

OVERVIEW

The purpose of the following activity is to have the students actively participate and understand the story of the internment and relocation of individuals deemed to be “enemy aliens” by the Canadian government. The teacher will guide the students through the story, following the script that is presented below. The students will follow the actions based on the activity card they were given. The script will be written in black and additional details and directions you will give to your students will be written in **red**.

If you have not already done so, hand out the Number cards to each one of your students. These cards will have a number on them. Some cards might have more than one number. Each number will correspond with a different part and action in the script.

SCRIPT

Narrator: The year is 1914 and Canada has grown since confederation in 1867. You are all part of Canada’s population that sits at just under eight million people in 1914. You live across the country, from the West Coast to the Maritimes to the Inuit populations in the North. **Have students spread out across the Giant Floor Map and pick a location where they would’ve wanted to live in 1914 Canada.**

Narrator: **Ask students that have number 1 on their cards to raise their hands.** You are all Ukrainian immigrants who live in Canada. You and your families have been immigrating to Canada since 1891. You were drawn to the Dominion of Canada by promises of free land and freedom, which you did not have in the Russian or Austro-Hungarian Empires. You were given a homestead in one of the Prairie provinces. **If these students are not already standing there, have them move to Alberta, Saskatchewan or Manitoba.**

When you arrive, you realize that people have a negative attitude toward you. People openly express their dislike for you and your kind, saying things such as, “They are, from the point of view of civilization, 10 times lower than the Indians. They have not the least idea of sanitation. In their personal habits and acts [they] resemble animals, and even in the streets of Edmonton, when they come to market, men, women, and children, would, if unchecked, turn the place into a common sewer.”

Take a moment for your class to reflect on the quote they just heard, which was taken from the Canadian Encyclopedia. How does it make them feel to hear something like that? Does that kind of language still occur today?

Narrator: **Ask students that have the number 2 on their card to raise their hands. Have them relocate themselves to Toronto, if they are not already standing near Toronto on the map.** Today is June 29, 1914. Like any other day, you are walking the Toronto streets on your way to work. Like you do most mornings, you stop to purchase a copy of the Toronto Star to see what is making news today. You are shocked to read the articles on the front page of the paper.

The paper reads “Archduke Francis Ferdinand, nephew of Emperor Joseph, and heir to the Austrian throne, and the Duchess of Hohenberg, his morganatic wife, were shot to death yesterday afternoon while driving the streets of Sarajevo.” It also reads, “the motive is Serbian hatred for the Austro-Hungarian State. The Archduke and his wife have fallen as the victims of the passionate enmity which Austro-Hungarian policy of late years has awakened among the Serbian people.”

You finish reading the newspaper and go about your day. The problem seems too distant for Canadians to have to worry about.

Narrator: It is now Aug. 4, 1914, and the situation has worsened in Europe since the assassination of the Archduke and his wife. Europe has erupted in war, with the main European powers and their alliances declaring war on each other. Canada is split on the prospect of war. **Ask students with number 3 and number 4 on their cards to raise their hands. The students who have the number 3 are English Canadians and students with the number 4 are French Canadians. Ask the French Canadians to relocate themselves to Quebec if they are not already standing there.**

Narrator: To my English Canadians, you are hoping that Canada enters the European conflict. Many of you are very recent immigrants from Britain and still have very close patriotic feelings towards Britain and the British Empire. If Britain goes to war, you want Canada to be loyal to Britain and fight alongside them. **On the count of three, students with the number 3, cheer “To War!” in their loudest voices.**

Narrator: My French Canadians, you feel very differently about the prospect of war. You have no love for Britain. You have long felt forgotten by the English empire that you are a part of and you often feel forgotten by the rest of the country. You do not want to fight and die in a war for Britain and you are strongly against the war. **On the count of three, students with the number 4 boo loudly.**

Despite the opposing views present in Canada, when Britain declares war on August 4, Canada answers the call and enters the war.

Narrator: **Ask students who have the number 5 on their card to raise their hands.** You are thrilled by the news that Canada has entered the war. You are excited about the opportunity to fight for the glory of the British Empire and it will be a great adventure for you and your friends. You all volunteer to serve in the first group of soldiers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. You and 30,000 others are eager to take part in this war. **Ask the class which direction these soldiers would need to go to reach Britain in the fastest way possible. Have the students with the number 5 leave the map and move in the direction of Europe.**

You all reach Britain in October of 1914 and will not see major combat until 1915 at the Battle of Ypres. Some of you will never see Canada again as you will give your lives in the battlefields of Europe.

Narrator: On Aug. 22, 1914, the Canadian government passed the War Measures Act. **Ask students if they remember what this act was about from doing the Minds On activity. The Act gave very broad powers to the federal government to maintain security and order during the war.**

With these powers, the federal government began to restrict the rights and civil liberties of people they deemed to be “enemy aliens.” Over the course of the war, 80,000 people would lose their right to vote, have their freedom of speech restricted, have to regularly check in with the police and would ultimately be forced to register as “enemy aliens.”

Narrator: **Call upon the students who have the number 1 and now number 6.** Because of the European Conflict, you and the other Ukrainians are seen as an “enemy aliens.” Many of you are originally from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, an enemy of Britain. You have been classified as a second-tier alien, behind Germans and Austro-Hungarians. All of you must carry an identification card.

Many of the 80,000 individuals deemed to be “enemy aliens” were Ukrainian. A portion of these “enemy aliens” were relocated and kept as prisoners of war. Ukrainians would be relocated to various internment camps across the country. **Use the coloured rope, which is provided in the kit, and have students create a circle in Alberta. Fit as many students with the number 6 into the circle. If not full with those students, ask students with the number 1 to join them.**

Narrator: The circle here represents the internment camps that “aliens” were forced to relocate to. They appeared all across the country and these internees were exploited for their labour to complete government projects.

An example of this is Banff National Park, which was the site for the largest and most abusive internment camp during the war. Prisoners here were forced to build roads and other major infrastructure projects. For all the work that the prisoners did across the country, many of them had their wealth confiscated, even though they were paid just 25 cents a day.

Narrator: During the course of the war, 8,579 people would be relocated to these isolated and rural camps from 1914-1920. Many were Ukrainian. It was not until 2005 that the Canadian government formally recognized that this had occurred.

Provide a moment for the students to reflect on this new information before moving on to the next section. Remove the coloured rope from the map and have the students again spread out across the map.

Narrator: We are now jumping forward 19 years in history to 1939. **Ask the class what happens in September 1939 (the start of the Second World War).** With the invasion of Poland on September 1 and the following declaration of war against Germany, Canada was in a very similar situation to where it had been in 1914. This time, the Canadian government waited a week before declaring war, giving the appearance of an independent Canadian decision. Once again, English Canada wanted to fight for Britain. **Anyone with the number 3 to give a loud cheer on the count of three.**

Narrator: However, this conflict would be different than the previous one. Germany would have rapid success in the first years of the war, forcing France to surrender in 1940. Canada introduced military conscription for the defence of Canada, but not for overseas fighting. A certain group would be excluded from this draft — the Japanese population living in Canada at the time. Japan was not officially in the war, but was deemed a potential future enemy and the government excluded Japanese Canadians from military service. **Ask students who have the number 8 on their card to relocate themselves to British Columbia. They are representing the Japanese population, who mainly lived in coastal B.C. Ask the class why British Columbia would have a high percentage of Japanese individuals.**

Narrator: **Speaking to the students with the number 8 cards.** Many of you are descendants of the first wave of Japanese immigrants that came to Canada from 1877 to 1928. Many of your parents and families arrived in Canada looking for work. They found work in factories, as fishermen and constructing railways. Your families faced severe discrimination from the largely white Canadian population and struggled to get by. Japanese Canadians would be denied the right to vote until the late 1940s.

Narrator: Japan would enter the war in 1941 when they attacked the U.S. naval base of Pearl Harbor on December 7. This is when Canada's treatment for Japanese Canadians would drastically change. **Ask the students with the number 9 on their cards to move into the Pacific Ocean or the water to the east of B.C.** You represent the Japanese fishermen living in B.C. You make your living by fishing for salmon. After the Pearl Harbor attack, the Canadian government seized your fishing vessels, all 1,200 of them. Your livelihood is now gone. You cannot turn to the factories or railways for work because these companies have fired all their Japanese workers. All of this occurs because the Canadian government fears that you are not loyal to your new country and might be working for Imperial Japan.

Narrator: These fears of sabotage and disloyalty were unfounded, but the war with Japan gave the government and the people of British Columbia an excuse to act on pre-existing anti-Asian attitudes.

Narrator: The treatment of Japanese Canadians declined further when the Japanese attacked Hong Kong on Dec. 18, 1941, which resulted in the death or capture of 2,000 Canadian soldiers deployed there. The Canadian Government responded in January 1942 by declaring a 160 km wide section of the B.C. coast, a "protected" area. **Grab the coloured rope again and place it in the interior of B.C.** At first, all males were removed from this coastal area and relocated to the interior of B.C. A few months later, all Japanese Canadians in the area — men, women and children — were forced to move inland. **Ask all students with the number 8 on their cards to move to the circle and fit as many of them in the circle as possible. Once full, have the students stand around the circle.**

You and your families were allowed to pack one suitcase to bring with you and then you were stuffed onto overcrowded trains in Vancouver and relocated to the interior. The overwhelming majority of the people being forcibly relocated from their homes were either naturalized citizens or were born in Canada.

In 1943, the Canadian government again yielded to pressure from white B.C. politicians and, in January, ordered that all the property left behind by the Japanese Canadians would be sold.

All that you own has been sold off and you have nothing to return home to except what is in your one suitcase. Overall, 22,000 Japanese Canadians were relocated and placed into internment camps during the Second World War.

Narrator: Once the war was over and the Allies had achieved victory, the interned Japanese Canadians were still not allowed to return home. The Canadian government wanted them to relocate and move east of the Rockies. **Students with the number 10 on their card please move to Ontario, Quebec or the Prairie provinces.** You are the majority of Japanese Canadians that chose the option of moving east.

Ask for students with the number 11 on their card to raise their hands. You are the portion that refused to move east of the Rockies. In the government's eyes, this meant that you "agreed" to repatriation and moving back to war-torn Japan. The government planned to deport 10,000 Japanese Canadians to Japan. Public protest led the government to relent in 1947 and allow those who still remained in Canada to stay, but not before 4,000 had been deported to Japan. You represent those 4,000 people. **Ask these students to remove themselves from the map by moving east to Japan.**

Narrator: After decades of protest, former prime minister Brian Mulroney in 1988 officially apologized for what had occurred during the Second World War. The final settlement also included a payment of \$21,000 to each internment camp survivor and a \$12 million community fund.