

## Community Involvement – Then & Now

**Grade Level:** 9-10 and Secondary III-IV (Quebec)

**Lesson Length:** 60 minutes + post-lesson homework assignment

### Curriculum Links:

- Social Studies (Community, activism)
- History (Canada, 20<sup>th</sup> century, women's history, Chinese Canadian history)
- Women's Studies (Canada, 20<sup>th</sup> century)
- Language Arts (Biography)

### Lesson Topics:

- Community involvement and activism, 1940-1980
- Women's participation in Canadian society
- Chinese Canadian participation in Canadian society

**Lesson Goals:** By the end of the lesson, students will be able to...

- Explain different forms of community involvement among Chinese Canadian women, 1923-1967;
- Draw links between past and present community activities;
- Identify and present key information from their research;
- Understand and explain how the contributions of individuals improve communities and transform society

### Equipment:

- Profile Card, "Civil Rights Activism – Ruth Lor Malloy"
- Profile Card, "Community Planning and Development – Shirley Chan"
- Profile Card, "Political Engagement – Jan Mah"
- Profile Card, "Youth Engagement – Alice Yeh"

### Advanced Preparation:

1. Explore the website *Chinese Canadian Women, 1923-1967* ([www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen](http://www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen)) and in particular the Exhibits "I thought I was Canadian but they didn't recognize me as Canadian': Legislation and its Impact" and "One foot Canadian, one foot Chinese': Family and Community"
2. Photocopy the Profile Cards (1 Profile Card per student)
3. (Optional) Instruct students to explore the Exhibit "One foot Canadian, one foot Chinese': Family and Community" from the website *Chinese Canadian Women, 1923-1967* ([www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen](http://www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen)) prior to class.

### Lesson Plan:

1. Introduction to Lesson (10 minutes)
  - As a class, brainstorm different ways to get involved in your local community.

- Examples: Volunteering at a hospital, teaching at a youth centre, canvassing for a political candidate, demonstrating for a cause that you support, etc.
  - As a class, brainstorm factors that make it hard to get involved in your local community.
    - Examples: Age requirements, transportation and access, cultural restrictions because of gender or other factors, insufficient training or experience, lack of knowledge about opportunities, etc.
2. Chinese Canadian women, 1923-1967 (10 minutes)
- Explain the history of Chinese Canadian women's community involvement, drawing on resources from the website *Chinese Canadian Women, 1923-1967* ([www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen](http://www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen)). Include the following points:
    - Reasons for dramatic gender imbalance in the community;
    - Limited opportunities for public involvement prior to World War Two, and shift to extensive public involvement after the war.
3. Biographical Profiles (20 minutes)
- Establish one Profile station for each of the four Profiles ("Civil Rights Issues – Ruth Lor Malloy", "Community Planning and Development – Shirley Chan", "Political Engagement – Jan Mah" and "Youth Engagement – Alice Yeh" in different corners of the classroom. Instruct students to make their way around the room, reading all four Profile cards.
4. Select an Issue (20 minutes)
- After students have read all four cards, instruct them to go to the Profile station with their favourite profile.
  - In their four groups, brainstorm contemporary examples of activism and involvement related to their chosen issue. Examples include:
    - **Civil Rights Issues:** same-sex equality rights, immigrant and refugee rights, gender equality, accessibility for people with health issues, etc.
    - **Community Planning and Development:** accessible public transportation, parks, developing high-density housing, etc.
    - **Political Engagement:** political campaigning, get-out-the-vote, campaigns to lower the voting age, campaign financing, First-Past-the-Post vs. other election models, etc.
    - **Youth Engagement:** helping at-risk youth, addressing age-based restrictions on voting/ drinking/driving, child labour practices, etc.
  - In their groups, students should try to identify people or organizations that are currently involved in the issues they have listed.
5. Post-Lesson Homework Assignment
- Option 1: Research a contemporary leader
    - Instruct students to select an organization or activist that their group identified and, following the models provided, create a Profile for that person.
  - Option 2: Interview a community leader
    - Instruct students to work individually or in pairs to select a local community activist, research his or her work and conduct an interview.
    - Using the information obtained from the interview, students create a Profile for that person, following the models provided.