

Unit 6: Discriminatory Policies, attitudes and historical wrongs

Social Studies 9

Topics

- Head Tax and other discriminatory immigration policies against people of East and South Asian descent
- gender issues
- labour history, workers' rights
- responses to discrimination in Canada

Chip Activity

- Obtain 10 chips each
- The rounds will be very quick so be prepared and have your items out of the way

Debrief

- Although I chose certain visible features for each round some examples could have been construed as favoritism
- The reality is that we need to see an example like this to understand that historically people who are different were subjected to persecution
- Now let us consider the effect of having a tax placed on Asians based on their culture

What is Discrimination?

- It is the process of excluding people that are different than the norm from participating in society.
- Specifically the norm could mean that these individuals are from a different ethnical group, practice a different religion or are a different race.

Head Tax and other discriminatory immigration policies against
people of East and South Asian descent

Chinese Head Tax

- The Chinese head tax was levied on Chinese immigration to Canada between 1885 and 1923, under the *Chinese Immigration Act (1885)*.

Chinese Head Tax

- With few exceptions, Chinese people had to pay \$50 (later raised to \$100, then \$500) to come to Canada.

Chinese Head Tax

- This anti-Chinese legislation was the first in Canadian history to exclude immigration on the basis of ethnic origin.

Chinese Head Tax

- When the tax was removed from the *Chinese Immigration Act* in 1923, Chinese immigration was banned until 1947.

Discrimination against individuals of Asian decent

- Time frame: 1850s to 1950s
- Location: British Columbia predominantly but also in other places in Canada
- Rationale: Many individuals believed that Asians were stealing jobs from white individuals as they were willing to work for less.
- Result: Asians were not allowed to be in unions, run for public office, work in public sectors, serve on juries, work as lawyers, pharmacists, teachers or civil servants.

Discrimination against individuals of Asian decent

- Result:
 - anti-Asian riots
 - Large-scale: Vancouver between 1887 and 1907
 - Small-scale: Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan between 1892 and 1907
- During WWI and WWII the armed forces were reluctant to allow individuals who were black or Asian to enlist

Gender Issues

Gender issues

- Males and Females historically have not been viewed as equals.
- This includes the belief that all men are logical and should work for money and that women can only care for children as they are overly emotional.
- Women were therefore not allowed to work in many fields and were seen as the individual who should only do house work.

Gender Issues Continued

- Women were not allowed to vote
- Women were treated as property rather than as another human being
- The rationale for most of the ideas came from older texts which gave men the right to say that women were inferior
 - In this current time frame do we still see discrimination between men and women?
 - Where do we see this most in society?

Gender Issues Activity

- In groups of 2 or 3 list out activities/items that are specifically male or female.
- Also answer the following questions:
 1. How does society put labels on gender (that is what are the genders that we know of)? And is that really an accurate representation of gender?
 2. At what age do we notice a difference in the genders?
 3. What are some of the differences that we notice (for example: the colour of items bought for girls compared to boys and the types of toys)? Explain.

Labour Laws, Workers' Rights

Why is it important to understand labour laws?

- Let's consider if the school day changed from 6.25 hours to 9 hours.
 - Would you still go to school?
 - Does this seem fair? Explain.
 - What is the problem with going to school longer?

Why is it important to understand labour laws?

- Now consider that workers in the past had to work long hours with limited breaks
 - What is the challenge with working long hours?
 - Why would it be important to not exceed a certain number of hours?

Why is it important to understand labour laws?

- Also consider that some work environments were unsafe which lead to serious injury and sometimes death.
 - Would you be willing to go to work in this situation?
 - What would you do to protect yourself at work?

Why is it important to understand labour laws?

- You think yes a Union is the solution, but
 - It's illegal
 - You could go to jail
 - Lose your job
 - Financial strain
- Let's take a vote with all the challenges associated with unions would you be willing to fight for a union?

Why is it important to understand labour laws?

- What are the benefits of Unions?
 - Coverage of health care
 - Ensuring that your work environment is safe
 - They are like a family that supports you during difficult times (grief)

Responses to discrimination in Canada

Responses to discrimination in Canada

- The responses varied, but discrimination still exists

Responses to discrimination in Canada

- In the past discrimination was more prominent as the majority of the population in the 1700s was white so Canadians at that time would discriminate.
 - The discrimination seen in this time was when people who were black were escaping into Canada to get away from slavery.
 - This led individuals who were black to be paid less and were not allowed to do the same jobs as whites.

Responses to discrimination in Canada

- Another important individual to consider is John A. MacDonald.
 - When he saw the challenges with Labour laws he decided that Unions were important and instigated a change in the laws that prevented the formation of unions.
 - He created laws that allowed for the formation of unions.
- As time has gone by Canadians have changed and realized that different nationalities are important to the heritage of Canada.

References

- Chinese Head Tax: <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/chinese-head-tax-in-canada/>
- Prejudice and Discrimination in Canada: <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/prejudice-and-discrimination/>
- Gender Inequality: Link not provided due to content.
- Labour Laws: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/highlights-in-canadian-labour-history-1.850282>