Traditions of Christmas Past



School Program Teacher Overview
Canadian Museum of Civilization

Introduction
This program has been designed to provide an interactive experience which will enhance your study of cultural traditions. During their exploration of Christmas celebrations in English and French Canada, your students will take part in roleplaying activities, interact with historical characters and learn about important topics such as the value of tradition in daily life, and how cultural celebrations evolve over time. Please divide your class in three groups prior to your Museum visit.

Goals
Our primary goal in this program is to capture your students' imaginations and bring cultural traditions to life. However, we have also ensured that the program actively supports your curriculum by enhancing pride in our shared identity and history as Canadians, and by promoting greater intercultural understanding and dialogue.

Program Content
Your students will travel back in time to explore early Canadian Christmas traditions. Their journey takes them to the Canada Hall, where they will visit one of New France's seventeenth-century inns, and a nineteenth-century Ontario street scene. **North Pole Ho!** a short play by our resident theatre company, Dramamuse, rounds out this festive holiday experience. This magical tale recounts the adventures of a dog musher on a mail run to the North Pole, carrying thousands of Christmas letters to Santa. From thought-provoking games to entertaining activities, this program ensures that cultural traditions are made both relevant and meaningful to your students.



Duration and Times
- From mid-November to mid-December
- 90 minutes
- Mornings at 9:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.
- Afternoons at 12:30 p.m. or 1:00 p.m.
- To make your reservation please call Group Services at 819-776-7014

Grade Levels
- Ontario — 1–4
- Quebec — Cycles 1 and 2

Specific Learning Outcomes
In addition to providing a general appreciation of different cultural traditions at this festive time of year, this program offers your students experiences which will deepen their knowledge and understanding in a number of specific areas. Through this program, your students will gain:
- An understanding of the origins of current Canadian Christmas traditions, and the historical factors that have shaped them.
- An understanding that Canada is a country of many cultures.
- An appreciation of how different cultures and traditions contribute to society.
- An understanding of how traditions evolve and change over time, and from place to place.

- An understanding of how traditions and heritage are passed on from generation to generation.
- An introduction to significant features of family traditions such as food, dress and celebrations.
- An introduction to new vocabulary, in familiar — and perhaps unfamiliar — languages.

Curriculum Links

In order to support Ontario and Quebec curricula, this program has been tailored to enhance your classroom content. Specific curriculum links for each level are outlined below.

Ontario

Grade 1 — Social Studies; Heritage and Citizenship — Relationships, Rules and Responsibilities
Heritage and Citizenship: Relationships, Rules, and Responsibilities

- Identifying significant people, places, and events in their lives, as well as some significant historical figures.
- The roles and responsibilities of various family members, as well as those of other people in their schools and neighbourhoods.

Grade 2 — Social Studies; Heritage and Citizenship — Traditions and Celebrations

- Canada is a country of many cultures.
- How family history and traditions relate to being Canadian.
- The contributions made by individuals and groups to local communities.

Grade 2 — Social Studies; Canada and the World Connections — Features of Communities Around the World

- The world is made up of many countries, in which people have both similar and different lifestyles.
- Maps and globes enable us to discover different countries, helping us to compare family traditions from other parts of the world.

Grade 3 — Social Studies; Canada and the World Connections — Urban and Rural Communities

- The distinguishing features of urban and rural communities.
- Similarities and differences among people, places, and environments.
- Relationships between communities and their natural environments.

Grade 4 — Social Studies; Canada and the World Connections — The Provinces and Territories

- The physical features of different regions within the provinces and territories.

Quebec

Cycles 1 and 2 — Arts Education — Drama

- Competency 3: appreciating dramatic works, personal productions and the works of classmates.

Cycles 1 and 2 — Arts Education — Visual Arts

- Competency 3: appreciating works of art, traditional artistic objects, media images, personal productions and the works of classmates.

Cycle 2 — Social Sciences — Geography, History and Citizenship Education

- Competency 1: describing the organization of a society in its territory.
- Competency 2: interpretation of changes in a society and its territory.
- Competency 3: awareness of the diversity of societies and their territories.

Preparing Your Class

In order to ensure that your class gets the most out of this unique educational experience, we encourage you to consider the following pre-visit activities:

- Explore our virtual exhibition of the Canada Hall online at www.civilization.ca.
- Have your students reflect on what "tradition" means to them and what types of special traditions they have in their own families.
- Have your students practice singing "Jingle Bells" and "Vive le vent", to prepare them for carolling throughout the Museum.

Post-Visit Activities

To help fix the lessons your students have learned during their Museum program, you may want to consider some of these follow-up activities:

- Ask your students to look at their own family trees and do a bit of research into one of their countries of origin. Ask them to share five interesting cultural traditions that their families have passed on to them.
- Help them to discover other cultural celebrations celebrated this time of the year, such as Diwali, St. Lucia, Los Posados, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Eid-al-Fitr.

Evaluation

In order to ensure that our programs remain helpful and relevant to your curriculum and to your students, we encourage all teachers to send in a post-program evaluation. Evaluation forms will be provided onsite, and we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to provide us with important feedback on your Museum experience.