

4. Canada's Royal Symbols and Medals



Overview:

This activity introduces students to symbols and medals associated with Queen Elizabeth II and her relationship to Canada. Students will research different symbols and medals that exist in Canada, understand their meaning and connection to Queen Elizabeth II, and discuss their importance. Students will finish the lesson by creating their own emblem to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee.

Time:

1.5 hours

Subject/topic:

Social studies, history, humanities, Canadian and world studies

Grade:

K - 12

Materials:

- Chart paper, white board, or projector
- Royal symbols and medals worksheet
- Device with internet connection (*not included*)

Learning objectives:

Students will:

- Discuss and learn about the importance of symbols to Canada's national identity and the country's relationship to Queen Elizabeth II.
- Learn about the different types of royal symbols and medals in Canada and their importance.
- Learn about the history behind the royal symbols and medals.

Lesson Description

Minds on:

Students will watch a [video](#) from Canada's Governor General and discuss the importance of symbols as representations of national identity in Canada and between Canada and the United Kingdom. The class will compile a list of symbols that are used to represent Canada and Queen Elizabeth II. They will discuss why these symbols are important.

Action:

Students will embark on an online scavenger hunt to learn about various types of symbols and medals related to the historical relationship between Canada and Queen Elizabeth II. Students will find various symbols of Canada and the Queen, such as the Silver, Golden, Diamond, and Platinum Jubilee medals. Students will also listen to the Royal Anthem of Canada and learn about various coins, flags, emblems, and the Crown.

Conclusion:

Students will brainstorm and create their own emblem to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee. They will share their work and the decisions behind their designs with the class.

Lesson Implementation

Minds on

As a class, begin by writing the word "symbol" on the board before showing students a video from the Governor General of Canada. Ask students to keep this word in mind as they watch the video. Once the video is done, begin a mind map on the board or on chart paper to track students' thoughts while they discuss symbols as they exist in Canada in relation to the United Kingdom.

Use the following guiding questions and ideas to generate discussion:

- What is a symbol? Why are symbols important? What symbols did you see in the video?
- According to the video, what does the Queen mean to Canada's Governor General, Mary Simon?
- What are some examples of symbols that represent Canada's national identity? What is the significance of these symbols?
- What are some examples of symbols that represent Canada's relationship with the Queen? What is the significance of these symbols?
- How do symbols influence how we perceive ourselves and our country? How do symbols influence how we perceive the Queen in Canada?

Action

Once students are done discussing, distribute the Royal symbols and medals worksheet to students and explain that they will be conducting an online scavenger hunt for symbols of the Queen in Canada. Students can copy and paste links to the symbols they find, take screenshots of images, or draw the symbols to put into the worksheet.

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Connection to the Canadian Geography Framework:

Concepts of Geographic Thinking

- Interrelationships
- Patterns and trends

Inquiry Process

- Formulate questions
- Gather and organize
- Interpret and analyze
- Evaluate and draw conclusions
- Communicate

Provide students with the following websites as a starting point for their scavenger hunt:

- [The Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II](#)
- [Canadian Identity and Society](#)
- [Honours, Medals and Awards](#)

Once students have completed the worksheet, have them share and discuss their answers together. Find student volunteers to share their answers for the last question of the worksheet and open a discussion about the stylistic details of the symbols they researched. Share with students the [symbolism of the Platinum Jubilee emblem](#) by the Government of Canada. [Download the PDF file](#) available to show a graphic that explains the different parts of the emblem and what they represent.

Conclusion and Consolidation

Have students brainstorm an emblem of their own as inspired by the Canadian emblem for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Students should think about the details they would like to include in their emblems and why they wish to include them.

Once students have completed their brainstorm and have a draft of their emblems, they will create a final copy by hand or online using websites such as [Canva](#) or [Piktochart](#). Ask students to share their work through a gallery walk or by presenting their finished pieces to the class. Students should share their ideas behind the stylistic choices of their design and why they connect to the Platinum Jubilee.

Extend your geographical thinking

- Students can create their own emblem for their school, their family, their community, or other.
- Students can replace the creation of an emblem with the creation of a coin, an anthem, a flag, etc.
- Older students can extend their learning into a larger independent research project.
- Students can research the various emblems created by other Commonwealth countries around the world to compare and contrast different stylistic ideas and influences.
- Students can research the Silver, Golden, and Diamond Jubilee medals and select a community member, public figure, fellow student, or other to nominate for a medal.

Modifications

- Students can write their thoughts and ideas on sticky notes to add to the mind map during the Minds on activity.
- The Royal symbols and medals worksheet can be modified to have sentence stems added to the answer column.
- Students can complete all the tasks above in pairs, groups, or as a class.
- Students can use a computer or tablet to write down their thoughts instead of by hand.

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Assessment Opportunities

- Observational and anecdotal notes can be used for assessment for learning, which can also be evidenced by the completion of the Royal symbols and medals worksheet.
- Assessment as learning can be facilitated by a Two Stars and a Wish activity or a simple reflective journal entry about the activity, sharing what students understood and what they need more time on.

Sources and additional resources

- [Video: Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee](#)
- [The Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II](#)
- [Canadian Identity and Society](#)
- [Honours, Medals, and Awards](#)
- [Symbolism of the Canadian Platinum Jubilee Emblem](#)
- [PDF: The Symbolism of the Canadian Platinum Jubilee Emblem](#)

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Royal symbols and medals	
Canada has its own emblem celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Find the United Kingdom's Platinum Jubilee emblem.	
Find a flag that represents the Queen and Canada. Are there any other royal flags that represent Canada and the United Kingdom? Provide an example.	
Did you know that Canada has another anthem besides the national anthem? What is it?	
Find three medals made in honour of the Queen.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.
Find a coin that has a representation or symbol of the Queen on at least one of its faces.	
What is the significance of the Queen's Royal Crown and Cypher in Canada?	
Pick one of the symbols above and research the history behind it. When was the emblem or song first created? What are the details marking the symbol and what do they represent (e.g., colours, flowers, coat of arms)?	