

Learning objectives

- Students will learn about the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition.
- Students will assess the significance of the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition to Canadians.

Time required

50-70 minutes

Grades

4-8

Materials

- Finding H.M.S. *Erebus* handout
- Multiple copies of the December 2014 issue of *Canadian Geographic*
- Access to the internet and a projector to view videos (optional)

Set-up

Print the “Finding the HMS *Erebus*” student handout, one for every two or three students. Photocopy the essays on pages 53 to 72 of the December 2014 issue of *Canadian Geographic*.

Links to the Canadian National Standards for Geography

Essential Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

- Map types

Essential Element 2: Places and Regions

- Perceptions of places and regions
- Political and historical characteristics of regions
- Changes in places and regions over time

Essential Element 4: Human Systems

- Regional development in Canada and the world
- Transportation and communications networks in Canada and the world
- Territorial dispute and conflict

Essential Element 5: Environment and Society

- Limits and opportunities of the phys-

Introduction

Introduce the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition to the class. If possible, have them watch, individually or as a class, the short videos on cgeducation.ca/franklin. Focus their attention on the fact that on September 9, 2014 Parks Canada announced that one of the missing 1845 British Arctic Expedition ships had been found. On October 1, 2014, Parks Canada confirmed that the ship was HMS *Erebus*. Read the Prime Minister’s press release here: <http://pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2014/10/01/pm-announces-hms-erebus-discovered-franklin-expedition-ship>.

Read the following quotes to students:

“[This is] the biggest archaeological discovery the world has seen since the opening of Tutankhamun’s tomb almost 100 years ago.”

- British archeologist, William Battersby

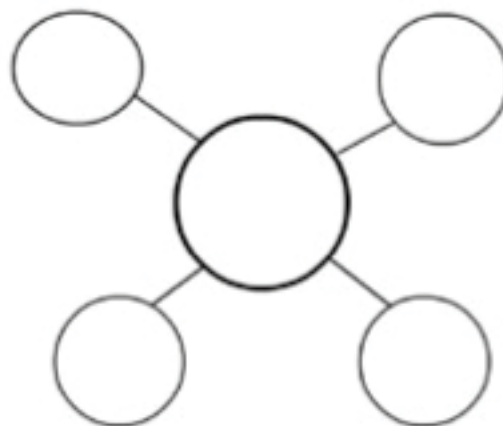
“This is truly a historic moment for Canada. Franklin’s ships are an important part of Canadian history given that his expedition, which took place nearly 170 years ago, laid the foundations of Canada’s Arctic sovereignty.”

- Prime Minister Stephen Harper

Lead a class discussion centred on the following question: What is the significance of the 2014 Victoria Strait Expedition and the finding of one of Franklin’s lost ships? Distribute copies of the December 2014 issue of *Canadian Geographic* to your class and discuss what they see, what they don’t see, and what conclusions can be drawn from the photos in the magazine.

Development

Distribute one essay from the December 2014 issue of *Canadian Geographic* to group of students. Instruct students to read it in their groups and highlight the key points. Ask each group to create a bubble map organizer similar to the one below. In the centre, have them write “2014 Victoria Strait Expedition.” In the outside circle, have the students record four or five reasons why the expedition was significant from the perspective of the essay they read.



ical environment for human activities

Essential Element 6: The Uses of Geography

- Influences of physical and human features on historical events

Conclusion

Have each group report to the class the perspective that they read about and why the find is significant to it. Explain to the class that finding HMS *Erebus* is significant in many ways, beyond simple historical curiosity. Be sure that students understand that the find:

- will tell us a great deal about many aspects of the 1845 British Arctic Expedition, both before and after the crew abandoned ship
- validates the Inuit testimony related to the location of the ship
- demonstrates that modern technology and traditional knowledge combined to locate the missing ship
- will further support scientific exploration in the Arctic
- asserts Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic with respect to resources and maritime passages
- gives Canada the ability to patrol and protect Arctic waters as northern sea routes see increased international trade and travel
- shows a commitment to involving the people of Nunavut into northern economic development and exploration

Conclude with a discussion about what they think the next steps in the search are, and how the ongoing search will contribute to future developments in the Canadian Arctic.

Extend your geographical thinking

Control over the Arctic Ocean is a matter of much debate. Under current international law, countries can claim jurisdiction over areas extending up to 200 nautical miles (370 kilometres) from their coastline. Provide students with a circumpolar map and have them investigate which countries are located in the region. How is climate change affecting debates over territorial claims in the Arctic?

For more information about the search for Franklin's lost ships, please visit www.pc.gc.ca/eng/culture/franklin/index.aspx