

Building Community

Paldi and the Legacy of South Asian Canadians in BC

ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ

ਪਾਲਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਬੀ. ਸੀ. ਵਿੱਚ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਏਸ਼ੀਆਈ ਕੈਨੇਡੀਅਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਰਾਸਤ

EDUCATOR GUIDE



We acknowledge that the Cowichan Valley, where the village of Paldi was built, is part of the traditional, unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, specifically the lands of the Ts'uubaa-asatx, Penelakut, Halalt, Lyackson, Stz'uminus, Malahat and Quw'utsun peoples.

INTRODUCTION

Between Duncan and Lake Cowichan on Vancouver Island, there was once a thriving logging community called Paldi. Paldi was founded in 1917 by Mayo Singh Minhas. Mayo Singh named his new village in Canada after the one he left behind in India. Although it started as a small lumber mill, the community grew, and at its peak it boasted a population of 1,500 people. The community had a diverse makeup, including individuals of South Asian, Japanese, Chinese and European descent.

WHAT'S IN STORE?

In this outreach box, we will explore the history and culture of the community of Paldi, with a focus on South Asian Canadian culture, intercultural communities and the lives of children. There are three units in this outreach box.

Unit 1: The Diversity of Paldi

Unit 2: Mapping the Community

Unit 3: The Daily Lives of Children

NOTE ON THE LANGUAGE USED

In some of the primary sources found in the outreach kit, you may see the term “East Indian” or “Indo Canadian” used. Today the term “South Asian” is generally used. This term is meant to encompass people with roots in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and their global diaspora.

BACKGROUND

The early South Asian migrants of Paldi, all of whom were men, came from undivided India and South East Asia, with the largest number coming from a small region in northwest India called Punjab. They were mostly from farming backgrounds and of the Sikh faith, with Punjabi cultural roots.

Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims all lived side by side in BC in the early years. In 2021, Sikhs were the largest socio-religious group in BC, and Statistics Canada reports (2017) that Punjabi is the third-most-spoken mother tongue in Canada after the two official languages.

THIS RESOURCE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SOUTH ASIAN CANADIAN LEGACY PROJECT

The South Asian Canadian Legacy Project aims to raise awareness and knowledge of the valuable contributions of South Asian Canadians to British Columbia's diverse cultures, history, heritage, economy and society.

Visit threadingourstories.ca for more ways to engage with our history.

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Mayo school group portrait (1956).
2020_06_01_018.

Unit 1: The Diversity of Paldi

INQUIRY/BIG QUESTION

What or who influenced the start, growth and decline of Paldi?

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

During this activity, students will rotate through a series of stations. At each station there will be a photo and an object. Students will investigate each artifact and make inferences about the community. After the session, the teacher will share a slide deck presentation that goes over the history of Paldi. A timeline made of bunting will then be sorted into order and hung up in the room to remind students of the community and its history as they do the other activities.

SOCIAL STUDIES BIG IDEAS

Cause and consequence

Why do events happen, and what are their impacts?

Historical significance

How do we decide what is important to learn about the past?

GRADES/CURRICULAR AREAS

Grade 4, 6 and 9 Social Studies

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

- Artifacts for each station
- Timeline bunting
- Slide deck presentation
- Sticky notes (not provided)
- Station rotation worksheet
- Historical significance worksheet (grade 9)

SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 9
<p>Sequence objects, images or events and determine continuities and changes between different time periods or places.</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>Sequence events using the timeline bunting.</p>	<p>Sequence objects, images or events and recognize the positive and negative aspects of continuities and changes in the past and present (continuity and change).</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>After sequencing events, students identify which events are positive and which are negative.</p>	<p>Assess the significance of people, places, events, or developments at particular times and places.</p> <p>Activity</p> <p>After sequencing events, students identify which events are significant.</p>

KICKOFF AND CONNECT

Introduce the topic, generate interest, identify the problem, connect/access prior knowledge

Throughout this lesson and various associated activities, students will be working towards answering the question of what or who influenced the start, growth and decline of Paldi.

To start off, ask students what makes up a community. The lesson will round back to this question later.

Consider putting their answers on the board or having them write their answers on sticky notes to place on the board themselves.

EXPLORE AND ENGAGE: EXAMINING THE OBJECTS

Break students into smaller groups, ideally no larger than three to four students per group.

Place one group of objects per table. Print out copies of [the station rotation worksheet](#) to help students focus their inferences and questions. Explain that today you will be exploring objects representing a community called Paldi that existed over 100 years ago on Vancouver Island. Based on the objects you examine, who do you think might have lived in that community, and what might their lives have been like?

Set a timer for five to eight minutes. Students will arrive at each station and have a chance to look at, hold and pass around each artifact. During this time, they should be directing conversation towards answering what Paldi and the community would have been like.

Questions to encourage thinking could include:

What part of life is your artifact connected to? (e.g., daily life, work or leisure)

How do you think the artifact looked or worked when it was new?

Who might have used an object like this?

What might this document tell us about the people who lived in this community?



Mayo Singh (c. 1915).
2020_06_01_022.

Station 1: Three images of lumber/sawmills and a pair of leather gloves

Station 2: Two images of the Paldi Gurdwara and thali (steel plates for serving langar)

Station 3: Two images of Japanese residents in Paldi and a ceramic bowl

Station 4: One image of Chinese residents in Paldi and mahjong tiles

Station 5: Three images of South Asian residents in Paldi, a chunni and two kara

Station 6: Four images of Paldi School and a school bell and slate board

See the [Appendix](#) for complete descriptions and image credits.

Building Community: Paldi and the Legacy of South Asian Canadians in BC

1. After the students have rotated through three stations, have each group discuss who they think lived in Paldi or what was done there. Without prior knowledge, the groups should have different answers at this time.
2. After the students have completed the six rotations, ask the class who might have lived in Paldi, what might have been the main industry in Paldi and why they think so.
3. Share the slide deck presentation (included in the kit) with the class. This presentation will cover the who, what, when, where, why and how of Paldi and give students additional information about the rich history of the small community.
4. Working as a class, distribute the flags from the timeline bunting activity (included in the kit) to each of the small groups. Start by asking one group to select one of their flags and to bring it to the front of the class. Ask the next group to choose one of their flags, and ask the class to decide whether that flag goes before or after the first flag in chronological order. Repeat with the groups until all of the flags have been placed in a timeline. Go over any corrections to the timeline (answer key provided below). Hang the timeline in the classroom and keep it up until it's time to return the outreach kit.
5. Grade 6: Ask students to identify which of the events on the timeline could be considered positive and which on the timeline could be considered negative. Have them write positive events on one set of coloured sticky notes and negative events on a different set of coloured sticky notes. Place their sticky notes on the whiteboard with positive on the right side and negative on the left side. Ask students to share why they chose certain events.
6. Grade 9: Ask the students to determine which of the events on the timeline are most significant. Explain that like historians, they will use criteria to make decisions about the events to determine if they are significant.
 - Prominence at the time: Was the event recognized as important at the time it occurred?
 - Impact: How deeply felt, widespread and long-lasting were the consequences of the event?
 - Revealing: Does the event highlight or symbolize important issues or trends in the past or present?Distribute [the worksheet](#) to the student groups and ask them to select up to three events to review. Invite students to share which of the events were most significant and least significant. Did they choose the same events as other students? Why were their ratings different from others? Which of the criteria is the most difficult to determine?
7. All grades: Ask the students to go back to the opening question about community. How does learning about Paldi add to or change their original thinking? Did early definitions include multicultural community groups? Does experiencing shared events have an impact on community?

WRAP UP AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment can be summative and include a show of fingers (one to five) on students' understanding of Paldi after the lesson or a quick "exit ticket" write up about a fact or question they still have.

ADAPTATIONS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

- Detailed descriptions of images used for sight impairments
- Multiple copies of all images included

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE WORKSHEET

Historical Event:

CRITERIA	RATING
<p>Prominence at the time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was it considered important at the time? How long did it exist or go on for? 	<p>Rating: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Evidence:</p>
<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How deeply were the consequences felt? How widespread were the consequences? How long-lasting were the consequences? 	<p>Rating: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Evidence:</p>
<p>Revealing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the event highlight, represent or symbolize important issues or trends in the past or present? 	<p>Rating: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Evidence:</p>

Scale of significance

- Not at all significant: No one needs to remember the event
- Individually significant: Only the descendants and family of the people involved should know about the event
- Regionally significant: Almost everyone who lives in the region should know about the event
- Nationally significant: Almost everyone in the country where it occurred should know about the event
- Globally significant: Almost everyone in the world should know about the event

EXPLANATION

STATION ROTATION WORKSHEET

Name:

Date:

Record what you saw at each station. What inferences did you make? What questions do you have?

Station 1	Station 2
Station 3	Station 4
Station 5	Station 6

ANSWER KEY FOR TIMELINE BUNTING ACTIVITY

1903—First South Asian men arrive in BC

1908—Canadian government restricts immigration

The Canadian government passes an order in council prohibiting immigration of persons who did not travel on a continuous journey to Canada.

1917—Mayo Singh starts logging in Paldi

Mayo Singh Minhas establishes a logging operation in the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island. Originally, the village is called Mayo, but eventually its name would be changed to Paldi. From the beginning the village includes South Asian, Japanese, Chinese and European residents.

1919—Immigration restrictions on women and children lifted

Immigration restrictions on bringing wives and children under the age of 18 from India are lifted.

1921—Paldi's first school is built

Mayo Lumber Co. donates all the lumber, building paper and nails for the building. Citizens of Mayo and Sahtlam Station give their labour and furnish the doors, windows and inside furnishings, and Mayo Singh donates a piano. Miss Marjorie Evans is the first teacher. Children from Mayo Mill, Yellow Fir Lumber Mill and Sahtlam Station attend.

1930—The Great Depression begins

The Great Depression (1930–1939) forces the temporary closure of the Mayo Mill. The only job at the mill is for a watchman, and several South Asian men share that one job. Each works for one month at a time, earning one dollar a day. They pool their wages to support one another.

1937—Population of Paldi hits peak of 1,500

After rebuilding the mill following a fire, applying for a post office and officially changing the name of the village to Paldi to honour Mayo Singh's village in the Punjab region, Paldi reaches its peak population of 1,500, with 100 families and 150 single men in bunkhouses.

1942—Japanese Canadians sent to internment camps

Japanese Canadians, including the families from Paldi, are sent to internment camps during the Second World War. One hundred and four people of Japanese descent from Paldi are relocated in total. They are housed in the animal barns at Exhibition Park in Vancouver, and they remain there for several months before being sent by train to the Interior of BC. While they are at Exhibition Park, Mayo's reputation and his work as a philanthropist give him access to the highly restricted detention centre. He comes many times to bring supplies to his friends and to ask what their needs are. Earlier, before they were taken away, he had offered to be responsible for his people if they could stay in Paldi, but his pleas had gone unheard. Residents at Paldi do what they can to save the personal belongings of the Japanese families. Only eight Japanese families will return to Paldi after the internment.

1945—Forest fire forces closure of Paldi mill

Previous fires had caused some damage in Paldi before, but the 1945 forest fire is the largest. The Paldi mills are forced to close.

1947—South Asian immigrants win the vote

South Asian immigrants are granted franchise to vote and become Canadian citizens. Mayo Singh had supported the work of Dr. Durai Pal Pandia, a lawyer trained in the UK who came to Canada in 1939. Pandia went to Ottawa to argue for both fair immigration laws and the right to vote.

1955—Mayo Singh passes away

Mayo Singh is remembered for his generosity and for advocating for his workers and their families. Mayo receives a traditional Sikh funeral in Paldi with hundreds of people in attendance. After his death, his oldest son, Rajindi, takes over the family business.

1965—A new mill is built in Nanaimo

A new mill is built in Nanaimo, and the Mayo offices are relocated there. People move away from Paldi and closer to their work.

1969—Paldi school closes

Remaining children are bused to Lake Cowichan.

2019—The hundredth anniversary of the Paldi Gurdwara

Huge crowds gather, including local, provincial and federal politicians, to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Paldi Gurdwara.



Mayo Siding, Duncan BC, (c. 1940–50).
2020_06_01_010.

Unit 2: Mapping the Community

INQUIRY/BIG QUESTION

What influences the building of a community, and what can you learn about its population from the layout of the village?

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

During this activity, students will create a map of the layout of Paldi while listening to a description of Paldi being read out. Afterwards they will be shown the map and will have the chance to compare how close they got their maps to the one presented.

SOCIAL STUDIES BIG IDEAS

Grade 4

The pursuit of valuable natural resources has played a key role in changing the land, people and communities of Canada.

Rationale

How was Paldi built around the lumber mill?

Grade 6

Media sources can both positively and negatively affect our understanding of important events and issues.

Rationale

How did your understanding of the oral telling shape your visual understanding? How did this change when shown the true map?

GRADES/CURRICULAR AREAS

Grade 4, 6 and 9 Social Studies

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

- Description of Paldi (printout and oral recording)
- Pencils/paper (not provided)
- Printed map and digital version of village map to be shown to class during wrap up

Grade 9

The physical environment influences the nature of political, social and economic change.

Rationale

How does the land impact us, and how do we in turn impact the land?

SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 9
Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions.	Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions.	Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions.

KICKOFF AND CONNECT

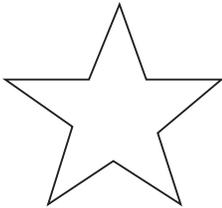
Introduce the topic, generate interest, identify the problem, connect/access prior knowledge

During this activity, students will listen to a description of Paldi being read out or a recording of the description being played. While they listen in (or afterwards), students will attempt to draw what they believe Paldi to have looked like.

A warm-up practice can be done where the description of a shape (a star) is given.

STAR WARMUP, 5 MINUTES

Draw a 10-sided shape that has 10 points and no curves.



1. Start by drawing a capital letter A without the horizontal line.
2. Draw a horizontal line across the upper third of the “A” letter.
3. Draw a straight line from the top left corner of the horizontal line to the bottom right end of the letter “A.”
4. Do the same from the other side.

EXPLORE AND ENGAGE

This description includes excerpts from Paldi Remembered: 50 Years in the Life of a Vancouver Island Logging Town by Joan Mayo (Duncan, BC: Paldi History Committee, 1997). Similar parts of Mayo’s book are included on the webpage [Paldi: Town Soaked in Sikh History](#).

“Carved in the bush in the middle of nowhere there was once a bustling community of 1500 hardworking pioneers of the logging and lumber industry.” (p. 1)

“The sawmill is situated at the foot of a steep hill.” (p. 35)

“The site of the new mill was chosen because of its proximity to the railway and to Sahtlam Creek. The creek could be dammed to form a mill pond into which the logs could be dumped.” (p. 6)

“The bunkhouse and cookhouse for [the mill’s shareholders, who were South Asian] would have been a top priority.” (p. 7)

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“Quoting Dharam Singh Parmar, a relative of Mayo Singh’s who came to work in the office, ‘Coming to Paldi was like coming to a city. It was so bright. The electric light in India seemed dimmer in comparison. I was amazed at how bright it was in Paldi and was excited to be in this fascinating place.’” (p. 63)

“Wherever there are five or more Sikhs there will be a Sikh Temple, even just a spare room in someone’s house. ... Therefore, it was only natural that once the mill and bunkhouses were erected the next building should be a Temple. Mayo built the first official Temple [or gurdwara] in Paldi in 1919, on the same spot where the present Temple is located.” (p. 16)

“Jean [Kitagawa, née Urabe] recalled, ‘The Japanese settlement was on the far side of the Sikh Temple. The children played close to home, playing games such as kick the can, softball, hide and seek, and cops and robbers.’” (p. 14)

“The community soon took on the atmosphere of a village in Punjab with the Sikh Temple in the centre. It became a home away from home in a foreign country; this was particularly comforting to [those who] spoke little English.” (p. 16)

The Japanese men helped with the construction of three large two-story houses built side by side. One for Mayo, one for his brother Ganea and one for Kapoor, a shareholder in the mill. (paraphrase from p. 34)

“As the community grew it became necessary to build walkways, and in some cases roadways, of lumber, building them just high enough above ground to keep pedestrians and cars up out of the mud. Little family homes were hastily built. They were little more than wooden shacks built in a haphazard manner with little order, but all connected by a maze of wooden walkways.” (p. 21)

“Almost everyone had their own garden and some had cows and chickens.” (p. 64, paraphrase)

“The whole village and plant are electrically lit and some establishments have running water as well. In the centre of the long stretch which flanks the E & N railway is a building which houses the company’s office and a store and post office. ... On the opposite side of the track is the school house.” (pp. 34–35, quoting from the *Cowichan Leader*, March 19, 1925)

“The first school was built among the huge stumps and debris left from the initial logging operation.” (p. 22)

WRAP UP AND ASSESSMENT

Compare and contrast two maps. Have students swap their map with a neighbour and see what their interpretation looks like. Share the map of Paldi included in the kit and then ask:

Do you think your neighbour’s map looks more like yours, or like the map provided of Paldi? What did you see in your mind while hearing the description?

Discuss what stood out about the village from the description provided. Did the students include the forest setting? The temple?

In the description Joan Mayo writes, “Out of necessity separate bunkhouses and separate cook houses were built for each nationality.” Why do you think this was?

ADAPTATIONS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

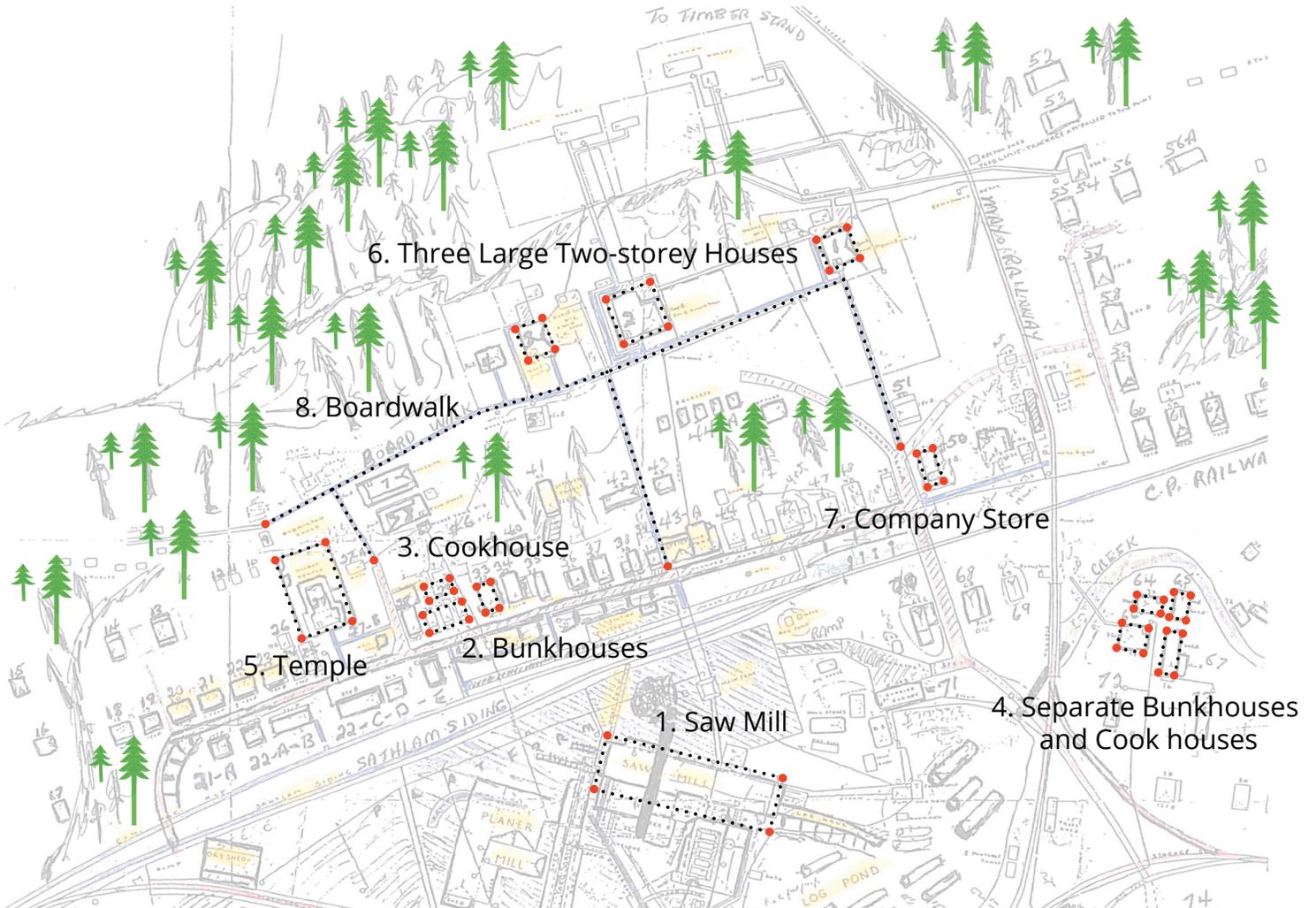
- Connect-the-dots version of the mapping activity
- Try to provide general sizing while reading aloud the description; for example, the mill is twice as big as the temple

CONNECT-THE-DOTS WORKSHEET

Name:

Date:

Map of Paldi.





Gurbachn and Rajindi Mayo (c. 1937–8). 2020_06_11_131.
Paldi Village (c. 1930). 2020_06_10_015.

Unit 3: Daily Lives of Children

INQUIRY/BIG QUESTION

What would have been the best and worst aspects of being a child in Paldi?

BRIEF DESCRIPTION (1–2 SENTENCES)

During this activity, students will be asked to answer the questions “What would the daily lives of children at this time have looked like?” and “What do you do during your own free time?”

SOCIAL STUDIES BIG IDEAS

Grade 4

The pursuit of valuable natural resources has played a key role in changing the land, people and communities of Canada.

Parents moved to Canada to give their children a better life. But how did this impact children growing up in early settler communities?

Grade 6

Media sources can both positively and negatively affect our understanding of important events and issues.

What types of stories have you heard about children growing up in the past? What is the source of those stories?

GRADES/CURRICULAR AREAS

Grade 4, 6 and 9 Social Studies

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

- Images
- First-person narratives (written and recordings)
- Sticky notes

Grade 9

The physical environment influences the nature of political, social and economic change.

How do you think the lumber mill and forest affected the daily lives of children in Paldi?

SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Grade 4	Grade 6	Grade 9
Sequence objects, images or events and determine continuities and changes between different time periods or places.	Sequence objects, images or events and recognize the positive and negative aspects of continuities and changes in the past and present (continuity and change).	Assess the significance of people, places, events or developments at particular times and places.

KICKOFF AND CONNECT

Introduce the topic, generate interest, identify the problem, connect/access prior knowledge

This is a Think-Pair-Share activity.

Think: Reflect on the first two lessons and imagine you lived in Paldi in the 1940s and '50s. What do you imagine your house would be like? Would you have your own room? What do you think your school would be like? What do you think you would do on a sunny Saturday? What if it was a rainy or snowy Saturday?

Pair: Join another student and share your answers. Are they different or the same? How come? Discuss with one another what the best part of living in Paldi would be and what the worst part would be. Write your ideas on sticky notes (one idea per note).

Share: Draw two columns on the whiteboard at the front of the class. Write "Best" at the top of the left column and "Worst" at the top of the right column. Have the pairs write their ideas on sticky notes and place their sticky notes on the whiteboard.

Best	Worst

EXPLORE AND ENGAGE

The teacher or a student should read aloud the following primary source oral interview transcriptions to learn more about childhood in Paldi. While reading, pass around the images of children or project them at the front of the classroom using the enclosed thumb drive.

Ken Yip lived in Paldi throughout his childhood. He was born in Duncan in 1942, was raised in Paldi and left in 1964, when he moved to Victoria. He has many memories of Paldi, such as attending the small community school and helping his family with daily chores like preparing firewood, fetching water and taking the bus into Duncan to get the weekly groceries. The home he grew up in was very modest and built quickly, along with the other workers' homes, in order to house the employees. The house was built using only wood and had no indoor plumbing, with an outhouse nearby. The home also had no electricity or insulation, and Ken Yip remembers waking up with frost on their blanket during the winter, as there was nothing keeping the cold out.

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Yip also remembers the fun he had playing with all of his friends. Once the daily chores were done, the children of the community would head outdoors to play until dark. Some of the favourite games of the children included tag, marbles, hide and seek, card games, and board games. During the summer there would be swimming, and throughout the year there would be movies played in the community hall that they could attend for two cents each. He also remembers when the children received roller skates, and the fun he had zipping through the community. Touch football was also a favourite among the children.

In place of television, Yip remembers listening to the radio. Radio shows were a popular pastime, as stories were read by the host to the audience tuning in. A favourite of Yip's was *Superman*.

Jor Malla is a Sikh gathering festival. Paldi's Jor Malla was held the last week of June or the first week of July. Other temples in BC had their Jor Mallas at other times so people could attend all of them. The children would run in and out of the cookhouse several times a day, wolfing down fresh, hot roti and curried vegetables. The meal was not complete until the children had enjoyed a mug of sweet South Asian tea. Everyone turned out to watch sports. The South Asian men from Paldi and other temples in BC competed in high jump, long jump and flip jump, but the most exciting event to watch was the weight lifting. There was also a wrestling match, South Asian stick fighting, shotput and races, soccer, volleyball, and kabaddi, the traditional game of Punjab.

Tom Tagami recalls:

"They had a pole about 70 feet high, with a long rope on it. There was a contest to see who could climb the highest with their bare hands. They lifted weights and threw the shotput but there was this one East Indian man [it is believed it was Tiger Dola, the wrestler], he was so strong he could stop a car with his bare hands. Mr. Boyer, who worked in the office, had a Model T Ford car and this man would plant his feet against two pegs then Mr. Boyer would try to drive the car, but the man was so strong he held the car back."

Paldi got more snow in the winter than other communities along the coast. Paldi lies in a little hollow, and there was often still snow and ice after other communities had thawed. Tom recalls that

"Everyone enjoyed making snowmen, snowhouses, sleigh riding and ice skating. When the snow was gone they invented games like bicycle tag, where if you got caught you exchanged bikes with one who tagged you."

There was a Japanese hall in Paldi. Tom recalls going there in the evenings to play ping pong. But he said, "We didn't have much time for fun. After our regular school classes, we had Japanese school."

In the summer months, picnics were popular. There were games, but chores too.

"Sometimes we spent the whole day gathering sword ferns and stripping off all the leaves to form arrows. All this and the mock battle was over in 10 minutes."

"During the summer we gathered sacks of fir cones to sell for 50 cents a sack to the Government Forest Nursery. We picked blackberries, raided cherry trees and built rafts on swamps. There was a great rivalry between the boys to see who could catch a big trout that had been spotted in the creek. As for the girls they were tolerated by the boys in most of their activities, again they looked after each other, but playing with dolls, playing house and playing school ranked higher with the girls."

"Mayo Singh arranged for an annual picnic. He arranged to use the Haliburton Street playground in Nanaimo. Arrangements were made with two nearby houses to use their washrooms, all paid for by Mayo. At the playground the women served roti and curried vegetables wrapped up like a hot dog. There were all the cases of fresh fruit, all you could eat, and across the street from the park was the Bright Spot, a confectionery store that sold ice cream and pop."

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Joan Mayo, wife of Rajindi Mayo, Mayo Singh's oldest son, recalls that movie nights were common practice in the 1940s and '50s.

"Rajindi and his friends, with the help of Leo Bennard the shop mechanic, chose the films from the National Film Board catalogue, then drove into Duncan twice a week to pick up the films from the bus depot. A makeshift projection room had been constructed about five feet above the main floor and it was from here that Rajindi and his helpers showed the films. The hall boasted backless wooden benches and a wood stove fashioned from an old barrel. Adults paid 25 cents and children only 10 cents to attend the twice-weekly shows. On one end of the benches at the back of the room Rajindi's younger brother Gindi set out boxes of chocolate bars, packages of salted peanuts and bottles of pop he brought from the company store. The residents of Paldi had a real movie theatre, concession stand and all.

Mayo Singh was one of the first persons in the Cowichan Valley to possess a TV set. Soon Mayo's TV replaced the bi-weekly movies in the old hall. Almost every evening and Saturday afternoon, the youngsters of Paldi gathered on Mayo's living room floor in front of his TV."

WRAP UP AND ASSESSMENT

Read aloud the sticky notes under each column. Do the students agree on the best and worst? Why or why not? Can you move or get rid of some of the sticky notes?

On a new sticky note, write down a fact that you have learned about the daily lives of children in Paldi. Place the sticky on the whiteboard up front under one of the two columns.

On another sticky note, write down a question that you still have. Place that on the board as well.

ADAPTATIONS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

- Audio recordings of descriptions



Paldi schoolchildren with houses in background (c. 1938–9).
2020_06_09_005.

Bonus Activity

BRIEF DESCRIPTION (1–2 SENTENCES)

Following up from the Daily Lives of Children unit, students will explore a traditional card game from India.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES

- Cards

PHE BIG IDEAS

Grade 4

Developing healthy relationships helps us feel connected, supported and valued.

Importance of friendships.

Grade 6

Learning about similarities and differences in individuals and groups influences community health.

How did play connect people to one another?

Grade 9

Lifelong participation in physical activity has many benefits and is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle.

How do we connect through play, and why is playing important for children?

PHE CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Grade 4

Describe and apply strategies that promote a safe and caring environment.

Do you include others in play? What if they are really different from you?

Grade 6

Explore and describe how personal identities adapt and change in different settings and situations.

How did growing up in early Canada impact children's identities?

Grade 9

Explore and describe factors that shape personal identities, including social and cultural factors.

KICKOFF AND CONNECT

Introduce the topic, generate interest, identify the problem, connect/access prior knowledge

Students will have the opportunity to try a card game that children in Paldi might have played. Quick discussion question: What types of games do you like to play with friends and siblings? What kinds of card games or board games do you know?

EXPLORE AND ENGAGE

Bhabi Card Game

<https://youtu.be/5NPjbb6hGz4> (Bhabi card game resource, game similar to Crazy Eights)

<https://boardgamegeek.com/thread/471299/perfect-card-game> (Bhabi written rules)

Objective:

Play all of your cards and be the first to have no cards left

Equipment:

- One deck of cards
- Maximum four players

Rules:

1. Shuffle and distribute the entire deck (except jokers) among the players (12 cards each). Players may look at their cards but must keep them secret from other players.
2. Once players have their cards, they should arrange their hands by suit from highest to lowest. The player with the ace of spades plays first. They play by placing the card face up in the middle of the playing area.
3. Players move clockwise around the circle to put down cards one at a time.
4. Players must play a card within the same suit that is currently in play. They want to try to get rid of their highest cards first. Aces are high. Players cannot lie about cards, as all cards are played face up, one at a time.
5. If the card the player puts down is the highest played in that round, they get to choose the next suit played.
6. If all players are able to put down a card within the suit, the cards in the discard pile are left alone.
7. If a player in the group does not have any cards in the suit being played, they may put ANY card down, preferably using this chance to get rid of a high card. This immediately ends the round.
8. The player who played the highest card in that round must collect that pile of cards and add them to their hand.
9. The player that gets rid of all their cards first is the winner.

Example:

Cards are divided among four players, and player 1 puts down the ace of spades. Each player puts down a card from the spade suit. Those cards remain on the table as the discard pile. Player 1 then plays the queen of hearts. Player 2 plays the 10 of hearts, player 3 plays the 7 of hearts but player 4 plays the ace of hearts. Since player 4 played the highest card, they get to pick the next suit. Player 4 then puts down the king of diamonds. However, player 1 does not have any diamonds and uses this chance to get rid of their ace of clubs. Player 4 must now take the entire pile of discarded cards as their own and play with them all.

Hint: Try to keep in mind which suits people don't have—this will help you in not having to pick up the pile of cards!

WRAP UP AND ASSESSMENT

Discussion-based formative assessment

1. Did you enjoy the game you played today? Show on your fingers on how much fun you had (one to five).
2. Do you enjoy playing games like these? What about computer games? Why or why not?
3. Which is more engaging and exciting: live games such as tag or cards, or virtual games such as video games?

ADAPTATIONS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

Video links to instructions accompanied by images to show students how to play the game.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This resource was written by Suvreet Johal, with contributions from Kathryn Gagnon. The main resource consulted was *Paldi Remembered: 50 Years in the Life of a Vancouver Island Logging Town* (1998), written by Joan Mayo. Many thanks to the South Asian Legacy Project, the South Asian Canadian Digital Archive, and the Cowichan Valley Museum and Archives.

Appendix

DESCRIPTION OF IMAGES AND REPRODUCTION MATERIALS USED IN UNIT 1: DIVERSITY OF PALDI

The images used throughout this resource guide and kit are from the South Asian Canadian Digital Archive at the University of the Fraser Valley in Abbotsford, BC. The physical repository of the images is the Cowichan Valley Museum and Archives.

Station 1: Lumber/sawmill photos and leather gloves

Photographs:

A “donkey” crew on Hill 60 (c. 1930). 2020_06_07_35.

Bringing logs to Paldi mill (c. 1940). 2020_06_07_147.

Sidalla, Gurcharan and Pindoo, mill workers (c. 1940). 2020_06_07_193.

Leather gloves:

Sawmills were, and still are, hazardous work environments because of the physical nature of the work and the saws, blades and machines that are used. Leather gloves provide a basic level of protection.

Station 2: Gurdwara images and thali (steel plates for serving Langar)

Photographs:

Natara Singh and Bhuton Singh serving prashad (1940). 2020_06_13_011.

Hisae Yonemura and Jean Urabe in front of the gurdwara (1924). 2020_06_07_087.

Thali:

A typical service at a gurdwara is always followed by a free, communal meal called langar. Langar is served on thali (tta-lee), which were traditionally steel plates. The plates are either round or rectangular in shape and have compartments of varying size. The largest compartment is used for rice, roti or naan. The other compartments have no true assigned dish, but all dishes served within a gurdwara must be vegetarian. People of all nationalities living or working at Paldi remember eating at the gurdwara.

Station 3: Japanese Canadian images and ceramic bowl

Photographs:

Japanese families gather at their temple (c. 1940). 2020_06_07_137.

Children outside of the Japanese Hall (c. 1941). 2020_06_13_007.

Further description: Front row, left to right: Masaru Inouye, Miyoshi Kawahara, an unidentified person and Haruye Toyota. Back row, left to right: Akiye Tagami, Mineo Toyota, Kenneth Yamada, George Ono and Sumiko Inouye.

Ceramic bowl:

There are many different kinds of bowls used in the traditional Japanese table setting. There are specific bowls for soup, rice and even ramen.

Station 4: Chinese Canadian images and mahjong tiles

Photograph:

Unidentified group of workers on a railroad track (c. 1930). 2020_06_07_161.

Mahjong tiles:

Mahjong is a strategy game that is easy to learn but difficult to master. The game originated during the Qing Dynasty and today remains one of the most popular games in China. In Canada, Chinese Canadian families continue to play the game, and its popularity has grown among other cultural groups as well.

Station 5: South Asian Canadian images, chunni and kara

Photographs:

Ladies gathering at the Mayo home was a regular afternoon affair (c. 1930). 2020_06_09_120.

Mayo Singh (c. 1915). 2020_06_01_022.

Eighty-one men and their sons at Paldi, including single men who lived in bunkhouses (1935). 2020_06_07_236.

Chunni:

In the Sikh culture, the chunni has been as essential to the woman as the turban has been to the man. Historically, women in the Punjab region have always worn this garment and covered their head as a sign of respect and modesty. Most Sikh women will use it to cover their head when among elders of both genders.

Kara:

A kara (pronounced ka da) is an iron or steel bracelet worn by devout Sikh men and women. The kara serves as a reminder of their commitment to their faith.

Station 6: Paldi School images, school bell and slate boards

Photographs:

Mayo school group portrait (1956). 2020_06_01_018.

Mayo Public School (1921). 2020_06_07_003.

Further description: The teacher in this photograph is identified as Marjorie Evans.

Group of unidentified schoolchildren and a teacher at Mayo School posing for a class portrait (1948). 2020_06_07_093.

Further description: The teacher in this photograph is identified as Mrs. McKelvie.

Second School (1938). 2020_06_09_004.

School bell:

Paldi's school teacher Marjorie Evans probably would have had a school bell like this one. The ringing of the bell announces important times in the school day.

Writing slates:

Slate boards, small rectangular blackboards for students, were used when paper and ink were expensive or hard to come by. The earliest students at Paldi School may have used slates, which were replaced by scribblers and pencils in the 1930s.

Building Community

Paldi and the Legacy of South Asian Canadians in BC

ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ

ਪਾਲਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਬੀ. ਸੀ. ਵਿੱਚ ਦੱਖਣੀ ਏਸ਼ੀਆਈ ਕੈਨੇਡੀਅਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਰਾਸਤ

Artwork on the Cover Page

The artwork on the cover page was created by Sandeep Johal for Saffron Threads, a free resource to support teachers with integrating South Asian Canadian content into the classroom. In Johal's work, threads from the saffron flower tie together cultures from BC and South Asia. The artwork provides a visual representation of the complex South Asian Canadian diaspora and leaves a lasting impression of its beauty—transcending time, space and culture.

