Working People: A History of Labour in BC



**Dark Days at Second Narrows**

**Film Summary:** On June 17, 1958, word quickly spread that the bridge crossing under construction across Second Narrows had collapsed. The film examines the reasons for the collapse and the impact it had on the Ironworkers who built it. In memory of the workers killed, the bridge is now known as the Ironworkers’ Memorial Bridge**.**

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**Curriculum Application** Youth work in Trades 11/12, Work Experience

12A/12B, CLE, CLC and

Social Justice 12, Law Studies 12

**The Essential Question:**

What is the impact of workplace accidents on the lives of the workers and their families and the community at large?

**Summary of the Lesson Activities**

1. Focus questions for the vignette provides a short lesson option. (15 minutes )
2. Students have a variety of writing assignments to complete after watching the vignette and reading the background information on the Second Narrows Bridge collapse.
3. An extension activity where the students investigate frequency and nature of workplace accidents since the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge.

1. To be able to explain what workplace safety protocols are in place to protect workers in British Columbia.

2. To be aware of how individuals can provide leadership as agents for change in such matters as workplaces safety.

3. Access information and ideas on workplace safety prior to work placement to determine workplace safety risks.

4. Understand occupational health and safety rights and responsibilities**,** including trade-specific hazards, risk reduction, and the rights and proceduresto refuse unsafe work.

Learning Standards

**Materials and Resources Provided**

* [“Dark Day at Second Narrows” Working People – A History of Labour in British Columbia](https://www.labourheritagecentre.ca/bridge/)
* Lesson Activity 1: Outline for Class Discussion
* Lesson Activity 2 Extension activities for students
* Lesson Activity 3: Further student inquiries

**Additional Suggested Materials**

### [Ironworkers Memorial Bridge Tribute](https://youtu.be/-4Kq5xtlWuQ)

* [George Orr “The Bridge”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lttghLG51z0)
* ['It’s a memory I can’t forget': 60th anniversary of the Second Narrows Bridge collapse | Vancouver Sun](https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/60th-anniversary-of-the-second-narrows-bridge-collapse)
* [Metro Vancouver Satellite Map](https://metrovancouver.org/school-programs/Documents/regional-satellite-map.pdf)
* On the Line: A history of the British Columbia Labour Movement p144-149

1. A short lesson option would involve showing the vignette and using the vignette questions to guide a follow-up discussion on the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge.
2. For a more in-depth lesson use the suggested outline in Lesson Activity 1 to guide a more detailed class discussion on the collapse of the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge. (1 class period)
3. Further understanding of the event and exploration of current dangers in the workplace, students can be assigned one or more of the questions in Lesson Activity 2: Extension Activity for students. Guiding questions for a debriefing of the activity are found on page 4 of Lesson Activity 2.
4. Further extensions on the lesson are provided in Lesson Activity 3 where students can undertake directed research into a related topic of workplace safety.

**Lesson Activities**

**Vignette Questions**

1. What was the design type for the Second Narrows Bridge? (For further information research the design elements of this bridge type and explain where its design is applied.)
2. Most of the workers killed on the bridge collapse were part of which union?
3. How does the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge rank as an industrial accident in Vancouver?
4. What was the most dangerous job after the bridge collapsed? Explain.
5. What was determined to be the cause of the collapse of the bridge by the inquiry?
6. What was the Second Narrows Bridge renamed in 1996?
7. What should be the lessons learned from the disaster at Second Narrows?

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Credit: Teaching Activities and Lesson Plan developed by Al Cornes