

Teachers' Notes

Why continue the search for Franklin?

This MysteryQuest investigates the reasons behind contemporary searches for the Franklin Expedition and reasons for continuing the search.

*A critical thinking challenge to accompany
Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History
The Franklin Expedition*

<http://www.mysteryquests.ca/quests/44/indexen.html>

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

Ages: 14–16

Courses

Canadian history, social studies

Key topics

- history of Canada
- exploration of northern Canada
- northern issues, including sovereignty

Critical Challenges

- Assess the reasons behind contemporary searches for the Franklin Expedition.
- Select the strongest reasons for continuing the search for the Franklin Expedition.

Broad understanding

- Students will learn about the various reasons motivating the ongoing search for the Franklin Expedition.

Requisite tools

Background knowledge

- British exploration in Arctic environments

- Canadian sovereignty issues

Criteria for judgment

- criteria for a strong reason (direct and indirect benefit)

Critical thinking vocabulary

- evidence
- reasons

Thinking strategies

- charting evidence
- justifying recommendations

Habits of mind

- open-mindedness, critical-mindedness
- attention to detail

Independent study

This lesson can be used as a self-directed activity by having students work individually or in pairs through the guided instructions and support material found at [MysteryQuest 44](#).

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 piece of support material and set of procedures are linked next to the relevant suggestions for whole class instruction.

Suggested activities

Introduce Franklin and contemporary searches

- Read, or have students read the sections [Introduction](#) and [The Task](#) in MysteryQuest 44.
- Ask students to read about Franklin's men who were travelling to find the Northwest Passage:
[The Mysteries of Franklin's Last Voyage](#)
[Northwest Passage](#)
[Timeline](#)
- Display the map of Franklin's voyage:
[Franklin's Voyage from England to the Arctic](#)
- After exploring these historical contexts, ask students to suggest what might motivate people to continue searching for the expedition some 170 years after its disappearance.

After sharing initial ideas, invite students to read about contemporary interest in the Franklin Expedition:

[Twentieth Century Searches for Franklin](#)

- Explain that in 2008, the Canadian Federal Government launched the most recent attempt to find the ships. It funded a partnership between Parks Canada, the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, the Arctic Research Foundation, the Canadian Coast Guard, the Royal Canadian Navy and the government of Nunavut. After six years, their search efforts paid off. On September 7, 2014 (when this MysteryQuest was just being completed!), the Coast Guard icebreaker ship the Sir Wilfred Laurier found the shipwreck of a ship later positively identified as the *Erebus*.
- Ask students to explore the media coverage of the finding of the *Erebus*, and the ongoing search for the *Terror*.
[The Mystery Continues](#)
[The Breaking Story](#)

Learn more about the possible reasons for searching for Franklin

- Explain to students that there are at least five reasons for ongoing interest in finding the Franklin Expedition so long after its disappearance:
 1. Historical curiosity: historians wish to solve the lingering mystery of an important historical event in Canadian history and Nunavut history.
 2. Scientific curiosity: the search for clues from the expedition provides an opportunity to develop and test new technologies in underwater exploration.
 3. National sovereignty: increased activity in the North helps to strengthen Canada's claim and control over Arctic territory.
 4. Resource protection: increased activity in the North may also protect commercial interest in valuable natural resources such as oil, minerals, marine life and fresh water.
 5. National pride: politicians and others wish to support stories that nurture Canadian identity and appreciation of Inuit culture and ways of life.
- After introducing the reasons for ongoing interest provide each student with a copy of the chart [Exploring reasons for the search \(Activity Sheet 1\)](#).
- Ask students to work in pairs or small groups to select at least one source from each of the four groups of sources found in [Evidence in the case](#). Instruct students to note the title of each source that they select in the far left-hand column of the chart.
- Inform students that their task is to look for evidence related to the reasons for continuing the search. This evidence should be noted on the chart under the appropriate reason. For example, students might discover that one document indicates that it is important to continue searching for the expedition because of what the discovery would reveal about sea ice. This evidence could be noted under "scientific curiosity." This should be repeated for each of the selected sources.

- Remind students that it is possible for a source to include more than one of the reasons for continuing to search for Franklin.
- As an option, consider having students use online sources to search for information about current search activities.

Rank the reasons

- After collecting evidence, direct students to the “Rating the reasons” row of the chart. Inform students that their task is to judge the strength of each reason for continuing the search for the Franklin Expedition.
- Introduce students to the criteria that can guide their judgments:
 - Direct benefits: which reason for continuing the search for Franklin might provide the greatest direct benefits? Direct benefits might include more jobs and testing of scientific equipment. For example, students might discover evidence about the number of jobs created to operate the equipment needed to conduct the search.
 - Indirect benefits: which reason for continuing the search for Franklin might provide the greatest indirect benefits? Indirect benefits might include satisfaction from solving the mystery, increased national pride, or greater awareness of Inuit life and northern issues. For example, students might discover that there is an increased awareness of northern Canada because of media coverage of the searches for Franklin.
- Invite students to use the criteria to rate the strength of each reason. As an example, suggest that if students believe that continuing the search for Franklin to satisfy scientific curiosity has relatively high direct and indirect benefits, they might circle “4” on the rating scale at the bottom of the “Scientific curiosity” column.
- Invite students to share their rankings, discussing any noticeable differences among rankings.

Select the strongest reasons

- After discussing the rankings, instruct students to complete the final part of the chart by identifying the two strongest arguments in favour of continuing the search for Franklin. Encourage students to develop a short justification for each choice.
- Conclude by discussing student choices and justifications.

Evaluation

You may use the assessment rubric, [Assessing the evidence and the rankings](#) to assess the evidence collected in Step 2, as well as the ranking of the reasons.

Support Materials

[Activity Sheet: Exploring reasons for the search](#)

[Assessment Rubric: Assessing the evidence and the rankings](#)

Evidence in the case

Background readings

[The Mysteries of Franklin's Last Voyage](#)

[Northwest Passage](#)

[Timeline](#)

[Franklin's Voyage from England to the Arctic](#)

Group 1

Core documents

[Who owns the Arctic](#)

[Sovereignty in the Arctic](#)

Source: Kathryn Isted, "Sovereignty in the Arctic: an analysis of territorial disputes and environmental policy considerations," *Journal of Transnational Law and Policy* (2009), Vol. 18, No. 2.

[The law and politics of Canadian jurisdiction on Arctic ocean seabed](#)

Source: M. Byers, "The law and politics of Canadian jurisdiction on Arctic ocean seabed," *ArcticNet Annual Research compendium* (2011–12), pp. 6–7.

Group 2

[Twentieth Century Searches for Franklin](#)

[Interview with David Woodman](#)

Group 3

[The Mystery Continues](#)

[The Breaking Story](#)

[Summary of Parks Canada's search activities 2008–2014](#)

Group 4

[Climate change and Canadian sovereignty in the Northwest Passage](#)

Source: Rob Huebert, "Climate change and Canadian sovereignty in the Northwest Passage", *Canadian Arctic sovereignty and security: Historical perspectives* (2011).

[Interview with Ryan Harris and Jonathan Moore](#)