

**Date Reviewed**

February 2023

**Course**

[Social Studies 9](#)

**Topic**

Discriminatory Policies

**Big Idea**

Disparities in power alter the balance of relationships between individuals and between societies.

**Essential Question**

How might specific examples of past incidents of inequality be handled today under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

**Learning Standards****Content**

*Students are expected to know the following:*

- discriminatory policies, attitudes, and historical wrongs.

**Curricular Competencies**

*Students are expected to be able to do the following:*

- make reasoned ethical judgments about actions in the past and present, and determine appropriate ways to remember and respond. (ethical judgment)

**Core Competencies**

[Communication](#) - I can describe historic discriminatory policies towards ethnic minorities and First Peoples in Canada.

[Thinking](#) - I can analyze ways the Canadian government justified discriminatory policies.

[Personal and Social](#) - I can explain how the Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects Canadians and reflects our values.

**[First People's Principles of Learning](#)**

Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

## Introduction

- Introduce the curricular competency of ethical judgement by showing this 6-minute [video](#) by the Critical Thinking Consortium
- Have students respond to the following questions:
  - Before watching the video, were you aware that the Canadian government interned Ukrainians in Canada during the First World War?
  - Why do you think more Canadians are not aware of this historical event?
  - What might have been the government's motivations for interning groups of people during a time of war?
  - What impact would this government action have on the people who were interned?
  - Was internment justified? Why or why not?
- Point out three criteria for making an ethical judgement about a historical event:
  - Interests and perspectives of all key groups are considered
  - Beliefs at the time are considered
  - Adequate relevant evidence is consulted

## Pre-Assessment

- Have students work in small groups to brainstorm other examples of discriminatory policies toward ethnic minorities and First Nations in Canada.
- Have students discuss the question: Do discriminatory policies continue to exist in Canada today?

## Interactive Learning Activities

- Have students work in small groups to choose a historical injustice in Canada that interests them. For example:
  - Head Tax on Chinese immigrants
    - [Chinese Head Tax in Canada](#)
  - Komagata Maru incident
    - [Komagata Maru](#)
  - internment of Japanese-Canadians during World War 2
    - [Japanese Canadian Internment: Prisoners in their own Country](#)
  - residential schools
    - [Residential Schools in Canada](#)
  - potlatch ban
    - [Potlatch](#)
    - [The Potlatch Ban](#)
  - women's suffrage
    - [Women's Suffrage in Canada](#)
- Students should work with their groups to research this historical injustice using multiple sources.

- Provide students with a copy of the chart “Inquiry into a Discriminatory Policy in Canadian History” and access to text and digital resources related to their topics (see additional references). Students should record their findings in the inquiry chart.
- Provide students with a copy of the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) and a copy of the handout “Thinking About the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms”. Have students work in their groups to consider what sections of the Charter relate to their chosen historical injustice and determine whether this injustice could happen today.
- Groups should organize their key findings on poster paper or chart paper and then participate in a [gallery walk](#) to view the findings of other groups.

## Post-Assessment

Journal:

- What reasons did the Canadian government have for creating discriminatory policies in the past?
- Were these reasons ever justified? Give specific examples to support your point of view.
- How effective is the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in preventing discriminatory policies today? Give examples to support your point of view.

## Extension Activities

Debate Topic: Is the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms effective in preventing discrimination?

### [Inner Circle-Outer Circle Debate](#)

- Arrange students into two groups of equal size who take opposing sides in the debate. Each group has an opportunity to listen to the other group discuss an issue and formulate conclusions, as well as discuss and formulate its own conclusions.
- The students in Group 1 sit in a circle of chairs facing out, away from the center, while the students in Group 2 sit in a circle of chairs around Group 1, facing the center of the circle as well as the students in Group 1. Once the students are seated, the teacher reads aloud the issue to be discussed.
- The students in the inner circle have 10 to 15 minutes to discuss the topic. During that time, all other students focus their attention on the students in the inner circle. No one else is allowed to speak during the inner circle's discussion time.
- As the outer circle group observes the inner circle group and listens to the discussion, members of the outer circle group create a list of the arguments made by each member of the inner circle group. The outer circle students also prepare their own notes about these arguments.
- After 10 to 15 minutes, the groups switch roles and the process is repeated. After the second round, all students share their outer circle observations. The notes from both rounds may be used in a follow-up classroom discussion and/or as an editorial writing assignment for students to express their positions on the issue at hand.

## Additional References

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<https://historicalthinking.ca/ethical-dimensions>

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<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/timeline/immigration>

First Nations Education Steering Committee. [n.d.] "Learning First Peoples Classroom Resources."  
<http://www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples/>

## Materials and Resources

### Inquiry into a Discriminatory Policy in Canadian History

<b>What</b> was the discriminatory policy?	
<b>Who</b> was affected by this policy?	
<b>When</b> did this happen? How long did it last?	
<b>Where</b> did this happen? In all of Canada or in specific provinces / regions?	
<b>How</b> was this policy enforced?	
<b>Why</b> did the Canadian government make this policy?	

### Thinking About the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

What section(s) of the Charter relates to this discriminatory policy?

Could this discriminatory policy exist today under the Charter? Why or why not?