

The Charter for Children: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Lobster

Lesson Plan for Language Arts, Social Studies, Social Justice and Character Education: GRADE 6

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FOCUS: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

What issues are being addressed in this book?
THE RIGHT TO SPEAK, SING AND LAUGH

- Bullying and other forms of abusive control
- Unfair or oppressive rules or laws
- The right to a free flow of ideas and the growth of public knowledge as a key element in an open democratic society
- Freedom of speech and expression as it relates to individual autonomy
- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, section 2(b) which states: "Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms...(b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication..." (reference the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, s 2(b), Part I of the Constitution Act, 1982, being Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), 1982, c 11.)
- Freedom of speech is with limits; where expressions promote or condone hatred against a group, it is not permitted
- How to effect change (peaceful protests, media, boycotts) and community participation in social and political decisions



Curriculum Objective: Grade 6

Social Studies: Communities in Canada, Past and Present

- **A1.1** Students will explain how various features that characterize a community can contribute to the identity and image of a country
- **A1.3** Student will explain how various groups have contributed to the goal of inclusiveness in Canada (e.g., ...the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code,...)
- **A2.1** Students will formulate questions to guide investigations into different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experience of two or more distinct communities in Canada
- **A3.5** Students will describe interactions between communities in Canada, including between newcomers and groups that were already in the country

(from 2013 The Ontario Curriculum: Social Studies Grades 1 to 6 Ministry of Education for Ontario, page 120-123)

Curriculum Objective: Grade 6

Language: Writing

- **1.1 Purpose and Audience:** Students will identify the topic, purpose, and audience for a variety of writing forms (e.g., an original poem...a persuasive letter...a script on a topic of current interest for a mock television broadcast)
- **1.3 Research:** Students will gather information to support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and a range of print and electronic resources (e.g.,...interview people with knowledge of the topic; identify and use graphic and multimedia resources)

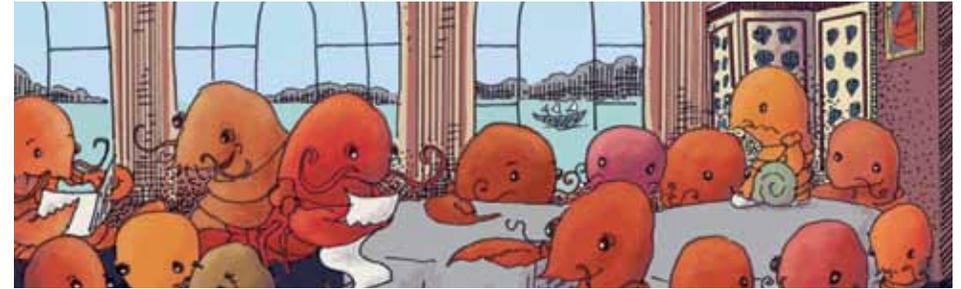
Language: Reading

- **1.4** Students will demonstrate understanding of increasingly complex texts by summarizing and explaining important ideas and citing relevant supporting details (e.g., general idea and related facts in chapters...; main theme and important details in short stories, poems)

(from 2006 The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: Language, Ministry of Education for Ontario, page 114 and)

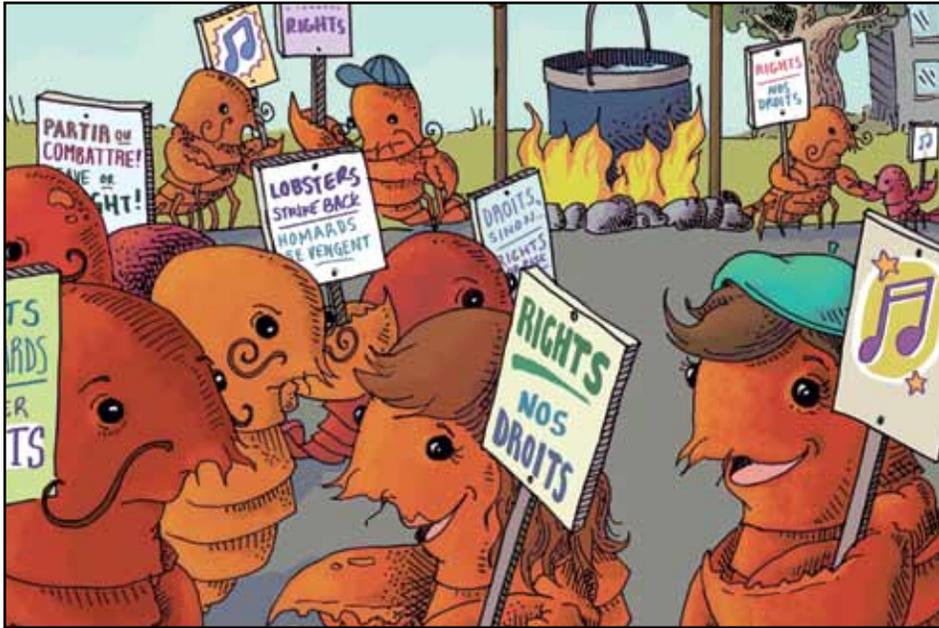
Preview:

- Review the map of Canada and locate with the students the location of the New Brunswick setting of this book. Discuss what characteristics this setting would have using students' prior knowledge (e.g., the ocean, the fishing industry such as cod and lobster, the sport of curling, bilingualism)
- Discuss with the class the meaning of an "inclusive society" and whether they think Canada is an inclusive country. Develop an anchor or T-chart that can be used as a reference for students. Discuss whether their class or their school is "inclusive", and why or why not they have this opinion. This can also be a writing response assignment, think-pair-share, class debate, or small group assignment.
- As part of the "inclusive society" discussion, talk about the experience of immigrant families (while being aware that many children in the class will have their own histories to share). Part of this discussion should include historical Canadian discriminatory practises that have since been addressed (e.g. the development of reserves for First Nations, the forced relocation of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War, the Chinese experience during the "head tax", including the reasons behind the formation of ethnic neighbourhoods).



Activation of Learning

- Read the story to the class. Use Shared Reading and Think Aloud methods to encourage student connections with the story. Record any questions, thoughts on anchor charts to be used later for discussion and reference.
- Encourage a class discussion on the main idea of this story. What are some of the supporting facts that strengthen the message of the story? Introduce The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, section 2(b) which states: "Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms...(b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication..." (reference the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, s 2(b), Part I of the Constitution Act, 1982, being Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), 1982, c 11.)
- How did the Lob-Mob negatively influence the town of Shediac? Have the students research what the situation was in Canada in the early 1900s and how white residents might have viewed other immigrant groups such as the Irish, Italian, Asian or Scottish people. How have things changed in present day and what organizations are available to help newcomers feel welcome in Canada? Have students select one organization and do a written or oral presentation, using their research.
- How does this story relate to the issue of "bullying", and how else can people fight against this? What are the different perspectives in a bullying situation (the bully, the bullied, and the bystander). What are some creative and safe responses to bullying?
- The right to freedom of expression, thought and belief is an important one that the citizens of Shediac were deprived of and later gained back through Aliya's creative protest action. Have the students discuss whether people should have the right to say anything they want and relate this to the limitations placed by the Supreme Court of Canada. Have a class discussion to talk about when "freedom of speech" becomes unacceptable as "hate speech". Have the class share their feelings with respect to this topic. What are some current examples of court cases which have ruled that certain internet postings, speeches or websites promote hatred and are not just someone's right to express herself or himself?



Assignments:

- **Writing Response: 1.3** Pair students, choosing complimentary partners. Students will select from a list of pre-screened teachers, administrators, volunteers, office staff and parents, two or three people for an interview regarding this section of the Charter. Students work collaboratively to come up with thoughtful questions, taking turns to ask and record answers. The final product will be a summary of their findings, which can be as a written report, a script for a mock television program, a slideshow presentation or a speech.

Projects:

- **Visual Arts: Creating and Presenting, D3.1** Students will use elements of design in art works to communicate ideas, messages, and understandings (e.g., a design of a letter of the alphabet using shapes, symbols, colour, and font style to represent a selected animal and its habitat; a DVD cover design or movie poster that uses line, shape, space, colour, and value to communicate information about the content). Have students create a bilingual sign or poster that promotes the right to express and share ideas, the right to participate in social community events, the right to be able to sing/talk/play sports, (reference the Ontario Curriculum, The Arts, Grades 1-8, 2009, page 129).

- **Media Literacy: Understanding Media Texts, 1.5** Students will investigate the use of media to influence the thinking of others and make an analysis of whether this can be a good or a bad thing. This can be done with newspapers, magazines, internet articles, billboards, bus stop advertisements, or television commercials. Students can select two different media that are dealing with the same topic and analyse their effectiveness based on the treatment of ideas, the information given, the opinions expressed, or the presentation (reference the Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Language Revised 2006 page 118).
- **Media Literacy: Creating Media Texts, 3.1** Students will describe in specific detail the topic, purpose, and audience for media texts they plan to create, and identify challenges they may face in achieving their purpose. "Why do you think it is important for people to know about this topic? Why might you need to be especially persuasive to interest them in the topic?" (reference the Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Language Revised 2006 page 118). Have students use a multimedia presentation format or a slideshow presentation to explain this section of The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and why it is an important right in a democratic society. This could be a combination of a personal perspective, interviews with others, or research on appropriate websites.
- **Music: C1.2** Students will apply the elements of music when singing and/or playing, composing, and arranging music to create a specific effect (e.g., compose a piece in the theme and variations form, using a well-known song for the theme to engage the listener... reference the Ontario Curriculum, The Arts, Grades 1-8, 2009, page 126). Student will create a musical piece that will show the difference in tone and emotion between Mobster Lobster, and Aliya and the town's lobsters once they had their freedom back.

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