

# RACISM in Canada

On January 29, 2017, Alexandre Bissonnette killed six worshippers and injured nineteen others at the Quebec City Mosque. He was convinced that there was at least one religious fanatic or terrorist in the mosque and that he could save lives.

2017

As a result of Bill C-31, the *Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act*, the government set a quota to remove status from 875 refugees with no process for appeal.

2014

The year begins with the deportation of a Toronto secondary school student, Daniel Garcia. Students and community members rallied together to try and prevent his deportation.

2011

The Manitoba First Nations asked the Queen to apologize to former students of residential schools. The apology was not given.

2008

Bill C-36, the *Canadian Anti-terrorism Act*, was passed. One impact of the Act was racial profiling of specific individuals at Canadian borders.

2001

A statement of reconciliation and apology was issued by the Canadian government to people who had experienced physical and sexual abuse in residential schools—this was not a formal federal apology. The government provided \$2 billion in compensation to former residential students.

1998

Grise Fiord—as part of a northern sovereignty agenda, the government forced settlement of eight Inuit families to the northernmost settlement in Canada on Ellesmere Island.

1953

Canada refused entry to thousands of Jewish refugees escaping persecution by Nazis. They were sent back and 3/4 of them died at the hands of the Nazis.

1939

The *Chinese Immigration Act* was passed, stopping Chinese immigration entirely.

1923

Ukrainian Canadians were branded as "enemy aliens." Thousands were interned and 50,000 had to wear special identification badges.

World War I

*Immigration Act* Section 38 allowed the government to prohibit landing of immigrants "belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada, or of immigrants of any specified class, occupation, or character."

1910

Persons of "Asiatic Heritage" were prohibited from voting in BC.

1895

The Potlatch and other ceremonies were banned by the federal government.

1884

British Columbia enters Confederation. Many groups are denied the vote.

1872

2018

Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson apologized to the Chinese community for policies in effect between 1886 and 1948 that banned Chinese Canadians from voting.

2017

Quebec's Bill 62, the religious neutrality law, banned face coverings for public workers and anyone receiving public services.

2015

The Conservative government passes Bill C-51: The *Anti-terrorism Act*, which grants excessive powers to government agencies and departments. It was denounced by First Nations, saying it would further target their communities, and refugee rights groups nicknamed it the "Refugee Exclusion Act."

2012

The Omnibus Budget Bill C-38 forced changes to the environmental assessment review process that violates federal government's obligation to consult with First Nations on projects that affect their land, water, and treaty and Aboriginal rights.

2009

Tamil refugees arrived by ship to Vancouver Island. They were detained by the government that claimed they might be terrorists or criminals.

2006

Redress for the Chinese head tax—the Canadian government apologized and gave symbolic payments of \$20,000 to the 20 surviving head-tax payers and the approximately 200 living spouses of deceased head-tax payers.

1996

The last residential school was closed.

1988

The Canadian government apologized to Japanese Canadians for wartime internment and offered a \$300 million compensation package, "a settlement that heals."

World War II

Japanese-Canadian internment—the Canadian government ordered all "persons of Japanese racial origin" to be removed from the "restricted zone," within 100 miles of the west coast of British Columbia.

1917

The newly created Department of Immigration and Colonization devised a list of "preferred" and "non-preferred" countries.

1914

Komagata Maru—376 people from India were detained on the Komagata Maru ship for two months and then denied entry into Canada.

1910

Black Oklahoman farmers developed an interest in moving to Canada to flee increased racism at home. In 1911 an order in council was drafted prohibiting the landing of "any immigrant belonging to the Negro race."

1904

Anti-immigration sentiment in BC led to a head tax of \$500. The government collected \$33 million, which is \$321 million in 2016 dollars.

1885

The *Chinese Immigration Act* imposed a "head tax" on Chinese immigrants.

1876

The *Indian Act*: Residential schools are established by the government.

1600s

First European colonists—the concept of "race" was created.

## What can you do?

For lesson plans and resources:

[bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=17632](http://bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=17632)



### Photo credits:

S.S. St. Louis—Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives.  
Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874—Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-A8223-1 and R-A8223-2.  
Japanese-Canadian internment—being relocated to internment camps—Tak Toyota / Library and Archives Canada / C-046350.  
KKK burning cross—Original photograph by Paul M. Walsh. Modified photo used under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license.  
Head tax certificate—Vancouver Public Library Special Collections, VPL 30625.  
Komagata Maru—Canadian Photo Company photo, Vancouver Public Library, VPL 136.  
Modified slave girl advertisement—Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management, Royal Gazette 24 June 1800 p. 3.



# Institutionalized Racism in Canada Timeline

## Lesson Plans for Grades 10–12

### Links to the Curriculum

#### Grade 10 Social Studies

##### Big idea

Historical and contemporary injustices challenge the narrative and identity of Canada as an inclusive, multicultural society.

##### Curricular competencies

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- assess the significance of people, places, events, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (significance)
- compare and contrast continuities and changes for different groups at particular times and places (continuity and change)
- assess how underlying conditions and the actions of individuals or groups influence events, decisions, or developments, and analyze multiple consequences (cause and consequence)
- explain and infer different perspectives on past or present people, places, issues, or events by considering prevailing norms, values, worldviews, and beliefs (perspective).

##### Content

Students are expected to know the following:

- discriminatory policies and injustices in Canada and the world, including residential schools, the head tax, the Komagata Maru incident, and internments
- advocacy for human rights, including findings and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

#### Grade 12 Social Justice

##### Big ideas

- Social justice issues are interconnected.
- Individual worldviews shape and inform our understanding of social justice issues.
- The causes of social injustice are complex and have lasting impacts on society.
- Social justice initiatives can transform individuals and systems.

##### Curricular competencies

Students are expected to be able to do the following:

- compare and contrast continuities and changes for different groups and individuals at different times and places (continuity and change)
- determine and assess the long- and short-term causes and consequences, and the intended and unintended consequences, of an event, legislative and judicial decision, development, policy, or movement (cause and consequence)
- explain different perspectives on past and present people, places, issues, and events, and distinguish between worldviews of the past or present (perspective)
- make reasoned ethical judgments about controversial actions in the past or present after considering the context and standards of right and wrong (ethical judgment).

##### Content

Students are expected to know the following:

- self-identity and an individual’s relationship to others
- social injustices in Canada and the world affecting individuals, groups, and society
- processes, methods, and approaches individuals, groups, and institutions use to promote social justice.

## Lesson Plan

### A Look at Incidents of Institutional Racism in Canadian Society

This assignment is aimed at helping students learn more about the history of institutionalized racism in Canada.

#### Assignment

In groups of two or three, review the Racism in Canada timeline and choose one case study from the list of Canadian government policies that directly or indirectly target(ed) certain racialized groups. You may want to explore events or policies that are not on this list.

Use the following questions to guide your research and to briefly describe the historical context of these events:

- What happened?
- Identify the government laws and/or policies that legally sanctioned this racism.
- Describe the treatment, discrimination, and injustices that resulted from this event/policy.
- What were the acts of resistance and resilience either by the targeted group, or their allies?
- Have the laws changed? When? How?
- Was there a government apology and/or compensation offered?
- What is the legacy of this event? Is the targeted group still experiencing the effects today?
- Were you familiar with this historical event? What is the significance of you not knowing about that event?

Present your research by creating a PowerPoint presentation (5–10 slides) or poster. Be prepared to present your work chronologically to the class or a wider audience if possible. You can find a printable version at [www.teachbc.bctf.ca](http://www.teachbc.bctf.ca).

#### Resources

- BCTF—Racism in Canada timeline poster: [bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SocialJustice/Issues/Antiracism/RacismTimeline.pdf](http://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SocialJustice/Issues/Antiracism/RacismTimeline.pdf)
- access to online and print materials
- History of Racism in Canada video: <http://bit.ly/2dwEbUn>.

See the BCTF resource *Show Racism the Red Card*, found here: <https://bit.ly/2R9uT43> for additional lesson plans.

