



From the North to Ottawa's Southway Inn: Unit and Lesson Plans¹

Note to Teachers

Thank you for your interest in the Lost Stories website. The lesson plans provided here are aimed at middle school and early secondary school students (grades 7-10). However, both younger and older students may find these materials to be useful if they are provided sufficient scaffolding and/or extension material. These lessons are meant to accomplish several interrelated goals. First, and foremost, these lessons build on the website's overarching theme of recovering lost stories from the past to encourage students to think historically. As they explore these lessons students will reflect on why this story might have been lost and how it was found. In so doing, they will experience key elements of *doing* history, which include finding and selecting evidence to build a portrait of 'what happened,' and creating a contextual narrative – a story -- that illustrates why it mattered. At the same time that the lessons are nurturing historical thinking, they also provide students with a great deal of insight into the specific issue or topic being explored, namely the experience of Inuit who travelled to Ottawa in the post-World War II era. This specific issue is also tied to wider historical contexts, including the forced relocation of some Inuit, discrimination, and Canadian identity. While the lessons provided comprise a coherent unit of study, and build upon one another in a logical fashion, it is possible to use them in a stand-alone fashion. As such,

teachers are **strongly** encouraged to adapt them to the needs of their classes.

While efforts were made to ensure that the primary documents used in these lessons represented many different groups and points of view a small collection of documents can only capture so much. We welcome suggestions for pertinent documents that might be added to our collection. It is suggested that teachers draw their students' attention to any gaps in the primary document collection and discuss how further information might change the theories or interpretations they have constructed.

Note on Terminology

It is important to note that many of the documents included in this package make use of archaic language, and include controversial terms, such as "Eskimo". These have been left in the documents for the sake of historical accuracy, however, teachers should explain to their students that the use of these terms is no longer acceptable.

Unit Overview

This unit plan provides supporting material for the Lost Stories episode: *From the North to Ottawa's Southway Inn*. These materials will help teachers guide their students as they think

¹ The research for the Southway Inn lesson plans was compiled by Stephanie Lett, with the support of John Walsh, Co-Director of the Carleton Centre for Public History at Carleton University.

historically about the film and the story it tells, one which positions the Southway Inn as a node of travel for Inuit visiting Ottawa from the North. The following lessons will outline theories that explain why the story was lost and propose several alternatives to the narrative presented in the film. They also include a variety of primary source documents that students can use as evidence as they consider new theories and alternative narratives. Also included is a backgrounder that provides students and teachers with context for the story of the Southway and Inuit travel to the South. The three lessons that make up this unit can be used as 'stand-alone' lessons, but taken together they provide a kind of 'how to' guide for recovering lost stories from a variety of communities, including local school communities.

Lesson One

In this two-part lesson, students develop criteria for distinguishing history from the past, and apply these to the resurrection of the Southway Inn Lost Story. Before students can begin to engage with the "Lost Stories" project in a meaningful way they need to possess some understanding of "history" as a discipline. Specifically, they need to recognize that histories are narratives constructed from the selection and interpretation of meaningful evidence left over from the past, and about an issue, event or topic that people are interested in.

Part 1 begins with a set of simple exercises to encourage students to think more deeply about what "history" is.

Part 2 moves students from the general discussion of history and its highly selective nature, to apply their understanding to the specific case of the Southway Inn and how its story was lost and then found. In so doing, students will develop their ability to work with primary documents, while also developing a deeper understanding of Inuit history.

Lesson 1, Part 1 (70 minutes) History vs. the Past

In this lesson, students work in small groups or pairs to examine and interpret artifacts. Having begun to think about the interpretive nature of history, students are asked more directly to articulate specific differences between history and the past. In the ensuing Socratic dialogue between teacher and students, four key differences will be clarified, and re-defined as four criteria not only for thinking historically, but for *making history* – and therefore of recovering lost stories from the past.

Activity 1: Teacher in a Box

This activity draws particular attention to the fact that historians usually interpret evidence that was created for other purposes.

For this activity, the teacher collects a wide range of personally significant items from their home. Each item should have the potential to tell your students something about you. However, some of the items should be potentially misleading. For example, one teacher who has used this activity brings in a number of vegetarian cookbooks. This usually leads students to conclude, incorrectly, that the teacher is vegetarian. It is also a good idea to have more than one item for some areas of your life, thereby indicating that this is an area of greater importance, for instance bringing in several artifacts related to children or some particular activity.

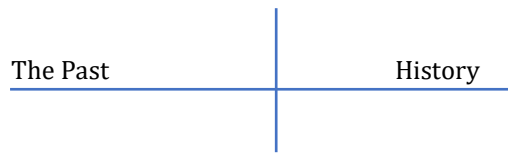
Begin the activity by breaking students into small groups. Explain to them that they are taking on the role of historians in the 22nd century. Because schools have all been entirely abolished by this time- replaced by individual, home-based, customized, computer-generated educational modules- historians have become very interested in the lives of teachers in the early 21st century. All of the evidence that has survived about you, the teacher, is contained in the box you have brought in for them. Working in their groups students are to examine the items. Based on their observations of the evidence they will generate conclusions

about you and record them using the following headings: “evidence” and “inference”. After examining all of the evidence they should write a short reflective paragraph summarizing their “conclusions.”

When debriefing this activity be sure to ask the students if there are any other types of evidence, missing from the box, they wish they had access to in order to verify conclusions or to learn more about you.

Activity 2: History versus the Past

A simple, yet highly effective, way to introduce students to the idea of “history” as a discipline is to discuss the difference between “the past” and “history”. Create a “T Chart” like the one below:



Place students into groups of two or three and ask each group to identify two differences between these two terms. Debrief this as a whole class, writing students’ answers on the board. During this discussion, the teacher should push students to recognize that “the past” is literally everything that happened before this exact moment in time, and history is the selection from it, based on certain criteria as identified below. Students can then be asked: “how is history different from the past?” During this discussion, the teacher should provide students with the following criteria for “making history:”

1. People need evidence -- traces and accounts -- left over from the past before they can begin to research and understand any aspect of history. These traces or accounts are called Primary Sources. Like evolutionary biologists and geologists, historical thinking depends on the existence of primary sources that have

remained from the past into the present. In other words, if a tree falls in the forest and leaves no trace, it is part of the past, but will not be part of history. Think about your own life: out of everything that you experienced yesterday, how much of it left traces and accounts?

2. Traces and accounts not only have to be created, this evidence **needs to be preserved** through time before it can become part of history. Think again about your own life: of that evidence about your life yesterday that was created - a shopping list, a text message, a record of a visa purchase, a conversation that you remember – how much will be preserved through time? How much will be available in the future? Evidence (or fragments) from the past can be found stored everywhere - in everything from government statistics and personal letters in provincial archives, to scientists’ pollen samples, and stories told from one generation to the next and preserved in family memories.
3. The creation and preservation of a record of the past is still not enough to make it become part of history. People need to **interpret the evidence**, the primary document. No primary source “tells the truth” about history; even eyewitness accounts, photographs and videos were created by a person at a particular time and place, and these factors influenced what was recorded, and how. Evidence, therefore must be interpreted
 - in the context of how, when, where, why and by whom it was created,
 - in the relevant historical contexts of the time and place it was created
 - in the context of issues and concerns in the present
4. Historians interpret evidence that they see as **significant**- meaningful, important, of consequence. What is significant changes from place to place, from person to person,

and over time. This is one of the reasons why history is never really finished, and one of the reasons why stories from the past are always getting lost and found.

In conclusion, suggest that students remember these criteria, because we will be using them to explore how a lost story from the past becomes history.

Lesson 1, Part 2: (210 minutes) Why are stories lost? How do stories get found?

Begin this lesson by watching the Southway Inn video on the Lost Stories website. While watching the video, students consider the question: Does the Southway Inn story meet our criteria for history (in comparison with the past)?

Debrief the video by asking students to discuss, first in small groups then as a class, the following questions:

- What evidence is presented in the film about the importance of the Southway Inn to Inuit who had come south to Ottawa? Provide as many examples as you can.
 - Does the film show where and/or how that evidence was preserved? Provide at least 2 examples (and remember that human memories count as evidence!). Does it provide other evidence that was not created at the time? What kind?
 - What individual person or people are responsible for interpreting the evidence for this Lost Hi/Story?
 - People seldom explicitly state why they think the history they are telling is significant, but they usually leave clues. What does the artist think is most important about this story? Can you guess what other participants in the film think is most important about the story of the Southway Inn? Or the filmmaker?
 - What are three reasons why the Southway Inn story might have been lost?
- What are three reasons why we are now able to “find” this story?

At the end of this discussion, explain to students that they are to complete a two-part critical challenge. First, students are to work in small groups to examine all of the primary documents provided in the *From the North to Ottawa's Southway Inn Historical Document Collection* in the **Teaching Lost Stories** section of the Lost Stories website. They will find that these documents support three theories, or cases, as to why the Southway Inn's story was lost.

1. **The story was lost because many members of the settler, non-Indigenous community in Ottawa see Inuit culture as “out of place” in Southern, urban environments.** Scholar Anita Kushwaha notes that because of Canada's colonial history, there is a “fundamental tension” between the ideas of Indigeneity and modern “civilization,” with Indigenous peoples historically characterized as living exclusively on the land, separately from settler Canadians. Furthermore, the land is understood in this context as referring to non-urban spaces, and often some combination of wilderness and rurality associated with life on reserves. This assumption that urban spaces are exclusively settler spaces exists in the public historical consciousness and is reinforced by the state. For example, Statistics Canada has consistently reported a number of Inuit living in Ottawa that is lower than that reported by Inuit organizations in the city, failing to recognize the mobility and heterogeneity of this population. It is possible that the story of the Southway Inn was lost because the settler majority failed to recognize Ottawa as a significant place for Inuit.
2. **The story was lost because the Inn was a site created by non-Indigenous settlers, and was therefore not seen as**

part of an Inuit story. While the Southway served as a community space and wayfinder for Inuit as they oriented themselves to life in Ottawa and in the South as a whole, it was by no means the only space to play these roles. In fact, since the 1970s and 1980s, organizations founded and built up by Inuit have become significant spaces for identity formation and place-making for Inuit visiting and living in urban centers. For instance, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, Ottawa's Inuit community centre, provides services that help Inuit navigate an urban lifestyle and stay connected to their culture. Ottawa's Inuit community has established many other service organizations in the city, such as the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre and the Nunavut Sivuniksavut education program. These organizations offer spaces for Inuit to build and maintain a sense of community and identity, including the teaching of Inuktitut.

3. **The story was lost because it is part of a much larger story of North-South travel by Inuit since the late 1940s.**

North-South travel by Inuit in the post-war era was not unique to Ottawa. In fact, the Canadian state's efforts to impose an ideology of liberal welfare reform in the Arctic after the Second World War disrupted Inuit practices and lifestyles and led to a fundamental change in the nature of Inuit mobility. Before this time period, Inuit travel was largely characterized by the movement of kinship groups between settlements using *qimmiit* (sled dogs) or boats in order to meet their own needs for food, clothing, and shelter. According to anthropologist Mark K. Watson, postwar Inuit mobility "was controlled and surveilled under a comprehensive policy of sedentarization that government agencies used to disrupt Inuit reliance upon a (semi) nomadic way of life in order to better administrate their

perceived needs." Rather than travelling between dynamic settlements in the Arctic, many Inuit were forced to travel to the South for medical treatment (either through forced evacuation or because of a lack of resources in the North), to settle in the High Arctic as part of government efforts to assert Canadian sovereignty, or to attend residential schools designed to train Inuit children for a future in wage employment. In addition, it is estimated that hundreds of *qimmiit* were killed by RCMP officers in this time period, a fact that is significant to the story of the Southway not only because of its impact on Inuit mobility in the postwar era, but also because the artwork designed to represent this lost story depicts a *qamutiik*, or dogsled. Much that has been written about Inuit mobility has emphasized the role of the state, leaving the impact of a place like the Southway Inn, and the community that developed there, out of the picture.

The teacher will assign each of the groups **one** of these theories and ask that each group identify the four or five pieces of evidence that best support their assigned theory. Students can use the **primary document analysis organizer** to help them through this process. The group's work can be summarized in a poster that they will present to the class. Each poster should briefly restate the theory the group was trying to support (maximum 2 sentences) and should clearly identify and explain the four or five pieces of evidence they found most compelling. For each piece of evidence the group should provide the title of the relevant primary document(s), as well as quotes or summaries and pictures or drawings.

Once all groups have presented their posters the class should discuss which interpretation is best supported by evidence using the criteria provided on the **primary document analysis organizer**. Teachers should ask all students to rank the order of the theories or cases from most to least convincing and collect this information as an exit

ticket. The results can be shared at the start of the next lesson. Teachers are also encouraged to draw attention to any absences or gaps in the document collection. An easy way to do this is to ask the students what other types of evidence they would like to have had available.

Note on the Primary Documents

Teachers can allow each group to examine all the documents. Alternatively, teachers can point students towards the documents that most directly address their assigned theory. In this case, we would recommend that students investigating the idea that **the story of the Southway Inn was lost because many members of the settler, non-Indigenous community in Ottawa see Inuit culture as “out of place” in Southern, urban environments** look at documents 1-7. Students looking into the idea that **the story of the Southway Inn was lost because the Inn was a site created by non-Indigenous settlers, and was therefore not seen as part of an Inuit story** can look at 8-14. Finally, those students focusing on the theory that **the story of the Southway was lost because it is part of a much larger story of North-South travel by Inuit since the late 1940s** should look at 15-21. Teachers may need to provide their students with assistance, by giving them additional historical context, as they try to interpret the documents.

