend and descend mountains and precipices [cliffs] by means of rope ladders, &c.

June 13, 1808

This morning, lost some time mending our shoes. We fired several shots to show the Natives the effects of our guns, and set out at five accompanied by all the Natives with two horses; three more horsemen soon joined our party. Having halted, one of the strangers took our interpreter's gun through curiosity, and, while

1. From L. R. Masson, *Le bourgeois de la Campagne du Nord-Ouest*, Vol. I (Quebec: A Cote et Cie, 1889), 157–221.

examining it, touched the trigger; one of our men having observed him in time, threw up the muzzle as the shot was going off and thus saved the lives of some Natives who otherwise would have received the contents; such misfortune would have at once put an end to our journey and perhaps to our lives. When we came to the Forks (of the Lilloet and Fraser) the Chief men, dressed in their coats of mail, advanced to meet us in order to know our dispositions [character and intentions] before we could be admitted into their camp. Our Chief harangued [gave a speech to] them in his own language; they answered him in theirs, and we were obliged to employ three interpreters on the occasion to settle the affair. These ambassadors are of the Askettih nation; they looked manly and had really the appearance of warriors. They seemed to speak with a fluency which attracted a kind of attention indicative of applause, and our Chief conveyed our sentiments and wishes with great animation. He assured the Askettih nation that we were good people and had nothing to do with the quarrels of Indian nations. Here we became acquainted with a man of the Chilkotin tribe who had left his own country when a boy, . . . He observed that he had been to the sea by this communication, where he had seen men like us who lived in a wooden enclosure [fort] upon an island, . . . He gave us a good account of the navigation and consented to accompany us as pilot. Since the departure of our Tha-how-tin interpreter, this was the only man with whom we could converse to any advantage. Continued our course with a strong current for about nine miles where the river expands into a lake. Here we saw seals and a large river coming from the left and a round mountain ahead which the Natives called Stremotch [Mount Baker]. After sunset, we encamped upon the right side of the river. At this place, the trees were remarkably large, cedars five fathoms [thirty feet] in circumference and proportionate height. Mosquitoes were in clouds. We had nothing to eat; the Natives, who always gave us plenty of provisions in their villages, were all as destitute [in great need] as ourselves. Though at a great distance from home, they carried no arms about them, from which we inferred that they had full confidence either in our goodness or in their numbers.

July 10, 1808

The Indians certainly deserve our grateful remembrance for their able assistance throughout these alarming situations. The descents were, if possible, still more difficult; in these places, we were under the necessity of trusting our things to the Indians, even our guns were handed from one to another, yet they thought nothing of it, they went up and down these wild places with the same agility as sailors do on board a ship. After escaping innumerable perils in the course of the day, we encamped about sunset; the Indians tried to fish but caught nothing; they however supplied us with plenty of dried fish.

July 11, 1808

Started early accompanied by many Indians as usual. Previous to our departure the Chief gave us forty salmons and sent young men along with us to carry them saying: "The Indians above are poor"; I returned the chief's compliment to his satisfaction. We could not procure [obtain] canoes, the Indians said the rapids were too strong to make use of them to any advantage. Soon after we had left the camp, the Indian who had supplied us with a canoe going down joined our party and offered his services again in like manner, which we accepted and found useful for many purposes in course of the day. We passed the village where the Indians were so poor according to the account of the chief, yet they generously shared with us what little they had . . .

July 20, 1808

Early in the morning, we proceeded on our journey and soon after joined Mr. Stuart, when we had the inexpressible satisfaction of finding our canoes and our cache [hidden supplies] perfectly safe. For this good fortune we felt grateful to the Indians who continually attended to their security during our absence . . .

July 22, 1808

At 8 A.M., we arrived at the rapide couvert [covered rapids] which is more than a mile long and where we were obliged to carry all our baggage over long and steep hills; here we found Indians among whom were the old Atnah chief and his brother both so overjoyed to see us that they annoyed us with caresses [hugs]. They assured us that they felt extremely anxious for our safety during our absence, and that they had determined, if the Indians of the sea destroyed us, to collect their friends and go to revenge us . . .

* Please note that the words "Indians" or "Natives" often appear in documents written at this time. While these terms appear in historical documents, these terms are generally viewed as inaccurate and disrespectful. Though these terms are still used in some Government of Canada government documents and legislation, it is now more accurate and respectful to use the name of the specific group of people or nation.

Quesnel's account of the trip¹

Now I must tell you that I went exploring this summer with Mr. Simon Fraser and John Stuart, whom I believe you know. We were accompanied by 12 men in three canoes. Went down the river that up until now was thought to be the Columbia but finding it very soon unnavigable, we left our canoes and continued our journey on foot in the most appalling mountain that we could never have crossed if the natives*, who received us well, had not helped us. After having passed all these difficult spots, not without much trouble as you can imagine, we found the river once more navigable and all embarked in wooden canoes and continued on our way more comfortably, as far as the place where the river empties into the Pacific Ocean. We were well treated by all the other Indians* on our return trip and all arrived in excellent health in our New Caledonia. The mouth of the river is in Latitude 49°, nearly three degrees north of the real Columbia. This journey did not meet the needs of the Company and will never be of any advantage to them, this river not being navigable, but we have nothing to reproach ourselves with, having done what we set out to do.

1. From a letter by Jules Quesnel, one of Fraser's two lieutenants on the trip.

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A twentieth-century account¹

On May 22 Fraser and eight men left Fort Fraser to ride the Columbia to its mouth. It was a voyage to curl a man's hair and in his portrait, Fraser's hair does appear somewhat curly. They were rolled and buffeted by vicious rapids. At one point the river look so bad they climbed the canyon wall on stone steps cut into the rock face by the Indians*, and crept along the track at the top of the canyon. Able to return to the waterway at a point of relative calm, they reached the delta on July 2, worn and shaken by their experience, only to be chased for six miles across the water by hostile Indians.

Simon Fraser was dismayed and disgusted by the Columbia. It was obviously useless for freight canoes and the country was too hot and dry for furs. Fraser had decided that the Columbia was the worst river he'd ever seen, when he made an important discovery. He surveyed his position and found it wasn't the Columbia at all. The Columbia entered the ocean below the 47th parallel and he was north of the 49th. Simon called his discovery the Bad River, one of the nicer names he could think of. His friend, David Thompson, later named it the Fraser and Fraser responded by naming a river he had discovered in honour of Thompson.

1. From T. Cashman, *An Illustrated History of Western Canada* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1971).

* Please note that the words "Indians" or "Natives" often appear in documents written at this time. While these terms appear in historical documents, these terms are generally viewed as inaccurate and disrespectful. Though these terms are still used in some Government of Canada government documents and legislation, it is now more accurate and respectful to use the name of the specific group of people or nation.

Using multiple historical sources

The following are guidelines for arriving at and defending a conclusion using multiple primary and secondary sources.

Type of source: Identify whether each is a primary or secondary source.

Summary of ideas: Paraphrase or list in point form what is actually reported in each document.

Authorship: Consider who authored or created each document and what is known about the person or group. How might this affect the information presented?

Context: Try to identify a purpose and intended audience for each document. Consider how this might affect credibility.

Inferences: Draw inferences from each source about the question you are trying to answer.

Corroboration: Check if any of the sources support or challenge the inferences drawn.

Conclusion: Considering all of the evidence, offer a conclusion that clearly and specifically answers the question offered for consideration.

Justification: Support your conclusion with evidence from the sources and suggest why alternative hypotheses are not as plausible as the conclusion you are putting forward. If applicable, explain why sources which may seem to contradict your conclusion are not really a concern.

Document analysis

Document			
Source (primary or secondary), authorship and context			
Possible relevance			
Summary of key points			
Inferences about the question under consideration			

Revising the account

Proposed conclusion about Fraser's journey: _____

Additions or changes to the account	Evidence to support recommendations

Before and after descriptions

Before the trip (start)	Supporting evidence

After the trip (end)	Supporting evidence

Assessing the descriptions

	Exemplary	Good	Satisfactory	Remedial
Revealing details of the descriptions	Overall, the identified before and after details reveal key aspects of the actions and reactions.	The identified details reveal some key aspects of the identified features reveal some key aspects of the actions and reactions but a few important aspects are ignored or incorrectly identified.	A few relevant and accurate details are identified for the before and after descriptions.	Almost all the identified actions and reactions reflect trivial or mistaken observations.
Explanation:				
Plausible explanations for identified changes and constants	All the explanations offer highly credible, clear reasons why the identified changes and constants are plausible.	Most explanations offer credible and clear reasons why the identified changes and constants are plausible.	Some of the explanations offer credible reasons why the identified changes and constants are plausible.	No credible and clear reasons are offered why the identified changes and constants are plausible.
Explanation:				

Comments:

Son of the sun¹

The Indians* seen this man coming down in the canoe with his party and Chief Spindlum, he soon spotted it, and he said, that's what my wife foretold ... So he said to the Indians, "You Indians must never touch him, you musn't hurt him ... That's the man of the sun. He is the son of the sun." So these Indians came along and came to Spuzzum and they spread the news all around. Our grandmother was ten years old ... She told us this story. There was a special woman, she was a relation to our grandmother, this special woman was an entertainer, she was a singer. She was asked to sing a special song when Simon Fraser was leaving. They had sort of a special prayer for him that he must be safe in his voyage, drifting down the Fraser River ...

So when he was leaving ... they sang this song and Simon Fraser ... he felt so sad, he had tears in his eyes ... This lady sings this song, "We'll meet you again, when the leaves are turning red and yellow and when our chief asks us to pray, we'll pray for you when the sun rises, and when the sun rises we'll bow our heads, and face the sun and we'll pray for you. When our chief takes his pipe and smokes his pipe his smoke will drift down the river and our prayers will be sent with you and will accompany you. And when all the trees sway along the beach, the green leaves and the green bows and with all the emerald winds will sway around you and the silvery circle, the eddy, the pool, you will be safe when you go through this channel. When we're in the woods, in the forest, we'll always pray for you and our prayers will always remain with you. All our tribes from Spuzzum will always pray for you to return and one day your flag will fly over us."

That's how the Indian people took him; he was the "son of the sun." Well, you see the Indians always thought the white people came from the sun and they revered the white people. I don't know why, but that's just the way they looked at it. In the beginning anyway [Annie laughs].

1. Annie York, interviewed by Imbert Orchard, 1965. Transcript from audio recording used with permission from The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

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Justifying my conclusion

I believe he had

changed greatly

changed quite a bit

changed in a few respects

hardly changed at all

The main reasons in support of my conclusion are

-
-
-
-

The best reasons why others might disagree with my conclusion are

-
-
-
-

I think my conclusion is more reasonable because

-
-
-
-

Assessing the justification

	Well-developed	Competent	Underdeveloped
Reasons for conclusion	Clearly describes several important reasons for the chosen conclusion.	Identifies some relevant reasons for the chosen conclusion.	Provides no relevant reasons for the chosen conclusion.
Explanation:			
Reasons for alternative conclusions	Clearly describes a few of the most important reasons to support other conclusions.	Identifies some relevant reasons to support other conclusions.	Identifies no relevant reasons to support other conclusions.
Explanation:			
Justification for preferred conclusion	Offers a thoughtful justification why the selected conclusion is more reasonable.	Offers some justification why the selected conclusion is more reasonable.	Offers no justification why the selected conclusion is more reasonable.
Explanation:			

Explaining their actions

Incident #1: _____

Possible explanation	Evidence

Incident #2: _____

Possible explanation	Evidence

Incident #3: _____

Possible explanation	Evidence

Self-assessment of discussion

	Exemplary	Good	Satisfactory	Developing	Remedial
Background knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ accurate use of relevant facts 	I am able to refer to many relevant facts, always with accuracy.	I am able to refer to relevant facts, most often with accuracy.	I am able to refer to relevant facts, usually with accuracy.	I am able to refer to a limited number of relevant facts with little accuracy.	I am able to refer to few or no relevant and accurate facts.
Open-mindedness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ open to considering a variety of views ▶ willing to re-think position based on new evidence or arguments 	I always carefully consider all viewpoints presented. I am always willing to reconsider my position when evidence or arguments warrant.	I usually consider most viewpoints presented. I am usually willing to reconsider my position when evidence or arguments warrant.	I occasionally consider a variety of viewpoints presented. I am sometimes willing to reconsider my position when evidence or arguments warrant.	I seldom consider other viewpoints. I am rarely willing to reconsider my position when evidence or arguments warrant.	I rarely or never consider other viewpoints. I am always reluctant to reconsider my position when evidence or arguments warrant.
Reasoned judgment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ uses evidence to reach an informed decision ▶ considers criteria when making a decision 	My decisions are always based on available evidence. I always consider the range of criteria when arriving at a decision.	My decisions are usually based on available evidence. I usually consider the criteria when arriving at a decision.	My decisions are sometimes based on available evidence. I sometimes consider criteria when arriving at a decision.	My decisions are seldom based on available evidence. I seldom consider criteria when arriving at a decision.	My decisions are rarely based on available evidence. I rarely or never consider criteria when arriving at a decision.

Assessing a U-shaped discussion

Use the following scale to score student performances: 4 = Exemplary 3 = Good 2 = Satisfactory 1 = Developing R = Remedial

Student names	Background knowledge	Open-mindedness	Reasoned judgment
	▶ accurate use of relevant facts 4 3 2 1 R Comment:	▶ open to consider a variety of views ▶ willing to re-think view and position based on new evidence or arguments 4 3 2 1 R Comment:	▶ uses evidence to reach an informed decision ▶ considers criteria when making a decision 4 3 2 1 R Comment:
	4 3 2 1 R Comment:	4 3 2 1 R Comment:	4 3 2 1 R Comment:
	4 3 2 1 R Comment:	4 3 2 1 R Comment:	4 3 2 1 R Comment:
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