



Impact of the Klondike Gold Rush

This MysteryQuest examines the economic, social, and environmental changes brought about by the Klondike Gold Rush. Students learn about the general areas in which change occurred and determine the significance of these changes.

A critical thinking challenge to accompany

Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History **Who Discovered Klondike Gold?**

<http://www.mysteryquests.ca/quests/24/indexen.html>

*Author: Warren Woytuck
Series Editor: Roland Case*

*based on an approach developed by The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC²)
www.tc2.ca*

Ages
14–16

Courses
Canadian history, social studies

Key Topics

- change and the historical significance of change
- Canadian history during the early 20th century

Critical Challenges

- Identify the changes associated with the Klondike Gold Rush.
- Rank the changes that occurred during this period in order of the significance of their impact.

Broad Understanding

- Students will learn to find evidence in textual and visual sources to support a conclusion.
- Students will learn that events often have multiple effects with varying levels of impact.

Requisite Tools



Background knowledge

- knowledge of the social, economic, and environmental changes that occurred in the Yukon during the late 19th and early 20th centuries



Criteria for judgment

- criteria for assessing the significance of an impact (e.g., breadth, depth, duration)
- criteria for sound conclusion (e.g., plausible, supported with evidence)



Critical thinking vocabulary

- cause and effect relationships
- inference



Thinking strategies

- data charts



Habits of mind

- attention to detail

Independent Study

This lesson can be used as a self-directed activity by having students individually or in pairs work their way through the guided instructions and support material found at <http://www.mysteryquests.ca/quests/24/indexen.html>.

Whole Class Activities

On the following pages are suggested modifications of the self-guided procedures found on the MysteryQuest website for use with a class of students. For convenience, each item of support material and set of procedures is linked to the relevant suggestions for whole class instruction.

Suggested Activities

Set the context

- Invite students to reflect on recent events that may have changed their community. Ask students with a partner to select one of the changes and brainstorm conditions before and after the event. Guide students to consider the impact of the event on three areas of their community - economic, social, and environmental. If needed, refer to [Step 2: Explore various kinds of changes](#) for examples of economic, social, and environmental changes.
- Using [Introduction](#) as a guide, explain to students the context for their investigation.

Introduce the task

- Using [The Task](#) as a guide, explain to students that they are to work in small groups to rank in order of the significance of their impact three kinds of changes (economic, social, and environmental) associated with the Klondike Gold Rush.

Learn about the event

- Use the two documents described in [Step 1: Learn about the Gold Rush](#) to explain to the class the range of changes prompted by the discovery of gold in the Klondike.

Look for evidence of changes

- Using [Step 3: Look for evidence of change](#) as a guide, instruct students to work individually or in pairs to examine approximately three of the five primary documents listed in Step 3 to find evidence of conditions in the Yukon before and after the Gold Rush.
- Distribute copies of [Comparing Conditions](#) to each pair of students. Direct students to focus on collecting evidence demonstrating economic, social, and environmental conditions before and after the Gold Rush. Model how to complete this part of the chart using an excerpt from one of the primary documents.
- Arrange for students to share their findings with others. As a class, identify the major changes associated with the Gold Rush and invite students to record these in the right-hand column on the chart.

Introduce the criteria for determining the degree of impact

- Using [Step 4: Identify criteria for assessing impact](#) as a guide, explain the relevance of breadth, depth, and duration of impact in determining the significance of changes.

Rank order the changes

- Using [Step 5: Rank order the degree of impact](#) as a guide, ask students to rank in order of the significance of their impact the three kinds of change caused by the Klondike Gold Rush.
- Duplicate and distribute to students copies of [Ranking the Impact](#).
- You may choose to hold a class debate or to assign students individually to prepare a 250-word report presenting and defending their ranking in light of evidence from the documents examined.

Evaluation

- Use the rubric [Assessing the Evidence about Changes](#) to evaluate students' description of the pre- and post-conditions and identification of the major changes associated with the Gold Rush.
- Use the rubric [Assessing the Rankings](#) to evaluate students' justification for their ranking of the changes according to the significance of their impact.

Extension

- Invite students to work individually or as a class to pursue the activities suggested in [Extension](#).