

Heritage Lesson Plan – Secondary
Roedde House Museum, Vancouver BC

“There are no hard and fast rules that determine what is, and what is not, heritage. Of course, everyone thinks of heritage as old buildings, however, heritage is whatever a community, past or present, values and would like to pass on to the future, regardless of age or vintage. It can be a place, a landscape, a cultural practice or a language.” – Heritage BC

Note: While the term “Vancouver” is to be consistently used in this lesson plan, the authors acknowledge the inherently colonial nature of discussing with land, place, and people when engaging with built heritage. The xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples are the original inhabitants of the unceded, stolen land which is now known as the city of Vancouver.

Introduction:

Heritage is important for various reasons, encompassing cultural, social, and place-based: Heritage reflects a community's shared history, customs, traditions, and values. It helps people connect with their roots and provides a sense of belonging and identity. Preserving cultural heritage ensures that future generations can understand and appreciate their heritage, promoting a sense of continuity and community. Looking at heritage through the lens of The First People's Principles of Learning, we can see that heritage is a vehicle for passing down knowledge, skills, and wisdom from one generation to the next. It helps ensure that valuable practices and insights from the past are not lost but instead shared and built upon. With that being said, how do we identify, connect with, and protect heritage at an urban and community level?

Lesson Overview:

Examining a series of case studies, including the Roedde House Museum, we will look at Heritage as both a conceptual idea and a tangible set of standards for protection, preservation, and celebration. Students will then explore heritage in Vancouver using these skills and frameworks to investigate, understand, and analyze heritage preservation within Vancouver.

Big Idea(s):

- The physical environment influences the nature of political, social, and economic change (Social Studies 9)
- Understanding the diversity and complexity of cultural expressions in one culture enhances our understanding of other cultures (Explorations in Social Studies 11)

- Decision making in urban and regional planning requires balancing political, economic, social, and environmental factors (Explorations in Social Studies 11)
- The historical development of cities has been shaped by geographic, economic, political, and social factors (Urban Studies 12)

Curricular Competencies:

- Assess the significance of people, places, events, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their historical significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (Social Studies 9-11)
- Assess how prevailing conditions and the actions of individuals or groups affect events, decisions, or developments (Social Studies 9-11)
- Make reasoned ethical judgments about actions in the past and present, and determine appropriate ways to remember and respond (Social Studies 8-11, Urban Studies 12)

Content:

- Canadian identities (Social Studies 9)
- Physiographic features of Canada (Social Studies 9)
- Representations of natural and human-made phenomena (Social Studies 11)
- Contemporary issues in urban studies (Urban Studies 12)
- Historic settlement patterns in urban centres (Urban Studies 12)

Core Competencies:

- Communication: Collaboration
- Thinking: Critical & Reflective
- Personal and Social: Positive Personal and Cultural Identity.
- Personal and Social: Social Awareness and Responsibility.

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

Materials/Resources:

- Pen/pencils
- Paper
- Access to Vancouver Heritage Foundation 'Site Finder'
- (Optional): Device such as iPad or laptop

Lesson Outlines:

1. *What is Heritage?* Foregrounding and foundations prior to the Roedde House Museum experience.
2. *Deeper Dive:* The Roedde House, heritage in Vancouver, and standards for preservation.
3. *Putting it Together:* Student-selected heritage focus assignment.

Part 1: What is Heritage? (Before Roedde visit)

Begin by introducing the word **heritage**, and asking students how they might define the word. What ideas or notions come to mind when they hear the word heritage? Give students a moment to jot down what different types of heritage they can think of before asking volunteers to share their thoughts.

Explain to students that **heritage** refers to the cultural, historical, and natural assets and characteristics that are passed down from previous generations and are considered valuable and important to preserve and protect for future generations. There are a variety of ways to approach and consider heritage, including:

Cultural Heritage: Expressions of a community's culture, such as monuments, artifacts, traditional crafts, music, dance, language, rituals, customs, and knowledge systems.

Historical Heritage: Physical remains and records of the past, such as historic buildings, archaeological sites, manuscripts, documents, and oral histories, which provide insights into the history and evolution of societies.

Natural Heritage: Natural landscapes, ecosystems, biodiversity, and geological formations that hold ecological, scientific, and aesthetic significance; national parks, wildlife reserves, and natural landmarks.

Intangible Heritage: Traditions, knowledge, skills, and rituals that are transmitted from generation to generation within communities and are considered vital for preserving cultural diversity and identity.

Built Heritage: Person-made structures, buildings, and architectural works that are historically or culturally significant and reflect the architectural styles and craftsmanship of a particular era.

- After these brief summaries, explain that there is often powerful overlap between the varieties of heritage. For instance, a building may itself hold important heritage value, while also being connected to the intangible and cultural varieties of heritage.
- Let the class know that you will be exploring heritage primarily through the notion of Built Heritage, but that the previously mentioned overlap is an important consideration also.
- Buildings are granted Heritage Status through a special municipal process. "Designating a site as a protected heritage property is a legislative tool we can use to help maintain a legacy for the future. The purpose of designation is to protect a heritage building from unsympathetic alteration, and subsequent loss of character or value. A designated

landscape can also be protected from unsympathetic construction or excavation”
(City of Vancouver)

- One of these designated Heritage Houses in Vancouver is the Roedde House. Built in 1893, the West End Heritage House was the home of Gustav and Matilda Roedde. The Roedde's were German settlers, with Gustav opening a bookbinding business that specialized in the craft of marbling paper. The Roedde house website features ample videos to project as further foregrounding to your field trip:
<https://www.roeddehouse.org/roedde-family-history/a-window-to-the-past/>

End the lesson by asking students, in groups or by themselves, to consider and respond to the following questions in short answer form:

1. What is heritage?
2. Why is heritage a significant thing to consider?
3. How do you see heritage, or the impact of heritage, in your own life?
4. Why is *built heritage* an important part of a city?
5. What elements do you think would make a building worth considering for heritage status?

Part 2: Deeper Dive (Before or after Roedde visit)

Open the lesson by having students share their answer in to the previously answered 5 questions while in small groups. Afterwards, have a member of the group share what similarities group members found, and where their ideas differed. This will help to remind students of the heritage elements previously introduced, as well as foreground further engagement with the idea of ***built heritage***.

Remind/explain that Heritage is valued for several reasons, including its contribution to cultural identity, promoting tourism, providing educational opportunities, fostering social cohesion, and contributing to the overall well-being and enrichment of societies. Efforts are made worldwide to protect and preserve heritage sites and assets through various means, such as UNESCO World Heritage designations, local conservation initiatives, and public awareness campaigns.

Explain that the following process guides heritage designation in the City of Vancouver. According to the municipality:

- “Buildings, interiors, or landscapes that merit designation are recommended to City Council by the Director of Planning, with the advice of the Heritage Commission”
- “The property owner is sent a notification letter and council places notifications in local newspapers”
- “A public hearing is convened and the property owner is compensated by us for any possible loss in property value, perceived or real.”
- A majority vote of Council is required to pass a bylaw designating a building, any portion of its interior, or a landscape. Once a site is designated, [the city] enacts a new bylaw specifically for that site.

Designated sites are protected by the Heritage Bylaw, which provides for **two** types of municipally designated heritage buildings:

- **Schedule “A” designations**, which include buildings where the exterior is fully protected from inappropriate alteration. In certain cases, protection may also apply to selected interior or landscape features.
- **Schedule “B” designations**, which include protection for specific features or portions of a building.

The Roedde House is a Schedule “A” designated building, and thus the entire exterior is fully protected.

Ask students to form the same groups as they started the class in. Have students brainstorm any buildings that they can think of in Vancouver that might have a Heritage Designation. Given 20-30 minutes have students consider and scribe the following questions as a group:

- Which buildings can they think of that might have heritage status?
- Where in the city are those buildings? Are any in their neighbourhoods?
- Why do the students consider these buildings to possibly have a heritage designation?
- What element of a building would students consider to be the most important part of a heritage designation?

Afterwards, use the Vancouver Heritage Foundation’s ‘Site Finder’ to confirm which of these hypothesized locations are in fact heritage designated sites. <https://www.heritagesitefinder.ca/>

This can be engaged with on iPad’s or laptops on a group by group basis if available, or as a class on a projected screen. What connections can students make to which sites are heritage designated, and where in the city those are located?

Part 3: Putting it Together (After Roedde visit)

Students will now have visited the beautiful Roedde House Museum, a designated heritage house. Students will have learned about the history of the Roedde’s connections to bookbinding, immigration, and the heritage status of the museum. Have students volunteer what they found most interesting about the museum, and how they see it as being a part heritage in Vancouver.

After students have shared their thoughts about the Roedde House and their field trip, introduce the following assignment: In the previous class, students will have been introduced to the Vancouver Heritage Foundation’s ‘Site Finder’ tool. Using the tool, students will investigate and present on 2 sites, as well as the Roedde House. This can be either in written or presentation format, given the nature of your class. Students should be able to answer the following questions about all three sites (2 student chosen, and the Roedde House):

- What is the selected heritage site?
- Why did the student choose these sites in particular?
- Which neighbourhood is the site located in?
- What is the historical or heritage importance of the site?
- What category of building is the site listed as on the Site Finder (i.e. residential, commercial, institutional)?

- What do these 3 buildings have in common? What is markedly different about them? Compare and contrast the sites.

Upon completion of the assignment and these 3 lesson parts, students will have engaged with a survey of heritage varieties, the process for heritage designation in the City of Vancouver, experienced first-hand the Roedde House Museum heritage site, and investigated a further set of heritage sites around Vancouver.

Differentiation & Considerations:

Students learn best when made to feel comfortable and it is acknowledged that their ideas are valid. The use of video content, like that found on the Roedde House website, will aid visual learners. ELL and recent newcomers should be encouraged to consider heritage in whatever form they best connect with, be it in their current neighbourhood or in a manner that is emphasized in family and cultural circles. It is also important to emphasize that heritage is **not** a concept that exists only to highlight colonial constructs and institutions, and that Indigenous, Queer, and BIPOC heritage can be highlighted, both as tangible and intangible forms of heritage. Heritage is for everyone, not an exclusive few.

Assessment

FOR LEARNING: (Formative assessment, collection of data to make students understanding visible to the educator):

Student responses at the culmination of Part One will demonstrate an understanding of, and engagement with, the foundational elements of heritage. This will ground students in the breadth of heritage topics that exist, as well as the fact that heritage exists as a community element all around them.

AS LEARNING: (Formative assessment, student self-assessment):

By employing group discussion in Part 2 (and optionally Part 1), students will be able to engage with not only their own ideas, but also those peers. By engaging in this fashion both early and often, students are able to judge how their own ideas of heritage differ from their classmates, and also in what ways they can expand their own thinking.

OF LEARNING: (Summative assessment: done at the end of the unit/course):

With the final assignment presentation piece, students will be able to showcase their learning in both tangible and abstract fashions. Describing a variety of heritage sites will demonstrate the. Student ability to research, engage with, and understand heritage in an independent fashion, as well as the means by which to communicate their heritage understanding to their class and community at large.

Resources, Links, & Sources:

- City of Vancouver - Heritage Designation Process:
<https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/heritage-designation.aspx>

- Vancouver Heritage Foundation – Heritage Basics & Frequently Asked Questions
<https://www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org/resources/heritage-basics-and-faq/>
- Roedde House Museum
<https://www.roeddehouse.org/>
- Heritage Canada
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage.html>
- Heritage BC
<https://heritagebc.ca/>