

Developing understanding through drama

How might creating dramatic poses deepen our understanding of events and experiences?

CRITICAL CHALLENGE

Create three dramatic poses to represent the experiences, feelings and thoughts of the Ukrainian and other Europeans interned during Canada's first national internment operations of 1914–1920.

SUMMARY

In this lesson, students develop a dramatic pose sequence to represent the possible experiences, feelings and thoughts of Ukrainian and other Europeans interned during Canada's first national internment operations of 1914–1920. Students begin by comparing two poses and discussing which one best communicates the meaning and feelings of a sample message. Students then infer the possible feelings and thoughts of internees drawing on their background knowledge and a briefing sheet. Students learn more about the experiences of internees through a source document and a historical image. After identifying the criteria for a dramatic pose, students select one of the experiences and create three poses to communicate the feelings and thoughts associated with it. The lesson concludes with students sharing their finished pose sequences and reflecting on the experiences, feelings and thoughts of internees.

OBJECTIVES

Broad understanding

Understanding the experiences of Ukrainian and other Europeans interned during Canada's first national internment operations of 1914–1920

Requisite tools

Background knowledge

- knowledge of the living and working conditions in internment camps

Criteria for judgment

- criteria for a dramatic pose
 - communicates an important message or idea
 - contains strong facial expressions
 - positions the body in an interesting shape
 - remains still and silent



Critical thinking vocabulary

- primary sources
- inference



Thinking strategies

- applying the creative process
- drawing inferences



MATERIALS

Briefing sheet

Understanding Canada's first national internment operations of 1914–1920
(Briefing sheet #4)

Activity sheets

Assessing my dramatic pose (Activity sheet #H-1)

Describing experiences, feelings and thoughts (Activity sheet #H-2)

Image

Internees at a camp (Image #H-1)

Source document

Sample letter from an internee (Source document #H-1)

Background information for teachers

For more information on European immigration to Canada, consider reading *Background information for teachers: European immigration to Canada, 1891–1914* (Briefing sheet #1). This briefing sheet is intended to support teachers with historical details related to the content of this lesson and is not intended for student use.

Suggested Activities

Compare two dramatic poses

1. Post or share this statement for students to read: “The student noticed that summer holidays were only two days away.” Ask the class to suggest what the student might be feeling. Student responses might include excited or relieved. Record student suggestions on the board or chart paper.
2. Prompt students to suggest what the student might be thinking. Student responses might include planning for holidays and “I want to sleep in.” Record student suggestions on the board or chart paper.
3. Explain to students that you will now demonstrate two dramatic poses related to the statement. Inform students that they are to choose the one that best matches the feelings and thoughts related to the statement.
4. Share a pose that displays very little emotion or meaning. For example, arms resting at your sides and a neutral facial expression. Ask students to discuss the pose with a partner and invite them to share their observations.
5. Create and share a dramatic pose that displays strong emotion and meaning. For example, arms stretched overhead, fists clenched, eyes squeezed shut and mouth open in the shape of wide smile or yell. Prompt students to discuss the new pose and invite them to again share their observations.
6. Pose the question: “Which of the two poses best matches the statement? Why?” Prompt students to share their selection and thinking.

Think about the lesson challenge

1. Share and discuss the critical challenge with students: *Create three dramatic poses to represent the experiences, feelings and thoughts of Ukrainian and other Europeans interned during Canada’s first national internment operations of 1914–1920.*
2. Ask students to summarize in their own words what they will be doing in the challenge. Clarify for students that during this challenge they will use their bodies to create statues that represent what internees may have felt and thought.

Identify experiences

1. Provide each student with a copy of *Describing experiences, feelings and thoughts* (Activity sheet #H-2). Prompt students to draw upon their learning from other lessons and to suggest the most important or significant experiences Ukrainian and other European immigrants had when they were interned between 1914 and 1920.

Lesson H

Activity sheet #H-2

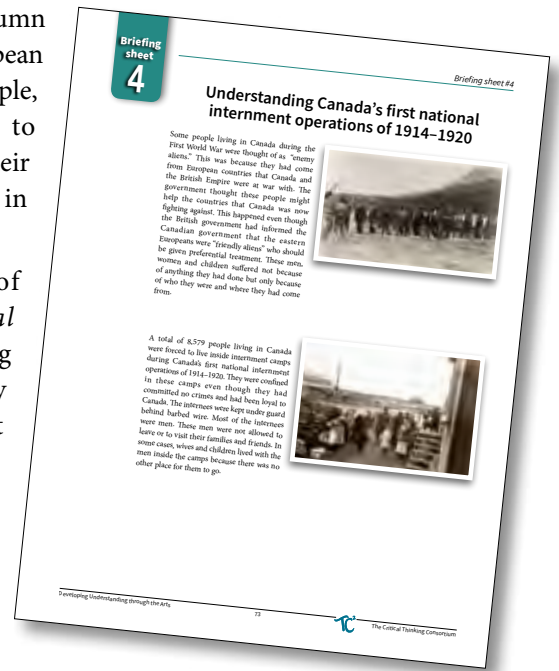
Describing experiences, feelings and thoughts

What were the experiences of interned European immigrants?	What might these people have been feeling?	What might these people have been thinking?

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Infer possible feelings and thoughts

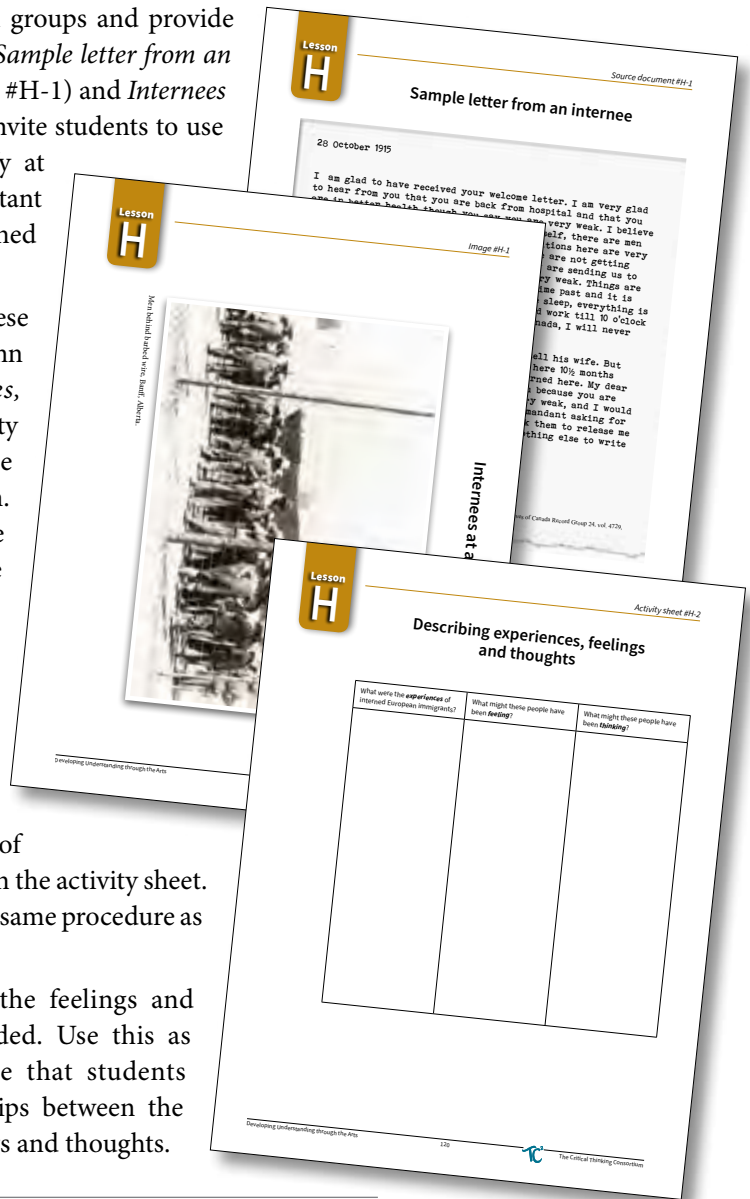
2. Direct students to list these ideas in the column “What were the experiences of interned European immigrants” on the activity sheet. For example, students may record ideas like “forced to work,” “taken from their families,” “lost their belongings” and “lost their right to vote” in this column.
3. Provide each student with a copy of *Understanding Canada’s first national internment operations of 1914–1920* (Briefing sheet #4). Instruct students to identify three additional important or significant experiences from the briefing sheet. Ask students to record these experiences on their activity sheet. Invite students to share the experiences that they recorded. Encourage students to add any experiences shared by their classmates that are not on their own list.



1. Direct students to select one of the experiences recorded on their activity sheet. Prompt them to record all of the possible feelings associated with this experience in the second column titled “What might these people have been feeling?” Student responses might include:
 - scared
 - tired
 - alone
2. Ask students to next consider a possible thought a person may have had in this situation or that is connected to the feelings they have identified. Prompt them to record these thoughts in the third column of the activity sheet titled “What might these people have been thinking?” Student responses might include:
 - I want to go home.
 - Why am I here?
 - What did I do wrong?
3. Invite students to share the feelings and thoughts they recorded. Use this as an opportunity to ensure that students understand the relationships between the experiences and the feelings and thoughts.

Explore additional experiences

1. Divide students into small groups and provide each group with copies of *Sample letter from an internee* (Source document #H-1) and *Internees at a camp* (Image #H-1). Invite students to use these materials to identify at least three additional important experiences of people interned in the internment camps.
2. Direct students to add these experiences to the first column of *Describing experiences, feelings and thoughts* (Activity sheet #H-2) used in the previous step of this lesson. Invite students to share these experiences with the rest of the class. Encourage students to add any new experiences to their list.



Infer feelings and thoughts

1. Prompt students to infer the feelings and thoughts that match each of the experiences recorded on the activity sheet. Remind students to use the same procedure as earlier in the lesson.
2. Invite students to share the feelings and thoughts that they recorded. Use this as an opportunity to ensure that students understand the relationships between the experiences and the feelings and thoughts.

Identify the criteria for a dramatic pose

1. Repeat each of the dramatic poses used to introduce the lesson and ask students to suggest what made one of the poses more effective than the other. Student responses might include:
 - An effective pose matches the feelings.
 - An effective pose uses more interesting body positions.
2. Share the criteria met by an effective dramatic pose with students. A dramatic pose:
 - communicates an important message or idea;
 - contains strong facial expressions;
 - positions the body in an interesting shape;
 - remains still and silent.

Create a dramatic body pose

1. Remind students of the critical challenge for this lesson: *Create three dramatic poses to represent the experiences, feelings and thoughts of Ukrainian and other Europeans interned during Canada's first national internment operations of 1914–1920.*
2. Instruct students to select one of the experiences along with its accompanying feelings and thoughts. Ask students to circle or highlight their selection on the activity sheet.
3. Prompt students to think of a dramatic body pose that might represent their selected experience, feeling or thought. Direct students to create their body pose and freeze in place like a statue.
4. Invite students to share their poses with the class and discuss the possible ideas and feelings associated with them. Encourage students to use the criteria for a dramatic pose to decide what made some of the poses more dramatic or interesting to look at.
5. Prompt students to revise their original pose to better meet the shared criteria and discuss possible revisions as a class.

Plan the body poses

1. Play a small portion (30 seconds) of the old Ukrainian folk song “Plyve Kacha” (available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-8PTK39cUU>). Explain that the song is sung in Ukrainian and that its title translated into English means “the duckling swims.” Invite students to share the feelings and thoughts they had while listening. After discussing student suggestions, consider telling students that the lyrics are a dialogue between a mother and a son going off to war.
2. Prompt students to think about how this music might connect to the ideas they have highlighted or circled on the activity sheet. For example, students may feel that the sadness in the song made them think about the men being forced to work or being taken away from their families.
3. Provide time for students to experiment with different body poses that could be used to communicate their three selected ideas. Offer to play the song as background music while students create their poses.

Share the poses with a peer

1. Post the criteria for students to refer to while they create and refine their poses. Direct students to create their first pose and hold it for a count of three seconds, then slowly dissolve the first pose and move into their second pose, again holding it for a count of three. Repeat this procedure with their third and final pose.
2. Invite students to share their pose sequences with a partner. Encourage them to provide any suggestions they may have for how the poses could be refined to better meet the criteria.

Finalize and self-assess the poses

Reflect on the learning

1. Direct students to finalize their three poses. Remind them to consider the suggestions provided to them by their partner in the previous step.
2. Provide each student with a copy of *Assessing my dramatic pose* (Activity sheet #H-1). Prompt students to self-assess their poses using the identified criteria.

1. Invite students to share their finished poses with the class. Consider playing a recording of “Plyve Kacha” as background music during the drama performances.
2. Provide the option of having small groups of students perform their pose sequences at the same time to speed up the viewing and reduce any nervousness on the part of the students.
3. Discuss and interpret the pose sequences. Use the following prompting questions to guide the discussion:
 - What made you decide to choose this experience to share with others?
 - What experiences, feelings or thoughts do you see being communicated by these poses?
 - What might the people who were interned have felt and thought after they were released?
 - Why is it important to consider the feelings and thoughts of people that were interned?

Lesson H Activity sheet #H-1

Assessing my dramatic pose

Rate each of the criteria below by circling the descriptor that best describes your dramatic pose.

Communicates an important message or idea	Very much	Somewhat	Not at all
Contains strong facial expressions	Very much	Somewhat	Not at all
Propounds the body in an interesting shape	Very much	Somewhat	Not at all
Remains still and silent	Very much	Somewhat	Not at all

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