Labour History Project Working People: A History of Labour in BC



**First Economies**

**Film Summary:** Referencing the pre-existing economy prior to colonization, this film powerfully places in context the significant role that BC First Nations played in the establishment and prosperity of British Columbia.

**The Essential Question:**

What was the role of Aboriginal Peoples in the economic development of early British Columbia?

**Curriculum Application**

* Social Studies 5 (with adaptations)
* Social Studies 10
* Social Justice 12
* BC First Nations 12

**Summary of the Lesson Activities**

1. Focus questions for the vignette provide a short lesson option. (15 minutes)
2. Interpreting photographs exercise (small group activity)
3. Reading exercise of supplemental materials
4. Focused writing exercise to wrap up the lesson
5. Students should have some previous teaching about the first contact with Europeans, the fur trade, and colonization of British Columbia.
6. Students can engage in a role playing/simulation exercise on the First Nations economies and experience in early British Columbia

Learning Objectives

1. To critically examine the portrayals of First Nations workers in early British Columbia, and to explore aspects of their lives.
2. To explore the community and social meanings of these portrayals while questioning preconceived stereotypes of First Nations people, and the nature of their roles as workers.
3. To examine gender and family roles within these portrayals.
4. To examine the changing power roles of these workers overtime from skilled independence to become disempowered employees

Prior to viewing the vignette ensure that the students understand the term **economy**.

1. Brainstorm/think-pair-share or write out their definitions and share them with the class. Students should have the following key terms in their definition “ the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services”
2. Before European contact what were the 3 main features in the economy of BC’s Indigenous (Aboriginal) People?
3. What kind of economic activities did Aboriginal Peoples contribute to the early economy of British Columbia after European contact?
4. What other kinds of activity did Aboriginal Peoples make to the European economic development of British Columbia that is not mentioned in the vignette?
5. Go back to your definition of “economy” in question 1. Make a chart of the economic contributions of Aboriginal peoples to the economy of British Columbia before and after European contact. In pairs or in small groups write a summary statement that reflects the content of this chart.

**Vignette Questions**

**Additional Suggested Materials**

[The Labour Movement in British Columbia 1840-1914](https://teachbcdb.bctf.ca/download/157?filename=bc-labour-history-1840-1914.docx)

[Edge of the World- the Salmon People](http://staging.knowledge.ca/program/the-edge-of-the-world-bcs-early-years-shorts)

* Have the students write a paragraph response to the Essential Question for evaluation

**Materials and Resources Provided**

* [*The First Economies* Episode 1. Working People : A History of Labour in British Columbia](https://www.knowledge.ca/program/working-people-history-labour-british-columbia)
* Activity Master: Interpreting Photographs (Document 1)
* The Five Photographs of Aboriginal Workers (Document 2)
* The Circle Exercise (Document 3)
* Appendix A: The First Nations
* Appendix B: The Europeans

**Lesson Activities**

Introduce the handout “Interpreting Photographs”(Document 1). Distribute it, and use as a discussion example any generally well established photo type. For example, a CLASS PHOTO or SCHOOL TEAM PHOTO. Use “Part 1: General questions to consider” to practice the process.

Once the class has analyzed these general questions, do “Part 2: Detailed Observation”. Show the class how their background knowledge has informed their observation (eg/ What a class is? How a team structured?

Model the more complex process of “Subjective Reactions” and “Inferences” with regard to the Class Photo or Team Photo.

Distribute the Four Photographs of Aboriginal Workers (Document 2) included in this Lesson Package without captions. They may be given to five groups (one picture per six student group), or have ten groups of three, each with an image.

Have the groups record their interpretation, and then report out to the class their interpretations. The image could be projected for the class to observe while they report out.

Show the Knowledge Network Vignette, “The First Economies”. Has the video changed your interpretation of the photos? Explain. The Teacher then reveals the missing information from the four images.

Alternate or additional lesson activity, **the First Nations Economies in early British Columbia- The Circles Exercise** ( Document 3 and Appendix A&B)

Credit: Teaching Activities and Lesson Plan developed by Gavin Hainsworth and Janet Nichol