

# A Soldier's Account of the War of 1812

## Lesson Overview

After exploring the history of the War of 1812, students will create a diary expressing the views of a British soldier in the war.

## Grade Level

Grade 5

## Time Required

Two 60 minute classes

## Curriculum Connection (Province/Territory and course)

Alberta – Grade 5 Social Studies

## Additional Resources, Materials and Equipment Required

- Appendix A: The Taking of the City of Washington in America (attached)
- Appendix B: List of British Soldiers who fought in the War of 1812 (attached)
- Computer lab with internet access.

### Websites:

*Canadian Atlas Online War of 1812 theme*

<http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/atlas>

## Main Objective

Students will learn the importance of examining different points of view by producing a diary from the perspective of a British soldier who fought in the War of 1812.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- explain the causes, players and events of the War of 1812;
- recognize that there are varying perspectives when studying the past;
- understand the role and the associated benefits and challenges of using primary sources of information to explore the past;
- compose and construct a diary from a soldier's point of view.

## The Lesson

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	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>Provide an overview of the War of 1812 based on the information found in the <i>Canadian Atlas Online War of 1812</i> theme.</p> <p>Distribute copies of <i>Appendix A: The Taking of the City of Washington in America</i>. Instruct the students to study the painting for several minutes. Ask the class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whose viewpoint is presented in the painting: British or American?</li> <li>• In what ways would a British soldier view the burning of Washington? How would this differ from the view of an American soldier?</li> </ul> <p>Explain that the class is going to create a diary from the perspective of a British soldier who has fought in the War of 1812.</p>	<p>Listen to the overview.</p> <p>Share thoughts about the painting.</p> <p>Listen to the directions.</p>
<b>Lesson Development</b>	<p>Explain to students that they will explore the life/lives of real soldiers from the War of 1812 in order to write from the perspective of a British soldier in their diary.</p> <p>Distribute <i>Appendix B: List of British Soldiers who fought in the War of 1812</i>. Escort students to a computer lab with internet access. Instruct them to complete point-form research on one or more of the names listed.</p> <p>Assign a diary activity. Use a Diary Rubric (such as the example provided in the assessment section of this lesson) to explain the criteria required.</p>	<p>Listen to the instructions.</p> <p>Conduct research.</p> <p>Create a diary using the criteria in a Diary Rubric as a guide.</p>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<p>Assign students to a triad (group of 3).</p> <p>Advise students to share one entry from their diaries with two other people.</p>	<p>Students will share one entry each from their diaries with the members in their triad.</p>

## Lesson Extension

- Using a map, explore why the first capital of Upper Canada, Newark (now Niagara-on-the Lake) was moved to York (Toronto) in 1793. What was the role of geography in the move?

[Until 1791, all the lands north of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes were simply known as "Quebec." In 1791, the Constitutional Act divided and renamed this vast territory. The Ontario area was called Upper Canada, and the remainder of old Quebec was called Lower Canada. The first capital of Upper Canada was Newark near the Canada-U.S. border. The capital was moved in 1793 to York which was less vulnerable to raids from the new republic to the south. Upper Canada's first Lieutenant Governor was General John Graves Simcoe.]

## Assessment of Student Learning

- Use a rubric to assess the diaries. An example can be found at [http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php?screen=ShowRubric&module=Rubistar&rubric\\_id=1165989](http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php?screen=ShowRubric&module=Rubistar&rubric_id=1165989).

## Further Reading

- *Canadian Geographic War of 1812* poster-map
- War of 1812 interactive map & timeline  
<http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/war1812>
- Malcolmson, Robert. *Historical Dictionary of The War of 1812*
- Graves, Dianne. *In the Midst of Alarms: The Untold Story of Women in the War of 1812*
- National Archives Website  
<http://www.archives.gov/>
- War of 1812 Magazine -  
[http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/Contemporary\\_Studies/2008/2008-Feb/2008-02-25\\_War\\_of\\_1812\\_Magazine-Issue\\_8\\_e.asp](http://www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/Contemporary_Studies/2008/2008-Feb/2008-02-25_War_of_1812_Magazine-Issue_8_e.asp)
- Archives Canada  
<http://www.archivescanada.ca/english/index.html>
- War of 1812  
<http://www.warof1812.ca>

## Link to Canadian National Geography Standards

Essential Element #6: The Uses of Geography

- Influences of physical and human features on historical events.

Geographic Skill #2: Acquiring Geographic Information

- Locate, gather and process information from a variety of primary and secondary sources including maps.

Geographic Skill #4: Analyzing Geographic Information

- Use texts, photographs, and documents to observe and interpret geographic trends and relationships.

**Appendix B:**  
**List of British Soldiers who fought in the War of 1812**

Name	Rank	Regiment
Sir George Prevost	Lieutenant General	
Charles de Salaberry	Lieutenant Colonel	
Sir James Lucas Yeo	Commander in Chief of Naval Army	
Laura Secord	British Sympathiser	
William Faulkner	Assistant Surgeon	
Sir Isaac Brock	Major General	
Tecumseh	Shawnee Chief	
Robert Addison	Reverend	
Robert Dickson	Lieutenant Colonel	
John Richardson	Gentleman Volunteer	41 <sup>st</sup> Regiment
William Hamilton Merritt	Solider	Niagara Light Dragoons
Adam Muir	Major	41 <sup>st</sup> Foot
Shadrach Byfield	Private	41 <sup>st</sup> Regiment



