

## **LOUISIANA AND CANADA: UNDERSTANDING ACADIAN CULTURAL CONNECTIONS**

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### **Description:**

After learning about the Acadian expulsion from Canada, students will analyze the impact that Acadians have had on Louisiana's history and culture.

### **Grade Level:**

This lesson is designed for high school social studies classes, particularly for World Geography courses at the 9th Grade level. However, lessons may be adapted to meet the requirements of other courses in the social studies disciplines.

### **Duration:**

6 one-hour class periods (lessons may need to be shortened or extended at the discretion of individual teachers).

### **Goal:**

Both Canada and Louisiana are a mixture of ethnic backgrounds, but one ethnic group, the Acadians, has been especially influential in both regions. As a result of this lesson, students will explain why Acadians initially migrated to Louisiana, their life in Louisiana, and the long-term impact that migration has had on Louisiana.

### **Objectives:**

The students will:

- Describe the impact that migration has on the development of culture.
- Describe historical events that shaped Acadian culture.
- Explain how cultures adapt, modify customs and develop over time.
- Consider factors that influence people to move from one region to another.
- Describe how the hostility between England and France led to the eventual expulsion of the Acadians.
- Construct and label a map to describe Acadian migration patterns.
- Compare and contrast physical and cultural elements of Canada and Louisiana.
- Describe commonly held generalizations about target cultures (Canada and Louisiana).
- Analyze significant factors (historical, geographic, economic, and political) that impact cultural practices.
- Compare and contrast the treatment of the Acadians by British and US governments on the Cajuns.
- Compare and contrast how interaction with the environment affected the lives of the Acadians and Cajuns in Louisiana.
- Use primary and secondary sources to learn about the past.

### **Standards:**

The lesson meets Louisiana state standards and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) as well as national standards issued by the National Council for the Social Studies.

### **Background Information:**

Prior to the lesson students will conduct research regarding the history of the Acadians' expulsion from Nova Scotia.

### **Materials:**

Computers with Internet  
Art supplies (scissors, glue, construction paper, magazines)

## Procedures:

### Day One (Possibly More):

1. With a partner, students will brainstorm cultural and physical characteristics of Canada. Students will CIRCLE items on the list that are similar to those found in Louisiana and UNDERLINE those that are different.
2. Compile a class list using either INSPIRATION software, butcher paper, or white board.
3. As a group, discuss stereotypes that people might have about Louisiana. (For example, my aunt who lives in Ontario really thought we had pet alligators!)
4. Review both lists with students. Then discuss the following issues:
  - a. How many of the items listed on the chart, Perceptions of Canada, do you think are true? How many do you think are stereotypes?
  - b. How many of the items listed on the chart, Stereotypes of Louisiana, are true? How many are false?
  - c. Where do you think these misperceptions come from in both cases? Do you find any of the misconceptions to be insulting? Explain.
5. Define ETHNOCENTRISM. Explain how ethnocentrism can be a negative AND positive trait. Discuss how ethnocentrism influences how other cultures may perceive one another.
6. Add words to designated WORD WALL: *Ethnocentrism, Diaspora, emigrant, exodus, migration, immigrant, ordinance, Acadians.*
7. Present PowerPoint: *Louisiana and Canada: A Strong Cultural Connection* and discuss with students.

**[NB: Although Acadians have migrated throughout Canada and Northeast US, for the purpose of this lesson, I have limited my focus to Acadians in Nova Scotia and Louisiana. This PowerPoint provides background information about Acadian history and is not intended as a comprehensive study. It is designed for an at-a-glance view so students can take notes on any pertinent information. During the course of the lesson, students will have the opportunity to delve further into Acadian history through a group research assignment.]**

- a. History of Acadian culture: origins, life in Canada, and expulsion and eventual life in Louisiana
  - As students view this section of the PowerPoint, distribute a blank map of North America so students can sketch the migration path that the Acadians took to Louisiana. Create map key detailing the migration settlements of the Acadians. (Color in Canadian provinces where Acadians originate: New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island)
  - Use a dotted line to sketch the migration pattern of the Cajuns from Acadia.
  - Label New York, North Carolina, and Massachusetts on the map. Explain to students Acadians did not only settle in Louisiana but also in the states mentioned above. [Many returned to France, too.]
  - From each of these states draw a line connecting it to Louisiana. Each line should be in a different color of marker or crayon.
  - As students complete their maps, discuss different modes of transportation. Describe conditions on the ships and why many Acadians lost their lives fleeing from the British.
- b. Life in Louisiana: settlement patterns, development of distinct culture
- c. Discrimination: Cajun French vs. Acadian discrimination under British
- d. Continued preservation of French heritage in Louisiana today

### Day Two

1. Journal Entry: Reviewing your notes and class discussion from the previous day, write one paragraph describing the importance of ethnic identity as it relates to the history of the Acadians and Cajuns in Louisiana.
2. With a partner, students will compile a list of as many words as possible that they believe have French origin (i.e. street names, parishes, town/city names, surnames, businesses, restaurants, stores, food, etc.) Remind students to be prepared to share lists with class the next day.
3. After students have had ample time to brainstorm, students will share their lists of French words with the class. Record the list on a piece of butcher paper, Inspiration software, or word wall. Leave this list up throughout the duration of the lesson.
4. Students will choose FIVE words from the group list that they think derive from Acadia. Then, they will create a collage focusing on how these items have influenced Louisiana culture. Collages can be done on computer or construction paper. Students may draw images or cut images from magazines.
5. On the back of the collage, students will write one paragraph explaining what the collage represents and why he/she selected these specific words. Additionally, students will reflect on how the items selected connect to Acadian culture that was brought to Louisiana from France and Louisiana.

### Day Three

1. Journal Activity: To begin the lesson, students will write a reflection in their daily journals from the perspective of an Acadian man/woman who has just found out he/she must flee his home. Reflections should include what emotions that person is grappling with and what he/she believes will happen as a result of the forced migration. (Is the narrator hopeful for a new beginning? Excited about being able to practice his/her own traditions? Scared about uprooting his/her family? Is the narrator attuned to what possible tragedy could arise as a result of this forced expulsion?)
2. Ask student volunteers to share their letters. Emphasize to students that many did not realize that families and friends would be separated never to reunite.
3. Students will conduct research on the reasons why Acadians were expelled from the land. Divide students into two groups so that their research considers a particular perspective:
  - a. British officials *in favor* of Acadian expulsion
  - b. Acadians who do not want to leave their homesDivide students unevenly with the group of BRITISH OFFICIALS being slightly larger than the ACADIAN group.

(For websites visit <http://trackstar.4teachers.org>. Once in the site, type in Track # 387952 in the box. The track entitled *Acadian Culture: Nova Scotia and Louisiana* will appear. Click on "View in Frames" and the web links will appear on the lefthand side of the screen).

4. Distribute to each student "Acadian Expulsion Debate Log" for recording pertinent information during research process and have students use the remainder of class time to conduct research.

### Day Four

1. Allow time at the beginning of class for students to reconvene and make last minute preparations for debate.
2. Debate Rules:
  - A. Opening Arguments: (2 minutes each)
    - IN FAVOR (British Officials)
    - AGAINST (Acadians)
  - B. Open Argument (Allow Acadians to open questions) (10 minutes)
  - C. Rebuttal (2 minutes)
    - AGAINST (Acadians)
    - IN FAVOR (British Officials)
3. After the debate ask students to consider why the groups were uneven and how those in the group with the least representation felt. Then, explain that many Acadians did not truly understand the expulsion orders because they did not speak English. The expulsion was a time of confusion and anger for many Acadians since they had no voice in their own destinies.
4. Assessment: Write a one page editorial of what occurred during the debate. Act as an eyewitness reporter who sat in during the proceedings. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of both sides. Explain why the British government had more representatives than the Acadians who were fighting for their land.

### Day Five

1. Students will be divided into groups to conduct further research about the topics discussed the previous day.
  - A. Origin of Acadians and Life in Acadia (1604-1755)
  - B. Events leading up to the deportation of the Acadians by the English and the 1755 deportation of the Acadians from Nova Scotia (Grand Dérangement)
  - C. Cajuns in Louisiana during the 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries
  - D. Compulsory Education Act of 1916 and it consequences on French Louisiana
  - E. Cajun culture in Louisiana today
  - F. Acadian culture in Nova Scotia today
2. Students will need access to computers with Internet. They will use the same TRACKSTAR webquest used for the debate (For websites visit <http://trackstar.4teachers.org>. Once in the site, type in Track # 387952 in the box. The track entitled *Acadian Culture: Nova Scotia and Louisiana* will appear. Click on "View in Frames" and the web links will appear on the lefthand side of the screen).

**NB: As a result of the research, students will create a PowerPoint presentation, poem, poster, drawing, or collage depicting what they learned from their research. They will present their findings to the class on Day Six.**

## **Day Six:**

1. Students will present findings to the class.
2. As students present, the audience will record any new information they learned from the various presentations.
3. After all groups have presented, students should answer the following questions in their journals:
  - What do you think it means to be Acadian?
  - Do you agree with the statement that Acadia is influenced by its past?
  - What factors helped the Acadians form a strong cultural identity?[NB: The term “Acadian” relates to both Nova Scotia and Louisiana heritage.]

## **Possible Extension:**

1. Students can interview family members to learn about their family history an ethnic background.
  - a. To begin the lesson students should interview parents or another adult about the origin of the name (If students lives with a relative that is not the biological parent, he/she can interview that person. If the student does not live with biological family for whatever reason, he/she may interview that person in place of biological family members).
  - b. As students conduct the interview, they will ask as many probing questions so they can gather information regarding information pertaining to the ethnic background. Students should reflect upon the following information:
    - Is the name a common name to your state, community, or country?
    - What is the ethnic origin of your name?
    - Were you named for someone in particular? If so, who?
    - Did the name experience any changes upon your ancestors’ arrival to the US? (For example, was the family’s original name or was it anglicized? (Rossi to Ross) If so, what was the motivation behind the name change?).
  - c. Students should also explore the history of any nicknames that family members might have. (For example, how does Robert become “Chick”?)
  - d. After students have conducted their interview, they will visually represent their name. They will choose some aspect of the name to represent. (i.e.: If the name is a French name, they may choose some aspect of French culture to represent). Representations will be creative and can be a poem, picture, collage, sculpture, cartoon, etc.
  - e. Students will present their findings and name representations in a small group setting.
2. Investigate a recent event in history in which one group has been mistreated by another group. (South Africa, Civil Rights Movement, Rwanda, Sudan, Iraq, etc.) Write a brief description of the event and compare and contrast to Acadian plight.

## **Assessment:**

1. Teacher will walk around the room and evaluate student understanding based on student work and student discussion in small groups and in whole group.
2. Brainstorming activities (“What do you know about Canada?” and “French influence on Louisiana”).
3. Journal Entries
4. Student collages
5. Acadian Research Grading Rubric (see Page 7)
6. Acadian Expulsion Debate Log and Grading Rubric (see Pages 8 and 9)
7. Acadian Expulsion Editorial

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## ACADIAN PRESENTATION (Criterion Sheet)

**Group Members:**

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**Group Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Research and Cooperative Group (18)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Remained on task while in computer lab and used time wisely. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Divided workload up among group members and held one another accountable for specific duties. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Members of group collaborated and worked well with one another. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Collected information that is pertinent to assigned topic. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Participated in group discussion and research process. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mindful of classroom rules during research and cooperative group assignment. (3)

### Presentation (20)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Evident that all members collaborated on presentation. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Interesting, well-rehearsed presentation in which all members evidenced adequate preparation. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Organized and well-thought out presentation. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Remained on topic and covered topic in-depth using details and examples. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Creative presentation that clearly conveyed information. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual performance (5 points)

### Layout/Design (12)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Well-organized and neat. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Easy to read from a distance. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uses appropriate photos, icons, and clip art. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Makes excellent use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance, not distract from, the presentation. (3)

### Total Possible Points (50)

**Student Scores:**

**Teacher Comments:**

**ACADIAN EXPULSION (Debate Log Sheet)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Debate Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Possible Questions/Issues Opposition Will Ask Our Group</b>	<b>Our Argument and Potential Responses</b>	<b>Questions/Issues We Will Raise Against the Opposition</b>	<b>Opposition's Possible Responses</b>	<b>Our Rebuttal</b>

**ACADIAN EXPULSION DEBATE (Grading Rubric)**

**Group Members:**

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**Assigned Topic** \_\_\_\_\_

**Research (12)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Remained on task while in computer lab and used time wisely. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Divided workload up among group members and held one another accountable for specific duties. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Members of group collaborated and worked well with one another. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Collected information that is pertinent to assigned topic. (3)

**Preparation (10)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ All members of group had questions prepared to ask opposing team. (4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Presented thorough and accurate information. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Each speaker presented convincing argument in favor of assigned topic. (3)

**Debate (22)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Argument clearly supported by factual information. (6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Speakers were composed, well-mannered and well-spoken. (4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fair debate in which no one was allowed to dominate the debate. (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Knowledge of topic; answered questions/issues in a timely, confident manner. (6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Concise rebuttal in which debate topic was wrapped up in a convincing manner. (3)

**Total Teacher-Assigned Points: 44**

**Student Self-Evaluation of Individual Performance: 6**

**Total Combined Points Possible: 50**

**Student Scores:**

**Teacher Comments:**