



# Internment

## Learning objectives

- Students will identify and locate internment camps across Canada.
- Students will learn about internment camps and Canadians identified as enemy aliens.

## Time required

30-40 minutes

## Grades

7-12

## Materials

- tiled map: *A Nation Takes Shape*
- Parks Canada places cards (Appendix 3)
- images from internment camps (Appendix 3)
- “Sabotage north of 49°” in *Canadian Geographic*, July/August 2014, page 54 (optional)

## Set-up

Print out and assemble the tiled map in your classroom. Cut out and prepare the Parks Canada places cards and ensure each student receives one.

## Links to Canadian National Standards for Geography

### Essential element 2:

#### Places and regions

- natural and human characteristics of places and regions within the provinces and Canada
- changes in places and regions over time
- how culture affects places and regions

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## Introduction

Highlight two areas on the map: the Welland Canal (the body of water connecting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie) in Ontario and the Vanceboro railway bridge between New Brunswick and Maine.

Ask students about the significance of the location of these two places. Explain that a German military attaché based in New York City named Franz von Papen tried to sabotage the Welland Canal in September 1914. On February 2, 1915, the Vanceboro railway bridge was bombed by a German reservist who had been travelling through the United States.

Explain that as the First World War progressed, Germany and its allies were viewed as enemies to Canada, and people feared German attacks on the home front. Using the tiled map, ask students why they think these locations were targets (both are located along the Canadian border).

## Development

Explain to your students that as a response to increasing fears that certain immigrant groups would be disloyal to Canada, the Canadian federal government passed the War Measures Act in August 1914, allowing it to do things such as monitor and even intern so-called enemy aliens – that is, anyone who was originally from a country now at war with Canada.

Ask your students to locate the alien internment camps, receiving stations and major cities on the tiled map and identify any patterns or trends they see (most camps were remote, northern and far from population centres, while receiving stations were located near major cities and waterways). Ask if the location of camps contributed to the expansion of Canada’s railroad. Share the internment camp images (provided) and discuss some of the struggles these so-called enemy aliens may have faced.

## Conclusion

Distribute one Parks Canada place card to each student. Have students read their card and locate their site on the tiled map.

Ask students to look for connections between the locations of internment camps and Parks Canada sites, discussing patterns and trends that arise (internees had to build roads and clear land, helping to create the infrastructure for some of Canada’s national parks).

Ask your students if Parks Canada could do anything else to identify former internment camps and the role they had in Canada’s past.



**Essential element 4:****Human patterns**

- patterns and processes of migration past and present
- human settlement patterns and land use
- processes of cultural diffusion

**Essential element 6:****The uses of geography**

- effects of natural and human geographic factors on major historic events
- influence of geographical features on the evolution of significant historic events and movements

## Extend your geographic thinking

Examine the role immigrants have played in your hometown. Look into the types of communities that exist, who founded your community and how your town is organized. If you live in a city, explore whether it is important to have neighbourhoods dedicated to particular cultures (Little Italy, Chinatown, etc.), and if this is important to ensuring that Canada remains a cultural mosaic.

The existence of alien internment camps during the First World War is seen as a dark period in Canada's past, although many felt the action was justified at the time. Discuss whether sending enemy aliens to internment camps during the First World War makes it more or less surprising that similar events took place during the Second World War.



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### **SIGNAL HILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** St. John's, N.L.

From the 18th century to the Second World War, Signal Hill was used for military observation and communication. During the First World War, Fort Waldegrave was guarded by a contingent of Newfoundland Legion of Frontiersmen.

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### **CARLETON MARTELLO TOWER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Saint John, N.B.

More than 50 deserters from the 69th Canadian Infantry Battalion were housed in the tower, which was made into a detention centre during the Great War.

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### **HALIFAX DEFENCE COMPLEX** Halifax, N.S.

The complex illustrates the shore defenses developed at Halifax between the 18th century and the Second World War. It was the main shipping point to Europe and, during the First World War, was where troops last stepped on Canadian soil before going overseas, and where they first stepped in Canada upon returning home.

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### **HALIFAX CITADEL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Halifax, N.S.

From September 8, 1914 to October 3, 1918, the citadel was used as an internment camp for enemy aliens under the War Measures Act.

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### **GEORGES ISLAND NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Halifax, N.S.

Georges Island was used as part of the military defence of the Halifax Harbour during the First World War.

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### **FORT McNAB NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Halifax, N.S.

Situated on McNabs Island at the mouth of the Halifax Harbour, Fort McNab was used as a military observation and defensive post during the First World War.

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### **YORK REDOUBT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Halifax, N.S.

York Redoubt is located on a large clearing at the mouth of the Halifax Harbour opposite McNabs Island. There are 27 buildings in total, including a searchlight and gun battery close to sea level, which helped defend the harbour during the war.

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### **MARCONI NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Glace Bay, N.S.

This is the site of the first telegraph sent and received across the Atlantic in 1902. Transatlantic telegraphy was integral to First World War communication between the home front and the front lines.

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**ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Baddeck, N.S.

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Bell partnered with four individuals, including Douglas McCurdy, in the Aerial Experiment Association to develop the Silver Dart (1909), the first powered, heavier-than-air flying machine in Canada. The Silver Dart was used in military drills that year, but was later damaged beyond repair.

**BATTLE OF THE CHÂTEAUGUAY  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Allan's Corners, Que.

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Charles-Michel d'Irumberry de Salaberry was a respected French Canadian officer for the British army and his victory at the Battle of Châteauguay during the War of 1812 was still a source of pride for French Canadians at the time of the First World War. Images of de Salaberry and his famous battle were used on recruiting posters in Quebec at that time.

**QUEBEC GARRISON CLUB  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Quebec City

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Canadian officers and influential civilians used the club as a social and professional gathering place during the First World War.

**LACHINE CANAL  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Montreal, Que.

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Completed in 1825, the Lachine Canal continued to be a major shipping route between the Great Lakes and the lower St. Lawrence River throughout the First World War. At its peak, 15,000 ships carrying goods to and from Canada passed through the transportation route.

**CHAMBLY CANAL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Chambly, Que. and  
**SAINT-OURS CANAL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Saint-Ours, Que.

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These canals were part of the First World War transportation network between the Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence River. These helped facilitate the shipment of coal, an important source of energy for ships and troops at the time, from Pennsylvania to Sorel, Que.

**GROSSE ÎLE AND THE IRISH MEMORIAL  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Grosse Île, Que.

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After the First World War, Irish immigrants who sought refuge in Canada most likely passed through the quarantine station at Grosse Île. This site commemorates Grosse Île's importance to the development of Canada's public health system as well as the hardships faced by Irish immigrants coming to Canada for a better life.

**FORTIFICATIONS OF QUEBEC  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**  
Quebec City, Que.

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The Dominion Arsenal in Artillery Park played a major role in the war effort during both world wars. Thousands of people, including women, were employed at the arsenal, which produced small arms ammunition.

**FORT GEORGE AND BUTLER'S  
BARRACKS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES**  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

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Butler's Barracks and Fort George, called Camp Niagara, served as a military training camp for 14,000 soldiers from 1914-1918. The camp also served as the winter training grounds for the Polish Army, in which Canadians and Americans of Polish descent prepared to rebuild Poland after the Great War.



### **BATTLEFIELD OF FORT GEORGE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

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During the First World War, Fort George, called Camp Niagara, was used as a military training camp. The existing rifle range on the battlefield was used to train Canadian Militia as were the newly-built grenade, rocket, small arms and machine gun ranges.

### **FORT MISSISSAUGA NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

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Incorporated into Camp Niagara, a First World War military training site, troops were housed in a tent city. Traces of soldiers' practice trenches can still be seen on the grounds.

### **BETHUNE MEMORIAL HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Gravenhurst, Ont.

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Dr. Norman Bethune is commemorated for his extensive overseas medical service in war-torn countries, including Spain during the Spanish Civil War (1936-37) and China during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945). During his early life, Bethune also served in the First World War as a stretcher-bearer.

### **FORT WELLINGTON NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

Prescott, Ont.

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The fort became a First World War armoury for local militia and a training ground for new recruits.

### **SAULT STE. MARIE CANAL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.

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Located between Lake Huron and Lake Superior, the canal was an integral part of the water transportation network that moved goods across the country during the First World War.

### **FORT HENRY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Kingston, Ont.

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Under the War Measures Act, this fort was superficially repaired and used as a First World War internment camp for enemy aliens.

### **THE FORKS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Winnipeg, Man.

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From 1914-16, Upper Fort Garry served as an internment camp for enemy aliens.

### **MOTHERWELL HOMESTEAD NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Abernethy, Sask.

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This site commemorates W.R. Motherwell who served as Saskatchewan's Minister of Agriculture from 1905-17 and promoted better access to information for farmers. In 1917, he spoke out against conscription believing that young farmers were more important to the home front than to battlefields.



### **BANFF NATIONAL PARK** Banff, Alta.

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Held at a First World War interment camp at Castle Mountain, enemy aliens provided much of the cheap labour to build Canada's western national parks. They improved facilities at Banff as well as built roads and other infrastructure.

### **JASPER NATIONAL PARK** Jasper, Alta.

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Housed at an interment camp, enemy aliens improved the roads in the park. Jasper has also given First World War commemorative names to a number of peaks and topographic features.

### **BAR U RANCH** **NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Longview, Alta.

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Like all farms and ranches in Canada during the First World War, Bar U Ranch produced food for troops. The ranch also bred Percheron horses used by soldiers at the front lines.

### **FIRST OIL WELL IN** **WESTERN CANADA** **NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** Waterton Lakes National Park, Alta.

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During the war, oil was used for military vehicles and planes and was first established as a strategic commodity.

### **WATERTON LAKES NATIONAL PARK** Waterton Park, Alta.

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The names of mountain peaks at this park commemorate First World War battles such as Vimy, Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.

### **MOUNT REVELSTOKE** **NATIONAL PARK** Revelstoke, B.C.

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An interment camp was built halfway up Mount Revelstoke in September of 1915, but was abandoned that winter due to harsh conditions.

### **YOHO NATIONAL PARK** Field, B.C.

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This park housed Camp Otter, one of many interment camps for enemy aliens during the First World War.

### **FORT RODD HILL AND** **FISGARD LIGHTHOUSE** **NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES** Colwood, B.C.

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This site was used for coastal defense during both world wars and the lighthouse was used as a physical landmark for daytime navigation.





**GULF OF GEORGIA CANNERY  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
Richmond, B.C.**

This site commemorates Canada's West Coast fishing industry. The cannery was also a key food supplier for troops during the First World War.

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