



Donald Blair Norton

“We Will Remember Them”



Overview

This lesson focusses upon using primary evidence and sources to think about the ethical dimension, as well as continuity and change. It enables students to identify different ethical positions in an argument, and to develop their own thesis statement. All of the templates, images, and archival sources used in this lesson plan can be found on the Donald Blair Norton [introductory page](#).

The Ethical Dimension

How can history help us to live in the present? (Seixas & Morton, 2013)

Grade Level **9**

Estimated Time **4-5 class periods**

Materials Required

- Internet access to Veterans Affairs Canada web site: [Veterans' Week Posters](#), [Information for Educators](#), and [Chronology of the Second World War](#), as well as The Royal Canadian Legion press statement on [Bill C-597](#);
- Textbook: Canadian Identity (2006);
- Coloured markers;
- Whiteboard or Mural paper and mounting tape;
- Photocopies of (or computer access to) primary archival source documents (as listed on introductory page);
- Photocopies of (or computer access to) scaffolding worksheets (as listed on introductory page);
- Large colour print image of Donald Norton's baseball cleats (H.F 973.4-1 a,b) and running trunks (H.F. 973.4-3);
- Physical access to a war memorial or images of the National War Memorial in Ottawa;
- Additional Internet Resources: [Canada and the Second World War](#), [On all fronts: World War II and the National Film Board](#), [Canadian newspapers and the Second World War](#), The Historical Thinking Project (<http://historicalthinking.ca/>).

Lesson

Part A - Introduction:

Think:

1. Commence by displaying a [Remembrance Day poster](#) and opening the floor to a discussion about Remembrance Day (the significance of November 11, what, why, and how we remember), using resources from the [Veterans Affairs Canada \(Information for Educators\)](#) web site.

Should Remembrance Day be a Legal Holiday?:

Pair: (Template: Identifying Ethical Positions)

2. Provide students with copies of The Globe and Mail (April 28, 2015) newspaper article “Should Remembrance Day be made a ‘legal’ holiday? Veterans’ groups are divided,” as well as The Royal Canadian Legion press statement “Bill C-597, An Act to Amend the Holidays Act,” and The Canadian Press (November 5, 2014) newspaper article “Bill to make Remembrance Day a national holiday inches closer to law.”
3. Working in groups, encourage students to analyse the three press documents, identifying arguments for or against making November 11 a national holiday (using the template provided). Remind students to take their own notes so they can return later.



Share:

4. As a class, compare and discuss each group’s findings. Record all of the findings on the classroom whiteboard, similarly to the Identifying Ethical Positions template. These notes will later facilitate a mock parliament debate on whether or not Bill C-597 should have been made law. Remind students to add any new findings to their individual notes.

Homework Assignment:

(Worksheet: Developing a Thesis Statement)

5. Encourage students to research the controversy surrounding Bill C-597 at home. Using the “Developing a Thesis Statement” worksheet provided, ask students to return to class with a written thesis statement as to why (or why not) they would vote for (or against) the bill in question.

Part B - Voting on Bill C-597:

6. Organise the classroom as a mock-parliament, with seating arranged accordingly. Have students nominate a Speaker of the House, who will preside over the third reading and debate of Bill C-597 (as well as party leaders).

7. Then open the floor for a debate on the positive and negative consequences of Bill C-597. Invite students to share their thesis statements, along with points gathered from the previous class.
8. Near the end of the class, encourage each student to declare their vote by standing (Speaker of the House tallies the votes).
9. Later have the Speaker of the House announce the results, and declare the bill either passed or referred for amendment.

Part C – Donald Blair Norton: How should we remember him?

Think:

10. Commence by reviewing the Second World War timeline graph developed previously for Amédée Cormier. Explain, that next, the class is going to examine the war experience of Donald Blair Norton, who was not as fortunate as Amédée Cormier, since he did not survive the war. End by displaying his portrait image (c. 1943, PHF70.4-4) and briefly describing who Donald Norton was.



Pair: (Template: Interpreting Artefacts)

11. Working in groups, encourage students to carefully examine two artifact sources relating to Don Norton: his baseball cleats (H.F.973.4-1 a, b), and his sport trunks (H.F. 973.4-3).

Have students record their evidence using the interpreting artefacts template as their guide. Explain that they will be asking similar questions as was demonstrated with previous artifact sources:

- What is it?
- Where and when was it created?
- Who created it?
- Why (do you think)?
- What does this mean?
- What clues can you draw from the artifact source about Donald Norton?



12. Now provide students with additional information, handing out the artifact accession records for each artifact, as well as related archival photographs and newspaper clippings (as listed on the introductory age for Donald Blair Norton):

- What is the significance of this artifact?

- What more information about Donald Norton can you pull from the museum's accession records?

Share:

13. Encourage each group to report their findings back to the class, making note of their findings on the whiteboard (so this information can be later added to the classroom timeline graph).



Part D – Was Donald Blair Norton a Hero?

Think:

14. Commence by reviewing the Second World War timeline graph developed previously for Amédée Cormier. Encourage students to contribute their new findings, with regard to the life experiences of Donald Norton. Questions to ask:

- Can Donald Norton's actions be considered heroic?
- Why or why not?

Explain that the class will next examine his military career.

Pair: (Template: Primary Source Analysis Tool)

14. Working in groups, provide students with a copy of Donald Norton's military personnel file, as well as related newspaper clippings and images (as listed on the introductory age for Donald Blair Norton).



15. Using the Primary Source Analysis Tool as a guide, encourage students to work in groups, sifting through the sources of evidence contained in these archival records. Remind students to make note of where they found their evidence.

Share:

16. Commence by displaying the RCAF recruiting poster "I'll be with you Boys" (CWM 19770474-020). Returning to the classroom timeline graph, encourage each student-group to contribute details (from Donald Norton's military personnel file, as well as related newspaper clippings and images analysed previously) - correlating specifically to Donald Norton's personal life and identified turning points in the Second World War. Questions to ask:

- What was going on in Donald Norton's life when the Second World War began?
- When did he join the RCAF?
- When did he begin his training?
- When did he travel overseas?
- When was he married?
- What events happened just before and just after his marriage?

- When and how was he killed?
- How does his life correlate with events taking place during the war?

(Add these life events to the classroom graph, using a different coloured marker). Then encourage students to record these details on their own timeline graph for Donald Norton.

Additional Internet Resource:

- [Cursive Letter Writing Guide](#)

Part E – How Should We Remember Donald Blair Norton

Think:

(Template: Assessing a Memorial)

17. In preparation for the student assignment, arrange a class visit to a local war memorial (or, if not possible, provide the class with images/ a virtual tour of the National War Memorial in Ottawa). Encourage students to analyse the war memorial, using the Assessing a Memorial Template provided.
18. Returning to class, encourage students to design a memorial to Donald Norton. Questions to ask:
 - What events in his life warrant being remembered?
 - What symbols best represent these life events?

Frame your questions as an introduction to the commemoration assignment:



Donald Blair Norton - How Should we Remember Him?

(As part of the assignment, provide students with an assessment rubric to guide their writing their thesis statement and designing their memorial. You may also wish that students first prepare a draft thesis statement - and have the class work as a group to edit each other's work- before submitting the final copy for marking)

Student Commemoration Assignment: Donald Blair Norton - How Should we Remember Him?

Due date:

Based upon discussions in class, and evidence that you have gathered from primary sources, design a commemorative memorial to Donald Blair Norton that could accompany Mount Allison University's Don Norton Memorial Award. Include with your design a thesis statement that explains how we should remember him and why. What evidence can you present to support your claim?

Assessment Rubric:

Criteria for Historical Thinking about Significance	Very Well	To some extent	To a limited degree	Not at all
Student provides a thesis statement that presents an alternative opinion as well as that of their own	3	2	1	0
As the statement continues, student reveals at least 3 pieces of evidence from primary sources to support their claim	3	2	1	0
Student clearly organises their memorial around these (at least) three points that support their claim.	4	3	2	0
Student makes more than three references to comparative evidence.	3	2	1	0
Student reveals how Donald Norton's life was changed by the Second World War	3	2	1	0
Student reveals at least three significant events that relate to Donald Norton's life experiences.	3	2	1	0
Student includes with their design a summary statement of what the evidence tells them about their response to the assignment	3	2	1	0
Student includes a bibliography of primary and secondary sources.	3	2	1	0

Score: /25