

2. The Commonwealth - Touring Canada



Overview:

This lesson plan introduces students to Commonwealth Day, which is celebrated on March 14 in Commonwealth countries around the world. Students will learn about the Commonwealth and its connection to Canada by seeking out answers to the following questions: What is the Commonwealth? Why is the Commonwealth relevant to Canada? What are the royal tours and what is their importance?

Time:

1 hour

Subject/topic:

History, social studies, geography

Grade:

K - 12

Materials:

- The Commonwealth fact sheet
- Plan your own royal tour handout
- Map of Canada handout

Learning objectives:

Students will:

- Learn a brief history of the Commonwealth.
- Learn about Queen Elizabeth II's royal tours in Canada.
- Use a map of Canada to create their own royal tour.

Lesson Description

Minds on:

Students will watch the BBC's video [What is the Commonwealth?](#) in order to fill in the blanks on the Commonwealth fact sheet and discuss what they learned.

Action:

Students will learn about Canada's relationship with the United Kingdom focusing on Queen Elizabeth II's royal tours of Canada using the Government of Canada's [70 Years of Service](#) web page. Using the map of Canada and the Plan your own royal tour handouts provided, students will plan a tour for Queen Elizabeth II.

Conclusion:

Once students have finished planning their own royal tours, students will write a descriptive paragraph about the tour they created. Students will share their maps and paragraphs with the class.

Lesson Implementation

Minds on

As a class, begin the lesson by distributing the Commonwealth fact sheet.

Students will watch the BBC's video [What is the Commonwealth?](#) and answer the prompts on the fact sheet provided.

Students will share and discuss what they've learned. Use the following guiding questions to generate discussion:

- What are three facts that you find interesting?
- What are some pros and cons of the Commonwealth?
- Can you think of any past and/or current events that are important to the relationship between Canada and the United Kingdom?
- What are some remaining questions you may have about the Commonwealth?

For younger students:

Have chart paper or a white board and markers ready to create an anchor chart with students. Track the students' thoughts on the chart paper or white board.

Show students the Commonwealth's [map of member countries](#). Have students read the list of countries and identify the different continents within which they reside. Use the following guiding questions to generate discussion:

- Which continents do these countries belong to?
- What do you notice about Canada?
- Why do you think Canada is part of the Commonwealth?
- What do you know about our country's connection to the United Kingdom?

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Connection to the Canadian Geography Framework:

Concepts of Geographic Thinking

- Interrelationship
- Spatial Significance

Inquiry Process

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

Geospatial Skills

- Foundational elements
- Spatial representations

Action

Once students have learned about and discussed the Commonwealth and Canada's relationship to the United Kingdom, have them access the Government of Canada's [70 Years of Service](#) web page.

Have students read over the timeline on the web page of Queen Elizabeth II's visits to Canada. Discuss the various reasons explained for her visits and the places she's explored.

Distribute the "Plan your own tour" handout and the map of Canada to students. Explain to students that they will plan and organize what the Queen's next visit to Canada would look like.

Students will complete the handout by answering the prompts on the handout and mapping out the Queen's trip.

For younger students:

As a class, students can look at the collection of photos from [The Queen and Canada: a Platinum jubilee timeline](#) by *Canadian Geographic*. Ask students the following guiding questions:

- Can you recognize any landmarks in the photos? Flags? Buildings? Events? What places can you identify?
- Why do you think the Queen has visited these places?
- In the photos, what are some of the activities that the Queen is participating in?
- Do you think the Queen will visit Canada again soon? Where will she visit and what will she do?

Students can write and/or draw what they imagine the Queen's visit to your city would look like. Students can also discuss through a think, pair, share or [Artful Thinking](#) activity.

Conclusion and Consolidation

Once students have completed the "Plan your own tour" handout, they will write a paragraph to describe the royal visit they created for the Queen and their motivation behind the cities they chose. Students can plan a royal tour to celebrate the Queen's [Platinum Jubilee](#) or find another reason for the Queen's tour.

Have student volunteers share with the class their map and the paragraph they wrote of the tour they created. Discuss why they chose certain places across Canada. Students can make a final copy of their maps and paragraphs to be hung around the class or school for a gallery walk.

For younger students:

Using the government of Canada's web page about [Meeting the Royal Family](#), divide students into groups and have them re-enact how to address, host, curtsy, bow, and toast the Queen.

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Extend your geographical thinking

- Students can be challenged to plot all 54 Commonwealth countries onto a blank map of the world.
- Once students are done mapping their tours, have them calculate the distance that would be traveled by the Queen.
- Students can be challenged to identify all the provinces and capital cities on the map of Canada handout and add all the elements of a map that are missing (title, scale, legend, compass, etc.)
- Students can start an inquiry project about one of the 54 Commonwealth countries and their shared history with the United Kingdom.
- Students can create a scrapbook researching all the famous landmarks unique to the places that the Queen would visit in the tour they created.
- Students can virtually plot their tour using [Esri StoryMaps](#) or [Google Earth](#).

Modifications

- Students can complete all the tasks above in pairs, groups or as a class.
- Students can use a computer or tablet to write their thoughts instead of by hand.
- The BBC video can be played slower and with subtitles.

Assessment Opportunities

- Observational and anecdotal notes can be used for assessment for learning which can also be evidenced by the completion of the handouts.
- 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 they understood and what they need more time on.

Sources and additional resources

- [What is the Commonwealth?](#)
- [Commonwealth map](#)
- [70 Years of Service](#)
- [The Queen and Canada: a platinum jubilee timeline](#)
- [Artful Thinking](#)
- [Meeting the Royal Family](#)
- [Esri StoryMaps](#)
- [Google Earth](#)
- [Canada and the Commonwealth](#)
- [Commonwealth Member Countries](#)
- [Royal tours of Canada](#)

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The Commonwealth fact sheet

What is the Commonwealth?

When was it founded?

What are two demographic facts about the Commonwealth?

What are three important values of the Commonwealth Charter?

List of Commonwealth countries

Africa

Botswana
Cameroon
Gambia
Ghana
Kenya
Eswatini
Lesotho
Malawi
Mauritius
Mozambique
Namibia
Nigeria
Rwanda
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
South Africa
Uganda
Tanzania
Zambia

Caribbean and Americas

Antigua and Barbuda
Bahamas
Barbados
Belize
Canada
Dominica
Grenada
Guyana
Jamaica
St. Lucia
St. Kitts and Nevis
St. Vincent and the
Grenadines
Trinidad and Tobago

Asia

Bangladesh
Brunei
India
Malaysia
Maldives
Pakistan
Singapore
Sri Lanka

Europe

Cyprus
Malta
United Kingdom

Pacific

Australia
Fiji
Kiribati
Nauru
New Zealand
Papua New Guinea
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tonga
Tuvalu
Vanuatu

Before the birth of the modern Commonwealth in 1949, Canada joined the British Commonwealth in 1931. Canada has held a rich and historical relationship with the United Kingdom which continues to this day. One of the most long-standing traditions between Canada and the United Kingdom, going back to the late 18th century, has been the royal tours of Canada. Can you think of other ways we maintain our relationship with the United Kingdom?

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Plan your own royal tour



After reading about the 70-year-long tradition of royal visits and tours from the Queen, imagine what the Queen's next royal tour of Canada might look like.

The government of Canada's [70 Years of Service](#) web page highlights the reasons and occasions for why the Queen has visited Canada in the past. What could be the reason for the Queen's visit for the tour you are planning?

Identify five places that the Queen would visit. They can be small towns, national parks, cities etc. List the specific places.

What are one or two landmarks that the Queen would visit during her stay in each place?

Using the map of Canada provided, identify all the places that the Queen would visit. Draw a line connecting them from where she would begin her tour to where she would end it.

Taking inspiration from the descriptive paragraphs about the Queen's royal tours from the web page, [70 Years of Service](#), write your own paragraph describing the tour you created.

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Map of Canada

