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



**Mayo Singh**

**Film Summary:** An important and often unknown story of the town of Paldi, located on Vancouver Island, and the history of Indo-Canadian workers in BC's forest industry.

**The Essential Question:**

Why was Mayo Singh’s contribution as a “lumberman” and a community builder a significant event in the early history of British Columbia?

**Curriculum Application**

Social Studies 10

Social Studies 11

**Summary of the Lesson Activities**

1. Focus questions for the vignette provide a short lesson option. ( 15 minutes)
2. Discussion to examine the role of multicultural communities in the development of B.C.’s Forest Industry
3. Identification of the biases and prejudices that ethnic communities experienced in early British Columbia
4. A simulated newspaper writing assignment from 1928 on the community of Mayo (Paldi)
5. Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Learning Objectives

1. Identify and describe Mayo Singh and his Indo-Canadian community in a context of a racist “white man’s country” in early 20th century British Columbia.
2. Identify and describe the uniqueness of the village of Mayo (later Paldi) among resource communities in early British Columbia.
3. To research and write historical narratives from multiple perspectives.
4. The shorter version of the lesson can be taught as part of the final historical unit in Social Studies 10 that examines the experiences of ethnic groups in British Columbia before and after the Komagata Maru incident in 1914.
5. Social Studies 11 classes may use the materials to examine the immigration issues and practices that followed the First World War.
6. A lesson strategy and guidelines for discussion following the vignette are provided in Document 1.
7. A newspaper exercise simulating a reporter’s assignment to cover the unique community of Mayo (Paldi) in 1928 is provided in Activity 2

**Lesson Activities**

1. Which groups of South Asians were predominant in the early Forest Industry of B.C? Why were they able to immigrate to British Columbia with greater ease than other groups?
2. Why did ethnic forest workers face discrimination?
3. What significant achievement was reached by B.C.’s Forest industry in 1908?
4. Describe the steps that Mayo Singh took to open his own sawmill in 1916?
5. Considering the ethnic conflicts in BC at the time of Mayo Singh’s opening of his sawmill, how were his hiring practices different from other business owners?

**Vignette Questions**

**Additional Suggested Materials**

* The Story of Paldi <http://www.paldi.ca/?p=1>

**Materials and Resources Provided**

[Mayo Singh-Working People: A History of Labour in British Columbia](https://cdnapisec.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/preview/partner_id/1454421/uiconf_id/26824312/entry_id/0_qkhod12v/embed/dynamic)

Document 1 Lesson Strategy

Activity 1 Narratives

Activity 2 Newspaper Assignment

Credit: Teaching Activities and Lesson Plan developed by Tony Arruda