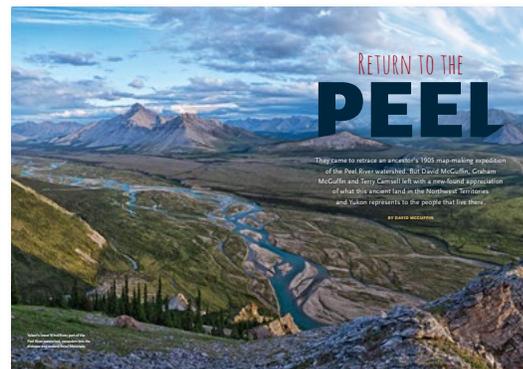


CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article RCGS Expeditions – Return to the Peel
Issue May/June 2019



Developed by:

Janet Ruest, Can Geo Education representative, British Columbia

Focus Question

What is it like to go on an adventurous expedition, to retrace the footsteps of your ancestors more than a hundred years ago?

Time

1-2 classes

Subject/topic

Social Studies

Grade level

8-12

Learning Goals

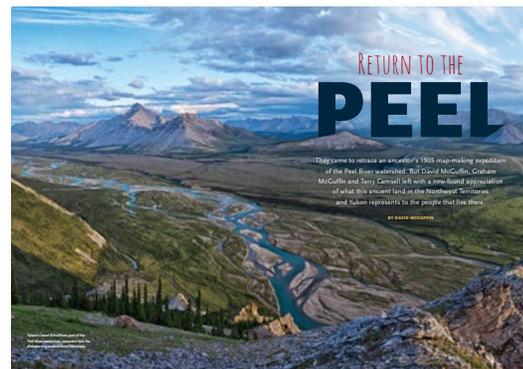
- Students will learn about one of The RCGS expeditions in the article “Return to the Peel” by David McGuffin in the May/June 2019 issue of the *Canadian Geographic* magazine ((pages 44-53) .
- Students will learn about the physical geography and history of the expedition route featured in the article.
- Students will learn about the traditional lifestyles of Indigenous Peoples along the expedition route.
- Students will examine various perspectives regarding resource extraction/development in the area of the expedition.
- Students will create a proposal for a geographically focused expedition that interests them.

Materials Needed

- One or more copies of the May/June 2019 “[Return to Peel](#)” article in *Canadian Geographic* magazine (or online version)
- Document camera or equivalent (to display article)
- Large wall map of Canada (e.g. Can Geo Education’s [tiled map of Canada’s Provinces and Territories](#) and/or [British Columbia](#))
- Handout: Expedition Proposal Assignment

CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article RCGS Expeditions – Return to the Peel
Issue May/June 2019



- Access to Google Earth
- Computer lab (for summary project)

Connection to the Canadian Geography Framework

Concepts of Geographic Thinking

- Patterns and trends
- Interrelationships
- Geographic perspective
- Spatial significance

Inquiry Process

- Formulate questions
- Gather and organize
- Interpret and analyze
- Evaluate and draw conclusions
- Communicate

Geospatial Skills

- Foundational elements
- Spatial representations
- Technology

Lesson Description

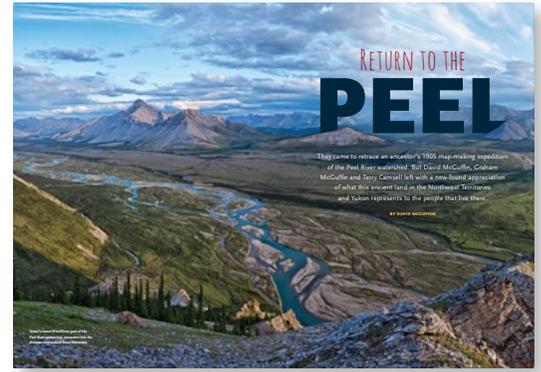
- **Minds on:** Students will brainstorm and record their knowledge of the following terms:
 - ▷ exploration
 - ▷ expedition
 - ▷ traditional knowledge
 - ▷ lifestyle
 - ▷ watershed

Students will also discuss: What areas of the world (and beyond) are being explored today? Are there local areas that the students would be interested in exploring?

- **Action:** Students will read the May/June 2019 Canadian Geographic magazine article “Return to the Peel” (pages 44-53). Students will take notes focusing on the geographic features mentioned in the article, as well as the cultural experiences of the expedition members, the physical and human interactions, and any patterns and trends mentioned in the article. Class discussions/debriefs can be used to expand student comprehension.
- **Conclusion:** After developing their notes and participating in the class discussion/debrief, students will create a “proposal” to The Royal Canadian Geographical Society for an expedition that they would like to go on. A proposal template is provided, which is based on the actual requirements for a real RCGS expedition, such as the one students read about in the article “Return to the Peel.”

CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article RCGS Expeditions – Return to the Peel
Issue May/June 2019



Lesson Implementation

Minds on

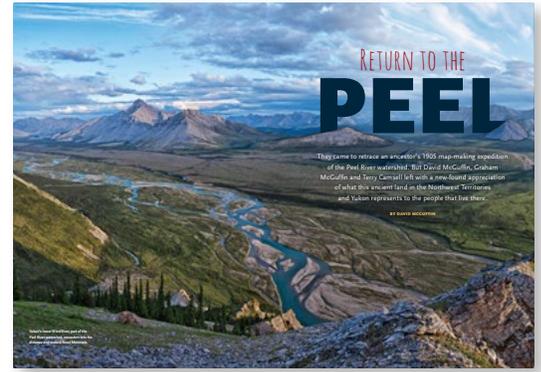
- Write the word “expedition” in the centre of the chalk/white board. Ask students to consider “expedition” as it is connected to the discipline of geography.
- Invite students to individually write down their comments/questions/reflections/ideas about the subject.
- Ask students what places in the world (or beyond) are being explored today and if there are places in their local area that the students would be interested in exploring.

Action

- Look at the photo introducing the article and have students create their own quick list of geographic features (examples could include: topography, biomes/ecosystems, animals, types of rock, potential resources)
- Review the students’ lists as a class. Identify similarities and differences among student lists. Clarify information as needed.
- Ask:
 - ▷ What does the term watershed mean?
 - ▷ What shape is the valley? How was the valley formed (i.e., geological process)?
 - ▷ What stage of river development is shown in the photo? What is the evidence?
 - ▷ What resources would Indigenous people in that area rely on?
 - ▷ How might an expedition in 2018 be similar/different to an expedition in 1905?
- As students read the *Canadian Geographic* article, have them also use Google Earth to “follow” the route of the McGuffin expedition. Ask students to create a Venn Diagram of the geographic observations made by the McGuffin expedition team. Students should also record their personal observations of the landscape (from Google Earth) and add to the Venn Diagram.
- As a class, discuss the similarities and differences in student observations from Google Earth and the expedition team observations. Why might there be differences?
- **Discussion Topics:** Select one or more of the following topics to discuss/develop with your students.
 - ▷ The article states that in Charles Camsell’s 1905 survey notes, he concluded, “The Wind River does not flow through a markedly mineralized belt of rocks.”
 - Research how technology is assisting in “gold prospecting” today to answer how the understanding of geology could help prospectors look for gold.
 - Charles Camsell started what is now known as The Royal Canadian Geographical Society. A major award is named in his honour. [Read about the RCGS’ Charles Camsell award and past recipients.](#)

CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article RCGS Expeditions – Return to the Peel
Issue May/June 2019



- ▷ The McGuffin expedition witnessed several examples of traditional Indigenous lifestyles. Make a list of these observations. Are any of these traditions similar to Indigenous groups living near your community?
 - Invite an Indigenous Elder to your class to discuss local traditions and stories of exploration in your area.
 - Discuss how traditional lifestyles have helped current Indigenous people manage the high cost of living in the Arctic.
 - Explain why the cost of living is so high in the Arctic.
- ▷ The article refers to a court case centred on the Peel watershed and nearby resource exploration and development. Create a graphic to summarize the issues related to the court case and discuss the impact Indigenous land claims played in the court decision.
 - Hold a debate with the following stakeholder perspectives:
 1. Developers
 2. Yukon government
 3. Indigenous groups
 4. Environmentalists
- ▷ Ernest Vittekwa, the Gwich'in Elder, refers to his experience of working in resource extraction. "I've been out in the oil sands in northern Alberta," he says. "The country is dead, the timber is dead, because of the contaminated water." Create a photo collage of the oil sands area with two perspectives: Resource extraction and efforts to mitigate environmental damage.

Conclusion and Consolidation

Assignment: Using the *Expedition Proposal Assignment* handout, have students, individually or in pairs, create a pseudo-proposal to The Royal Canadian Geographical Society for an expedition that students would like to experience.

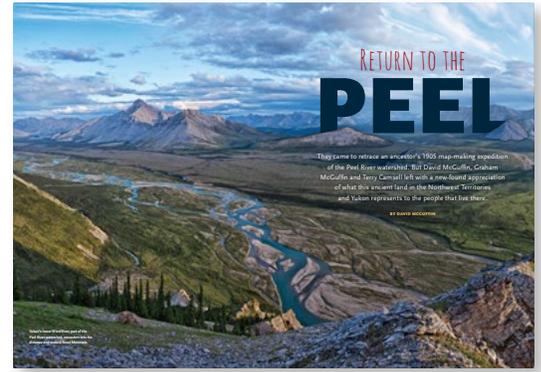
Extending Your Geographic Thinking

Click on the following links to view more photos and videos from the McGuffin expedition. How do these images enhance your understanding of the expedition and the geography of northern Canada?

- [David McGuffin's YouTube Channel](#) (more photos and videos)
- [The Peel River Canyon, Yukon](#)

CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article RCGS Expeditions – Return to the Peel
Issue May/June 2019



Modifications

- Use a document camera or equivalent to display the article on the board for students to follow along while reading.
- Assign the article to students to read the night before, allowing them to review the article ahead of time.
- Alternative assignments:
 - ▷ Research how gold prospecting is undertaken in the 21st century compared to the 19th century.
 - ▷ Compare traditional Indigenous lifestyles, as described in the article, to the traditions of Indigenous groups living near your community.
 - ▷ Create a shopping list for the first week of the students' proposed expedition. Have them research the prices for these items to create a budget and use that same budget to compare what items they would be able to purchase if they were living in the Arctic. Would all the same items be available? How would the budgets compare?

Assessment Opportunities

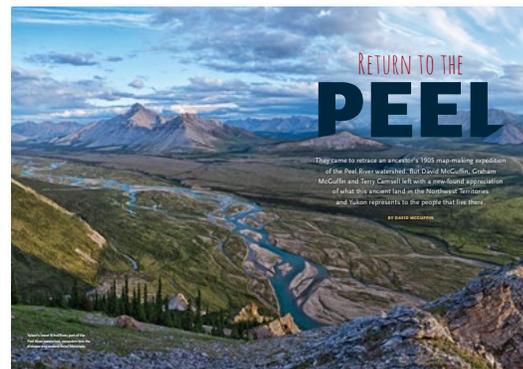
- Assess student learning based on their participation in class discussions after the article has been read.
- Students can assess their own understanding of the article based on the notes they made while reading the article.
- Students can reflect on what they learned by participating in the class discussion and on their summary project.
- Assess the summary project.

Sources and Additional resources

- David McGuffin YouTube Channel: youtube.com/channel/UCnLQrs5MCBbozyL9cOhvYGw
- Google Earth: google.com/earth/
- The Royal Canadian Geographical Society – expeditions application page: rcgs.org/programs/expeditions/expeditions_how_to_apply.asp
- Explore: A Canadian Geographic Podcast: canadiangeographic.ca/topic/explore-podcast

CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article RCGS Expeditions – Return to the Peel
Issue May/June 2019



EXPEDITION PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT:

Model of The Royal Canadian Geographical Society (RCGS) expedition application*

Background:

The RCGS mandate: To make Canada better known to Canadians and to the world.

The goal of The RCGS Expedition Program is to enhance the appreciation, understanding, and knowledge of the physical, environmental, and cultural geography of Canada by recognizing and encouraging the spirit of discovery and adventure through expeditions taking place largely within Canada.

Student Expedition proposals must have:

- A well-defined purpose or objective that contributes to geographic appreciation, understanding, and/or knowledge of Canada, and therefore fulfills the mandate of The RCGS: “To make Canada better known to Canadians and to the world.”
- A clear element of physical challenge, adventure, and exploration, taking into account:
 - ▷ remoteness
 - ▷ physical challenges
 - ▷ terrain and elements
- A map showing the location of the proposed expedition.
- A clear and well-developed outreach component incorporating one or more of the following: web, social media, video, print, community and/or school engagement (i.e., how you will share your expedition experience with others).
- Expeditions must take place largely within Canada.
- Expeditions should provide a new lens through which to understand the landscape, people, and environment of Canada.

In consultation with the teacher, students should choose a format (i.e., video, infographic, poster, written) to complete their proposal.

*Adapted from The RCGS' [Expeditions How to Apply](#) webpage.