



Should I Join the Rush?

This MysteryQuest examines the conditions and opportunities presented by the Klondike Gold Rush. Students learn about the hardships faced by adventurers who went to the Klondike. Students also learn that many factors determine the success of individuals during historical events.

A critical thinking challenge to accompany

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

<http://www.mysteryquests.ca/quests/23/indexen.html>

*Author: Warren Woytuck
Series Editor: Roland Case*

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

Ages

11–14

Courses

Canadian history, social studies

Key Topics

- working and living conditions in the Klondike
- Canadian history during the late 19th century

Critical Challenges

- Identify working and living conditions during the Klondike Gold Rush.
- Provide a recommendation as to whether or not a family member should travel to the Klondike to find work.

Broad Understanding

- Students will learn to find evidence in textual sources.
- Students learn about the hardships faced by adventurers who travelled to the Klondike.

Requisite Tools



Background knowledge

- knowledge of the conditions in the Yukon during the late 19th and early 20th centuries



Criteria for judgment

- criteria for determining suitability (e.g., likely financial success, personal well-being, positive experience)
- criteria for a sound recommendation (e.g., plausible, supported with accurate evidence)



Critical thinking vocabulary

- inference
- contradictory evidence
- pro and con evidence



Thinking strategies

- data charts
- rating scale



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/23/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 imagine that, as adults, they must move to a new country to find work. Brainstorm factors that students might consider in choosing their destination (e.g., likelihood of making money, certainty of getting a job, climate, recreation opportunities). Ask students whether they would consider moving to a location that could put their personal safety and well-being at risk.
- Using [Introduction](#) as a guide, explain to students the context for their investigation.

Introduce the task

- Using [The Task](#) as a guide, explain that students are to work in small groups to provide advice to Alan, a fictional cousin who is thinking about travelling to the Klondike to find work.

Learn about the event

- Use the overview, timeline, and map described in [Step 1: Learn about the Gold Rush](#) to describe to the class the events and conditions of the Klondike Gold Rush.

Look for evidence

- Using [Step 2: Look for evidence about living and working conditions](#) as a guide, instruct students to work in pairs to examine one or two documents and two or three photographs listed in the Primary Sources section of [Evidence in the Case](#) to learn about the conditions in the Klondike.
- Distribute copies of [Investigating the Conditions](#) to each pair of students. Select one of the photographs to illustrate how students might identify and record information about various conditions existing in the Klondike.
- Arrange for students to share their findings with others in the class. Assemble a master list of the evidence and collectively discuss the most appropriate ratings for each condition.

Identify the cousin's characteristics

- Using [Step 3: Establish your cousin's characteristics](#) as a guide, inform students that their next task is to determine the cousin's work skills and personality traits.
- Distribute to each student a copy of [Personality Profile](#).

Justify a recommendation

- Using [Step 4: Prepare your recommendation](#) as a guide, explain to students the three options they have to recommend to their cousin about travelling to the Klondike.
- Distribute copies of [Making a Recommendation](#) for students to record the reasons for and against coming to the Klondike and to justify their recommendation.
- You may choose to hold a class debate or ask students to write a 250-word letter defending their conclusions in light of evidence from the documents examined.

Evaluation

- Use the rubric [Assessing the Evidence and Ratings](#) to evaluate student identification of the living and working conditions.
- Use the rubric [Assessing the Recommendation](#) to evaluate student justification of their advice to their cousin.

Extension

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