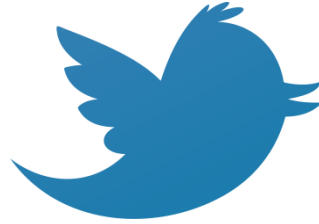# Lesson Resource Kit: Tweeting the War of 1812

Grade 7: Canada, 1800–1850: Conflict and Challenges

Introduction

Designed to fit into teachers' practice, this resource kit provides links, activity suggestions, primary source handouts and worksheets to assist you and your students in applying, inquiring, and understanding Canada between 1800 and 1850.

Topic

The War of 1812

Source

The Archives of Ontario's Ely Playter Twitter account (click here to view the @ElyPlayter1812 Twitter account), and the Archives' War of 1812 online exhibit (click here to view the online exhibit).

Themes that can be addressed

- Use of Primary Sources
- Historical significance
- Diversity of historical perspectives
- Possibilities and limitations of using social media to share historical knowledge

Curriculum Links

Strand B. Canada, 1800–1850: Conflict and challenges

Overall Expectations	Historical Thinking Concepts	Specific Expectations
B1. Application: Changes and Challenges	Continuity and Change; Historical Perspective	B1.1, B1.2, B1.3
B2. Inquiry: Perspectives in British North Americans	Historical Perspective; Historical Significance	B2.1, B2.2, B2.3, B2.4, B2.5, B2.6
B3. Understanding Historical Context: Events and Their Consequence	Historical Significance; Cause and Consequence	B3.1, B3.2, B3.3, B3.4, B3.5

Assignment & Activity Ideas

Tweeting Significance

- As a class, create a timeline of the War of 1812 and display it in your classroom.
- In your next class, have a discussion about historical significance. What makes something historically significant? Who decides? Would significance be the same for everyone? [Click here to visit the Historical Thinking Project](#) and [click here for exemplars on Establishing Historical Significance](#).
- Create a chart with criteria for establishing significance. Display the chart under the timeline.
- As a weekly project, have a discussion about the [@ElyPlater1812 twitter. Click here to access the @ElyPlayer1812 tweets](#) and rate the significance of each one. Have the students plot the tweets that have been judged as 'significant' on the class' War of 1812 timeline.

Tweeting Perspective

- [Click here to follow the @ElyPlayer1812 Twitter feed](#) and have daily or weekly recap discussions about the events he is tweeting.
- Discuss Player's unique perspective and how his tweets only tell one story from his point of view.
- As a class, in small groups, or individually, encourage students to write tweets from another perspective about the same events.
- Students could tweet from one of the main players in the War of 1812 such as Laura Secord, Tecumseh, or Brock or an imagined character such as Player's wife, an American solider, or an Ojibwa Elder.

Tweeting Continuity and Change

- Introduce Twitter to your class and discuss the limitations and possibilities of this social media: Instantaneous but public, expressive but 140 characters, able to meet new people but invites marketing and promotions.
- [Click here to follow the @ElyPlayer1812 Twitter feed](#) over the course of a week or month and have a discussion about how the limitations and possibilities play out in this feed.
- As a class, pick one current event and use Player's example to tweet about this event.
- Continue to follow Player's feed and keep track of moments of continuity and change in writing about current events and conflict

Complete the Tweet

- [Visit this link to the ElyPlayter1812 Twitter feed](#) once a week and as a class read and discuss Playter's tweets.
- Ask students to keep a journal to make notes about their favourite tweets each week. Students could write their journal entry at home for homework or during class.
- At the end of the month, or the end of the year, ask students to pick three of their favorite tweets from their journals and complete the diary entry that the tweet could have come from. Diary entries should be no more than one paragraph and allude to the broader context of life in British North America.

Question the Tweet

- After reviewing tweets as a class, encourage students to build context and practice writing research questions by having them fill out a 5WH worksheet on what else they want to learn. See the attached *Questioning Ely's Tweets* worksheet.
- Emphasize that one source never tells the whole story. Encourage students to think about: Who else was there, What else was going on, When in the day was the Tweet written, Where was Playter when he was writing, Why was this an important moment to record, How does Player respond to the events around him?

Graphic Tweets

- Split students into nine groups of two or three and assign them a number 1-9. Using the *Comic Tweets Preparation* worksheet provided, give each group of students a set of tweets.
- Provide each group of students a *Comic Tweets – Getting the story down* worksheet that asks them to think about the tweet(s) they have and how they could be graphically displayed.
- Using the *Comic Tweets* worksheet, ask students to draw out their scene to match with the class. When completed, the class will have created a chronological comic strip from the beginning of the war to the Battle of Fort York.
- Use their work time as an opportunity to provide more context for the events they are representing.
- Alternatively, for homework or a special computer lab period students can look through the whole [@ElyPlayter1812 feed by clicking here](#) and choose three to five tweets of their own to graphically represent in a comic strip.

Handouts & Worksheets

Introduction to Primary Sources
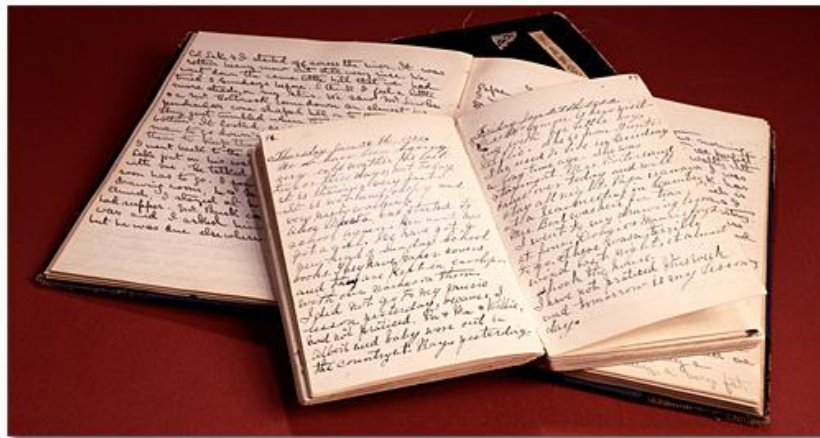
A *primary source* is a document or object from the past created by people who lived during that time. Primary sources provide a view into an event or experience that only people living during that time could have experienced.

Archives collect and preserve primary sources so that students can learn history from the experiences of people who were there. At an archive, primary sources are called records. At a museum, primary sources are called artifacts.

Have you ever used a primary source before?

Primary Sources	Secondary Sources
Original material from the past	Material people today write about the past
Example: Letters Diaries Photographs Paintings and other art work Graphs Maps	*Example:* Textbooks Reference books Websites such as Wikipedia Current news articles Documentaries and films

What are some other examples of primary and secondary sources?

Can sources be both primary and secondary?

Questioning Ely's Tweets

One source, or one tweet, never tells the whole story. Based on the information provided in the tweet, and what you know about life during this time, use this worksheet to answer the following questions and explore the stories behind the story that Ely Playter is telling.

*Write the Tweet here:*_____

_____

_____

_____

In this moment he is writing about, *who* else was there?_____

_____

What else was going on? _____

_____

_____

When in the day was the Tweet written?_____

Where was Playter when he was writing?_____

_____

Why may have it been important to record?_____

_____

_____

_____

How does Player respond to the events around him?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Comic Tweets preparation material

Teacher: Cut out a section of Tweets for each group of students

Section	Tweets
Section 1: Life before war	14 June 1812: Sunday. Sophia and self with the babes went to Gilbert's house. A Scotch Presbyterian Minister preached a moderate sermon. 4 June 1812: Went to town by 9 o'clock. 2 companies of militia met. Drilled till past 2 o'clock.
Section 2: The declaration of war	18 June 1812: I sawed before breakfast and planted melons, pumpkins and potatoes the remainder of the day. 27 June 1812: On my return from the mill I met George. He had been to town and heard that the Congress had declared war against us.
Section 3: Capturing Fort Detroit, August 15-16, 1812	16 August 1812: There was some alarm. The Militia were ordered to the Garrison. We rode down at dark and was there all night. 21 August 1812: Great news of General Brock taking Detroit with 2500 prisoners.
Section 4: Increased work at the Fort York garrison	13 September 1812: My daily employment was now in the Garrison where I attended every day. 17 September 1812: Went on board [the ship] the Royal George at early day and brought 2 prisoners on shore
Section 5: Life at the Fort York garrison	26 April 1813: I came home about dark. I was sent for by Major Allen. An alarm of the Yankee fleet seen off the Highlands. I hasted down. 26 April 1813: I was ordered to get the Militiamen in readiness and go to Major Givens for some Indians. He was at the Generals.

Section	Tweets
Section 6: Attack on Fort York, April 27, 1813	27 April 1813: I could see the American fleet when it came light. I proceeded with my men down the lake shore. Hear the guns fire just after we started back.
Section 7: Attack on Fort York, April 27, 1813	27 April 1813: [Yankee] vessels kept a constant fire. 6 or 8 of them hauled in near opposite our Garrison and opened a brisk fire.
Section 8: Attack on Fort York, April 27, 1813	27 April 1813: As I returned out the Gate the Magazine blew up and for a few Minutes I was in a Horrid situation.
Section 9: After Fort York was attacked	28 April 1813: Met young [Smith] who told me his father was dead. Was wounded in the leg. Had it cut off and died soon after. 30 April 1813: The appearance of the town and the Garrison were dismal.

Comic Tweets – Getting the story down

You have tweets from the primary source diary of Ely Playter. Read the tweets to answer the questions. Use your answers to plan your section of the comic strip

Section Number: _____Topic:_____

What do the tweets tell you about your topic?

Is there any other information you want to know?

What is the idea you want to express in your section of the comic strip?

Who are the characters?	What will be happening?	Who will be saying what?	Where will the scene take place?

What else do you want to know?

Comic Tweets

Draw your scene here!