

**Historical Thinking Mentorship Project:
Continuity and Change in CHC2D – Overall Expectation D2**

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Section 1. Historical Thinking Concept

Chosen concept: Continuity and Change

Student explanation for learners:

As grade 10 historians, we are using history as a lens to develop our understanding of what it means to be human within our world at this present moment. We develop our understanding by thinking critically about periods where the speed and pace of change have reshaped and redirected history (Seixas & Morton, 2013). Continuity and change at any moment in time exist alongside each other (Seixas & Morton, 2013). When comparing key events, sources, and social attitudes as significant moments of history, we must simultaneously address what remained the same alongside the key indicators of change between two distinct time periods. There are certain historical moments where changes seem more prominent, while continuities exist backstage. Continuity and change exist in flexible tandem between periods, highlighting how the ongoing process of change does not exist along a linear timeline.

Grade 10 students, your task is to practice using the concept of *Continuity & Change* to analyze a set of primary sources from different points in history. *Continuity & Change* asks you to use primary resources, artifacts, and different perspectives to determine how Canadian and international relations have both changed and remained the same over time. To develop your historical skills of using continuity & change, we can analyze how political alliances have changed or how social structures have evolved. One can also investigate how information is represented in that resource compared to different eras—is there *bias*? What type of language or visuals does the resource use to represent different people, policies, or places? Connections or comparisons can be made to discover how the content in the resource is presented today—are the issues or values represented in that resource still important to us today? *Continuity & Change* asks you to analyze a resource within the context in which it was created and compare that to how those same ideas are talked about in a different era.

Section 2. Curricular Alignment

Grade level: 10 (CHC2D)

Ontario curriculum Overall Expectation: D2. Communities, Conflict, and Cooperation: analyze some key experiences of and interactions between different communities in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, as well as interactions between Canada and the international community, from 1945 to 1982, and the changes that resulted from them.

Teacher facing curricular note:

To provide our students with the best possible education, we must overlay both conceptual and curricular thinking in our teaching. Applying the conceptual lens of *Continuity & Change* to curricula presents historical education as the “unfolding of events, people, motivations, and twists and turns,” rather than having students focus on a chronology of specific, isolated truths (Wineburg, 142). By framing NATO-era developments within a continuum of earlier international efforts, students learn to interpret political change as part of a larger historical trajectory. This deepens engagement with the curriculum by moving students from simple description towards thoughtful interpretation, allowing them to assess how and why Canada’s role within the scope of the international community transformed during this period. To address the establishment of NATO, teachers can guide the contextualization of conflicts, interactions, and social attitudes that sparked the development of an international collective defence and military alliance by highlighting *Continuity & Change*. Effective historical teaching fosters students’ ability to interpret relationships between isolated events existing within a larger historical context (Levesque, 65). To understand the

continuity that exists across modern historical international relationships, students must learn comparative skills rooted in their ability to interpret continuities and key moments of change.

Section 3. Primary Source and Worked Example

Primary source selection:

FEBRUARY,
1920. *League of Nations—Official Journal.* 3

The Covenant of the League of Nations.

THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES,

In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security

by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,
by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between nations,

by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and

by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organised peoples with one another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.

Figure 1: The founding of the League of Nations, which was an early international agreement in 1920 where member countries pledged to cooperate, uphold international law, and work together to prevent future wars.



THE GAP IN THE BRIDGE.

Figure 2: League of Nations Poster – A political cartoon from the early 1920s that depicts the League of Nations as a structure held together by key member states.

The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments.

They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area.

They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty :

Figure 3: The founding of NATO, which was an agreement between twelve countries committed to working together for collective security during the early years of the Cold War.

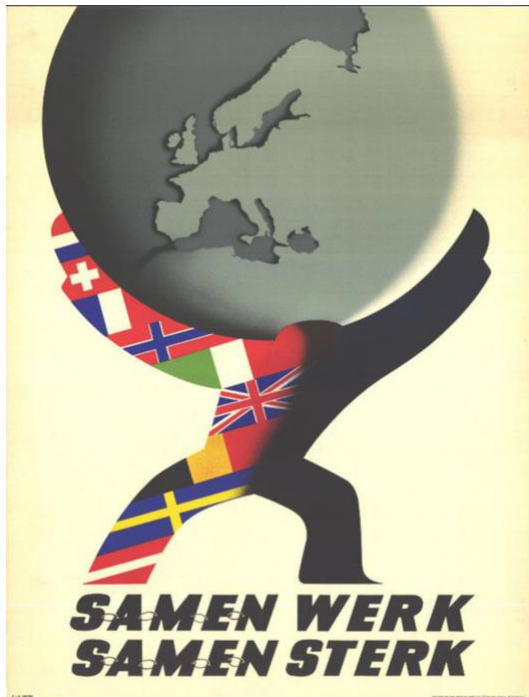


Figure 4: NATO Alliance Poster. Translation: [Work together, strong together] – A late 1940s NATO promotional poster that highlights unity and collective strength among member countries in the early Cold War period.

Context for learners:

Included here are four primary sources for your analysis. Two of which are situated in the immediate post-WW1 period: the founding document outlining the creation of the League of Nations and an accompanying cartoon/visualization from the same period. The next two are from the post-WW2 period (late 1940s): the founding document of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and an accompanying poster translated from Dutch.

Modelled historical thinking:

Analyzing history through the lens of continuity & change requires that historians place primary sources in the context of the period they were created in. The four primary sources above come from two distinct eras, existing within their own discernible reality. When analyzing these sources, some questions to keep in mind are:

- Who authored the source?
- Did they have social/economic/political motivations in doing so?
- What major events/political movements may have influenced the creation of the source?
- What message does the source attempt to convey?
- How is the source worded? Is there bias?
- What is the international goal or reason to create the League of Nations? What was the international goal of creating NATO?

For the first source, one may note the language the authors use to describe the nature of the NATO treaty, noting the “desire to live in peace”. We may infer that this peace is contingent on “democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law” as the document highlights these themes as founding principles. In the immediate post-WW2 era, Soviet expansionism posed a serious threat to Western nations. Emphasizing principles such as democracy and liberty is an important distinction to make and shows that one of the purposes of this document is to maintain security against the Soviet Union, without explicitly mentioning it here.

In comparison, the earlier League of Nations document (1920) also highlights the need for “international peace and security”. However, it does so explicitly cite an “obligation not to resort to war”. Absent here are keywords such as democracy or liberty—this source places a broader emphasis on war itself. We can infer that these principles may not have been as severely threatened at this time, especially noting that the Russian Revolution had occurred only a few years prior. *Continuity* can be noted in that both sources occurred immediately after a world war, with authors seeking a diplomatic solution to solidify world peace. That peace is also achieved by international cooperation. *Change* is noted in how said international cooperation is presented—In the League of Nations document, war itself is denounced, while the NATO treaty places a stronger emphasis on the principles that govern individual countries that contribute to that cooperation.

The last two sources are posters from the 1920s and late 1940s, respectively. The League of Nations poster illustrates the alliance between member states as a collaborative effort, with a bridge that connects them. Notably, the USA is represented as a powerful “Uncle Sam” figure, as the keystone or cornerstone for the alliance. In the NATO alliance poster, a *similar* visual for togetherness is made, showing all the different countries holding together to support the world. Different here is the lack of presence of the United States. One may infer that, as the League of Nations poster is of American authorship, it chooses to present itself as more of a central figure. It is interesting to note that the Dutch NATO poster doesn’t include the US, despite them being a central member, but the League of Nations poster does, highlighting that the US never joined. *Continuity* is represented by togetherness as a parallel value between the posters, but *change* is noted in how differently the United States is represented.

Teacher note:

A pedagogical use for this worked example would be to demonstrate the type of structured, inquiry-based approach to reading that Wineburg advocates as essential for history thinking. Using this example to guide students in the processes of sourcing, contextualizing, and comparing the four sources will enable the teacher to emphasize that historians do not approach the past with modern assumptions; instead, they seek to understand how each document relates to its particular moment

in history. While students may start out noticing obvious differences between the visionary language of the League and the military nature of NATO, through discussion prompts, they may begin to realize there are also similarities and shifts in how countries viewed cooperation and security in the past century. The teacher can also highlight the persuasive role of the posters, asking students to consider the purposes and audiences of each piece, promoting an inquiry-based approach.

Section 4. Visual Accompaniment to the Primary Source

Type of visual or organizer:

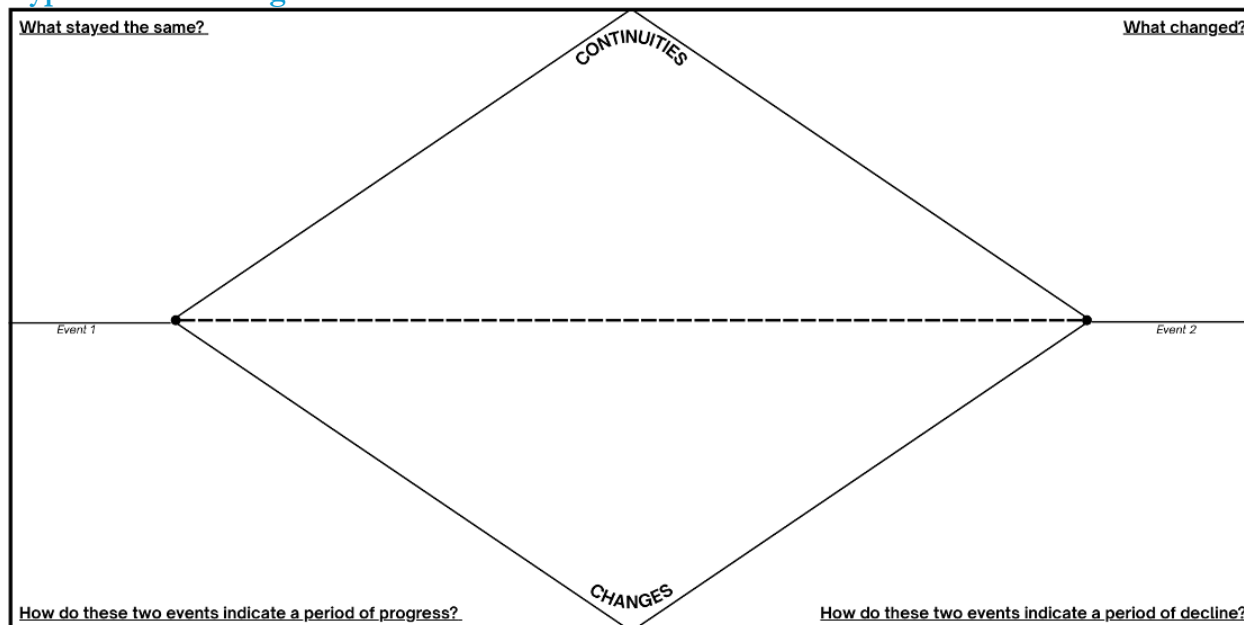


Figure 5: This graphic organizer is a Continuity & Change Event Comparison Timeline. The graphic organizer is developed for landscape orientation. Replication of the template onto chart paper is advised when working in groups.

Description of the tool:

This event comparison timeline is used to help students analyze the patterns of continuity and change in the establishment of international governance organizations in the post-WWI and WWII eras. Students begin by identifying two key historic moments or turning points that define a period of history. Use the timeline as the starting point for sequencing events. Students then highlight events, perspectives, cultural identities, or moments of progress and decline, plotting them as continuity (upper section of the diamond) or change (lower section of the diamond). Having students differentiate and categorize events as significant moments of continuity or change, using their knowledge of history and primary sources, supports their ability to observe and rationalize the coexistence of continuity and change across history. After creating the continuity and change timeline, guiding questions in the four outer quadrants direct students to develop a deeper analysis of the meaning behind their constructed chronology of historical events. By drawing point-form conclusions from the timeline, students further question the changes and continuities that occurred between two key turning point events. This process helps students conceptualize the patterns and pace of change depending on the events chosen (e.g., the establishment of the League of Nations and NATO). Questioning the progress and decline within a historical period encourages students to analyze how change and continuity can simultaneously create progress for one group or person while causing decline for another.

Pedagogical purpose:

Developed to build historical thinking on post-war international governance systems, the comparison timeline applies continuity and change principles of periodization, progress and decline, the interwoven nature of continuity and change, and identification of patterns and turning points across historical periods. The use of a graphic organizer enhances students' reading comprehension and analysis of primary sources in two areas, context enhancement and cognitive strategy instruction (Claravall & Irey, 2021). This organizer first prompts students to situate the context of two historical events within a period. Using the timeline requires students to interpret and analyze how continuities exist alongside changes within the normative understanding of the past as a chronology of key events and turning points. This graphic organizer serves as a medium to visually represent historic patterns that occur within a period, while asking students to critically identify significant turning points that spark change or preserve the status quo. Students must first apply prior historical knowledge and categorize events either as continuities or changes within an established period. The organizer scaffolds the process of learning, storing, and using information to identify main ideas and draw conclusions regarding continuity and change (Claravall & Irey, 2021). This act of recall and analytical categorization of events as moments of continuity or change serves as a diagnostic assessment for a learning task. Both teachers and students can then recognize and address knowledge gaps from a historical period of study needed to thoughtfully engage in historical thinking. First, completing the timeline scaffolds the application of the historic thinking concept and provides a logical progression through the continuity and change guideposts. Then students can rationalize and draw conclusions based on their timeline and analysis of the continuities and changes, and evidence of progress and decline that have transpired between these two key historical events.

Section 5. Scholarly Rationale for Pedagogical Design

Scholarly rationale:

This learning design is based on research that shows that students' historical thinking improves when they are encouraged to go beyond just remembering facts and instead engage in disciplined interpretation. Wineburg (2001) argues that historical thinking is an “unnatural act” as it requires students to ignore contemporary assumptions, meticulously source documents, and situate evidence within unfamiliar frameworks. The modelled explanation and guided questions in Section 3 are designed to make this reasoning clear; students learn how historians think about purpose, audience, and context before coming to a conclusion. This clear modelling is in line with Seixas's (2017, p. 594) focus on teaching students the ways of thinking that historians use to make sense of evidence. Students practice finding patterns, disruptions, and turning points by working with two sets of sources from different times, which are all important parts of the Continuity and Change concept.

The choice and order of the four primary sources are also based on research on how students learn to compare evidence in a meaningful way. In “Thinking Historically: Educating Students for the Twenty-First Century”, Lévesque (2008, p. 75) points out that students often have trouble seeing continuity unless they are given chances to look at sources from different times and are helped to say what has stayed the same and what has changed. Combining the League of Nations and NATO documents with their matching posters gives students different ways to learn and makes abstract diplomatic ideas more real. The visual organizer helps this process even more by giving students a structured way to group events, find patterns, and show how continuity and change can happen at the same time. The timeline organizer also helps students develop the conceptual reasoning they need to think historically by making them put events in order, find turning points,

and judge progress and decline. These choices about how to teach are based on research in history education and are meant to help students learn how to make disciplined, concept-driven interpretations of the past.

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