

YUKON ARCHIVES
The Alaska Highway: A Yukon Perspective
Lesson # 3

LESSON TOPIC:

Chapter 3: Impacts of the Alaska Highway

SUMMARY:

Students begin by responding to several statements regarding the impacts of the Alaska Highway. After reading the text from this chapter they return to their initial responses and reflect on any changes they may wish to make. A class discussion follows, which examines both the benefits and impacts of the highway. The concluding activity asks students to form small groups and create a “Headlines of Alaska Highway History” list of new and interesting things they have learned in this chapter.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

B.L.M. 3.1 “Reaction Guide”
Flip chart paper and markers

DURATION:

1 ½ to 2 hours

WARM-UP ACTIVITY:

Reaction Guide

1. Introduce students to this chapter by reviewing some key points from chapters 1 and 2. It is important that students have an understanding of what conditions were like during the construction phase and who was involved. These ideas could be listed on the board for students to copy in their notes.

2. Explain to them that this chapter explores the impacts (positive and negative) that the highway had on the Yukon Territory. Ask them to offer some initial predictions of what these impacts might be and list them on the board.
3. Distribute the B.L.M. 3.1 “Reaction Guide”. Ask students to complete the sheet by putting a check next to the statements they agree with.
4. Teachers may then wish students to defend their responses in small groups or as an entire class.

ACTIVITY:

Class Discussion

1. Ask students to read through the text in Chapter 3 and review the photos. As they read the text, have them take notes on the material that supports or rebuts each statement from B.L. M. 3.1
2. Once they have completed the reading ask them to return to the Reaction Guide to determine if they have changed their mind on any statements.
3. Ask students to share with the class what new information they have learned and what statements, if any, from their Reaction Guide they changed.
4. Lead a class discussion on the benefits and impacts of the Alaska Highway. Make a list with the class that details both. Open-ended questions to help with the class discussion might include:
 - Was there a particular group of people who benefited more from the highway? Explain
 - Does an improved economy justify the affect the highway had on wildlife and the Yukon environment in general?
 - What do the Elders mean when they say the highway meant “a breakdown in traditional institutions”?
 - What was your reaction to the reading that the Federal Government made family allowance for First Nations available ONLY to children registered in school?

WRAP-UP:*Headlines of Alaska Highway History*

1. Ask students to form small groups of 3 or 4. On flipchart paper have each group discuss, then list the “Headlines of Alaska Highway History” from this chapter (these may include a particular photo).
2. Each group will then present their “Headlines” list to the class.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Have students interview a First Nations person who remembers the construction of the highway period. Students should prepare questions ahead of time and be prepared to share their experience with the class.

OR

2. Students examine the photos from this section and choose 2 or 3 that particularly interest them. They will then write a newspaper article that explores some aspect of the photos. These can be shared with the class and then displayed in the classroom.

ASSESSMENT IDEAS:

1. Participation marks may be given during the class discussion.
2. Group marks could be assigned to the “Headlines” exercise (i.e. how well they worked in the group, quality and completion of their list, clarity and strength in oral skills during the presentation, ability to respond to peer questions, etc.)