DEVELOPMENT OF AN ONLINE HISTORY 12 UNIT

by

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Introduction

Society has seen tremendous technological advances in the past few decades. Home computers and the Internet have greatly changed the world of information and technology. The effects of the information age touch nearly every aspect of Canadian society from entertainment to the way we do our banking. One expected area of change has been education. However, the rate of change is not what people felt it would be many years ago. Most modern education still takes place in traditional classrooms with a teacher and a group of students. While computer use has made an impact on the average classroom, online learning has not replaced the face-to-face learning that occurs in conventional educational institutions. The reasons for this are numerous. For example, much of the online learning in the local school district centers on asynchronous learning and lacks the social aspects of a conventional classroom. New technology has not meant that students learn at home nor made the classroom obsolete.

Nonetheless, there remains a demand for online learning. The Canadian Federation of Teachers (2003) estimates that there were about 50,000 online courses being taught in the world in 2003 and 20% of them originated in Canada. The report went on to state that 57% of Canada's universities offered at least one online course in 1999-2000, and that the median number of online courses offered was 5.5. The demand for online courses in a K-12 situation was much lower, but demand is expected to increase. To that end, in 2002 the federal government began a SchoolNet, program to wire schools throughout the entire country (approximately 250,000 classrooms). In 2003, the ratio of students to computers throughout Canada ranged from 1:15 in Nova Scotia to 1:5 in Manitoba. In Alberta, there were 4,500 full-time and 2,500 part-time online
students in 2003. In the same year, the British Columbia government joined the Alberta Online Consortium with the exclusive focus of delivering online education throughout the province. According to Mark Hawkes of the Ministry of Education, over 27,000 British Columbia students were using some type of online learning system, ranging from Continuing Education to Cool Schools, in 2004-2005.

The Canadian Federation of Teachers (2003) lists several reasons for the increased demand for online learning. Some students live in rural areas, some have an illness that prevents them from attending school on a regular basis while others are forced to take such courses because of disciplinary actions by the school. Many students are also home schooled and may wish to have a higher-level course with a provincial exam taught by a professional. Some local schools have begun to give online classes to students within the school itself ("Cool Schools"). School districts have recognized that online courses can be an efficient and effective way of delivering certain courses. The provincial government of British Columbia recently promised to install high-speed Internet services throughout the province. As well, Froese-Germain (2003) states that online courses offer a relatively inexpensive alternative to the traditional schools. Online courses will allow certain students, such as those whose behaviour would keep them out of a traditional classroom, to continue their education. Governments would also see the appeal for online courses in that they could offer education opportunities to a greater number of students and therefore drive down costs, since there would be no bussing, heating costs, etc. Certainly, this appears to be an opportune time to introduce a series of effective online courses to service students who cannot or will not take traditional courses in a school setting. As more and more students receive an opportunity to learn in this
fashion, it is imperative that effective online courses be designed in order to meet this demand. The Americans have seen a huge increase in the number of online courses being presented in the past few years for many of the reasons cited above (Froese-Germain, 2003). As well, McLester (2002) states that online courses will help keep rural schools with dwindling populations open by providing such a service.

But what makes an effective online course? It is easy enough to place a lot of relevant information in text form on a web site for students to access. However, it is clear that simply presenting information is not teaching. Contemporary research indicates that the most effective form of teaching is constructivist in nature (Vygotski, 1978). In this process, students construct knowledge through prior experience and through the experiences and knowledge of others. Current teaching practice centers around such an approach. Students often work in cooperative groups to solve problems and present information to the instructor or other class members. The most important aspect of such learning is to build upon prior knowledge and expand upon it. Because of technological advances in the past few years, there is little reason why such an approach cannot be used in computer-based distance courses. Teachers no longer have to mail assignments and questions to students and wait for the work to be completed and mailed back.

Technology provides numerous options to today’s students. Internet research, access to data bases, e-mail, chat rooms, blogs, and the speed of all of these permit students to be students anywhere they can connect a computer to the Internet. Traditional classroom orientated activities can now be supplemented by taking such classes in the comfort of one’s own home. But can these online courses, often taken in isolation,
replace the social and physical interaction that occurs in a classroom setting? Can students learn as well in an online setting as in a classroom? While the educational environment is different, research indicates that students can be just as successful at home as in school if certain educational criteria are incorporated into the online course.

The purpose of this study is threefold: the first was to review current research in online courses and determine what makes an effective course. Second, an online History 12 unit was designed around the principles discovered in a research review. The unit was designed to include best practice and aspects of the constructivist approach. It took the best possible advantage of existing technology and attempted to provide an excellent learning environment for students. Finally, four knowledgeable educators, with experience in either the History 12 course and/or online learning were asked to assess the course using a questionnaire of my design. Seven were asked, but three were unable to do so. After the survey was completed and assessed, revisions were made in the curriculum in accordance with the suggestions provided.

A successful online History 12 unit must incorporate many factors. It must be student-centered. It must be interactive. It must permit a series of activities to be completed by the student. It should involve the best elements of face-to-face instruction (such as socialization and cooperative projects) as well as the potential of the Internet to create activities that promote critical and analytical thinking. It must provide opportunities for students to receive feedback regularly as well as evaluation from both the instructor and other students. Finally, it must give students the opportunity to be successful on an external provincial exam at the completion of the course.
History 12 is a British Columbia provincial course. It is a study of world history from 1919 to 1991. Most of the course content focuses on Asia, Europe, and the United States, and there is some content based on events in India, Central America, and South Africa. At present, the course has a provincial exam at the completion of classroom study. The exam has a value of 40% of the course. This exam, like all others in grade 12 except for language arts courses, will become optional for students in the 2006-2007 school year, and students will be able to opt out of writing the exam if they do not intend to follow up on their studies in a college or university setting. The course is described in an Integrated Resource Package (IRP). The IRPs consist of learning outcomes, suggested activities and evaluations, and recommended resources. The four elements are incorporated in all six units of study (historiography, and a series of eras – 1919, 1919-1933, 1933-1945, 1945-1963, and 1963-1991). The present exam consists of 52 multiple choice questions, two short essay questions worth six marks each, and one much longer thematically-based question worth 25 marks. The test lasts for two and one-half hours.
Limitations

There are several limitations on a study of this kind. While the design of the online History 12 unit will follow the principles of a successful online course as determined by the research, the effectiveness of this unit will not be evaluated by student use. This would not be possible to do and finish the project in a timely fashion. A difficulty with the unit design revolves around the software. I am using School District 57's (Prince George) preferred provider, Desire2Learn. That part of the unit will be easy for evaluators to study because it is available on the Internet. All that is needed is an identification code and a password. However, there are two computer platforms necessary for the teaching of this unit. The second program used is Vclass. This program allows the teacher/moderator to talk to the students using headphones and a microphone and discuss matters in real time. The students work in front of their computers and the teacher can explain, bring up websites or other pages, and use the program's "blackboard" to explain ideas and content. This is a major component in a course designed around interactivity, and my unit stresses interactivity. In many ways, it both replaces and augments the traditional lecture. However, since this runs in real time, it will be quite difficult to display this aspect of the course to an evaluation team examining my History 12 unit. I will have to improve my own computer skills in order to work around this potential difficulty. To improve my computer skills, I worked with the school district in a program called Quality Learning Globally that revolves around the application of computer technology to regular classroom teaching methods.

Another problem could be the length of the course. In School District 57, most high school classes are semestered, but this type of course may work better as a year-long
program. Since this type of learning may be new to many students, it would be helpful to permit students more time to learn the content in a different manner. I have been assured that any online course presented in this school district must remain a semester-long course. Another potential difficulty is that online courses are relatively new. While distance learning has existed for many years, the development of real-time computer based courses is comparatively new. This means that much of the research on such programs has based its conclusions on impressions of the course designers or the students involved. Therefore, many of the articles studied in this review consist of researchers stating their own experiences with little empirical evidence to support their beliefs.

Nonetheless, I have chosen the research herein because it follows the idea of best practice within a traditional classroom. I feel that best practice in person should translate to best practice online with some modifications, of course. These modifications would include using the computer as an interactive tool, rather than having the opportunity to talk face to face with students.

Another difficulty is that few of the studies done so far concentrate on high school students. Instead, most focus on university or college environments, or on adult students taking vocational classes online. Nonetheless, I have chosen to include these studies because I feel that if a student is voluntarily taking a provincial-examinable course in an online environment, this should display the motivation and maturity of those who may be older in a university setting.

There are quite a few important topics that must be examined in order to design a successful online course. The first is the content of the unit itself. It must, of course, cover the materials that students need to pass the final exam. But it must do much more
than simply present content. It must stress innovation, analysis, and critical thinking. The design of the course must also enable students to escape the potential isolation that an online course can present, which often leads to a lack of student success in online courses. It is vital to create activities that permit students to interact with each other and with the instructor. The course must not simply revolve around presenting content and testing for student comprehension at a later date.

Secondly, the course must be designed in a manner to keep student motivation high. The course must be designed to be stimulating enough to entice students to stay with it. Since much motivation is intrinsic, this becomes a troubling aspect of course design. In order to keep students involved in the course, they need to have some knowledge of the online process prior to taking the course. It is also imperative that students are able to interact with one another and with the instructor in order to escape the potential isolation of an online course and to encourage scaffolding through group activities. Therefore, the course cannot be self-paced. It must follow a regular schedule, and students must work online much the same as they would if they were working in a regular classroom. Finally, the course materials must be relevant and the activities should be presented in such a manner to maintain student interest in the course.
Literature Review

Most contemporary research agrees that the online course should not simply be a replacement for the traditional classroom, especially at the college level, wherein the computer simply replaces the lectures given by teachers. For example, Alexander & Boud (2001) claim that e-lectures lack the physical presence of the lecturer (along with the authority that comes with proximity) as well as the physical cues that accompany a face-to-face discussion. They argue that there must be interactivity to produce effective learning. They feel that effective computer conferencing which genuinely involves the learner is critical for an online course. Online debates and role-play/simulations are some ways to promote effective learning.

Dunlop (1999) echoes the approach stated above. She stated that the goal of online courses is not to imitate classroom lectures. Instead, online courses should encourage a growth of student responsibility and initiative. She suggested a program entitled REAL (Rich Environments for Active Learning). Courses should stress time management concerns and effective goal setting. Online courses are effective when they implement strategies that promote higher level thinking through a variety of activities. Instructors must make learning more meaningful to the students, and encourage research, collaboration, and student-student/student-teacher interaction. This approach goes well beyond a strictly lecture situation. Such an approach takes advantage of the opportunities provided by an online situation, and Dunlop feels that this unique situation is a great chance to improve student-learning prospects.

There is a body of research that states that online courses should not only encourage higher level thinking skills, but they also should provide an excellent
environment in order to do so. For example, Oliver (2001) contends that online courses provide an incredible opportunity to permit students to develop and strengthen critical thinking and analytical skills. To ensure that this occurs, Oliver stressed the importance of the interactive aspect of such a course. Chat rooms, e-mail, and bulletin boards allow students to interact with one another and with the instructor. This is a potential strength of an online course. Some shy students would be able to use their isolation in a positive manner in order to put input into the learning environment without the fear of potential taunts and jeers that could occur in a classroom situation. In contrast, some bolder students would, according to Oliver, relish the opportunity to be heard in an online setting, as well. Thompson & Randall (2001) concurred with this view, and stated that the goal of e-learning is not simply to pass on information. This should only be a small portion of such a course. E-learning should foster creativity and should “encourage learners to believe in their own potential” (p. 290). While the focus of their study was on entrepreneurship and creativity in the business world, it follows that if business people learn best through constructivist learning, students in high school can also learn this way. Like many of the researchers in this review, Thompson & Randall claim that Vygotski’s (1978) principles of constructivism are vital to encourage student learning.

Murphy & Gazi (2001) elaborate on the value of constructivism. They found that graduate students valued the learning opportunities through various activities that could build on the students’ prior knowledge and experiences. They also noted the importance of working with other students online. They found that “having multiple participants in a computer conference contributes to individual constructions of meaning, their abilities to add new knowledge structures to those they already possess, and their abilities to explore
and create meaning” (p. 262). Students in this study worked together on discussions, role-plays, simulations, evaluations, and panel discussions. It must be emphasized that the students involved in this study were graduate students and that they were already quite familiar with the interactive software before the course began. The latter is a significant factor in many of the studies presented herein. Few studies have described how this situation would translate into a high school atmosphere.

Knowlton (2002) studied the design of an online course and stressed the importance of interactivity to maintain student motivation. Students reported that the opportunities to discuss ideas with one another and with the teacher were important motivators. He noted that the online environment by itself was not a significant motivator for most students. After the novelty of an online course wore off, the nature of the course design and content were the factors that kept students interested in the course. Jackson & Anagnostopoulou (2001) endorse this sentiment. They found that the course design and the teacher are the central features of a successful online course. The fact that the course is online, while important, is not the most significant factor in the success of students in such classes. Good design and teaching practice make a successful online course.

Other researchers reported the same results in their studies of online courses. Cellis & de Beer (2001) contended that the online course must shift away from a content-driven and pre-specified series of lectures to a balance between student acquisition of knowledge and student contributions through individual and group activities (p. 238). They recommended using texts only as a supplement to the course, and to use the Web for student contributions. They stressed the importance of increased student participation
and group projects in an online course. Murphy (2000) surveyed adult students about motivators, and they replied that online courses needed to avoid traditional teaching techniques and provide interesting and relevant course materials. They reported that group projects and group interaction were important to maintain interest in an online course. Hiss (2000) recommended that humour should also be used to maintain motivation. It eases the stress of new students and it shows that the facilitator cares about the course and the students.

A framework for designing student-teacher interactive activities was built by Mishra (2002). She also noted the importance of group work and group interaction. In the constructivist approach, it was important that the student be seen as the center of learning activities. Without interaction, there is little scaffolding and few opportunities to build knowledge. Blythe (2001) also found that the course presentation must focus around student-centered activities and avoid traditional lecture models.

To ensure student success, researchers examined the importance of motivational and design factors. Gunn (2001) found that online courses are more successful if students and instructors are knowledgeable about the online process. They must be effective in using various online communication software programs. She noted the importance of motivation, but went further than other researchers. She claimed that students must be motivated to learn online, and that teachers must also be motivated to teach online.

Redding & Rotzien (2001) made the claim that online students seem to be more motivated to be successful than are students in face-to-face classrooms. This result is not echoed in all studies, however. Marcel (2003) studied the attitudes of 30 rural students
studying Advanced Placement (AP) courses online. While the students surveyed stated that they generally enjoyed the classes, only five of the 30 passed the AP exam. Nonetheless, the students surveyed claimed that interaction with other students and the collaborative nature of the course, were the most important positive aspects of the courses taken. Their negative comments focused on the fast pace of the course (a common complaint for AP courses in general), isolation, the lack of access to texts, and communication problems with group work. Other factors that reflected negatively on the course were issues with online mentors and difficulties with the instructor. Despite these complaints, most expressed satisfaction with the online nature of the course.

There are positive attributes of online courses that can improve student motivation. Cashion & Palmieri (2002) surveyed 356 students and 63 educators involved in vocational courses in Australia. In descending order, the respondents stated that they preferred the flexibility of online courses, responsive teachers, the materials and the course design, the access to resources, and the online assessment and feedback. Their negative feelings, in ascending order, were limited access to technology, the lack of self-motivation, inappropriate assessment methods, the lack of prompt teacher responses, and a general confusion over the course and its expectations.

In order to be successful in an online course and to maintain motivation, students must have certain learning concerns addressed. Laszlo & Kupritz (2003) noted that college students rated course relevance and interesting materials as the most important factors in motivation. They also stressed frequent instructor feedback to overcome the feelings of isolation. Ludwig-Handman & Dunlop (2003) noted much of the same in their studies of college students’ beliefs about online courses. They need support services
such as an electronic or telephone help desk, e-mail, and access to a learning community. This could consist of other students registered in the program or the instructor. The students surveyed claimed that these support services were vital to overcome isolation and to combat decreased motivation.

As in any course, there is always a variety of learning styles that the teacher must address. This is not different in an online setting. Muir (2001) studies this problem in a high school setting and reported that it was indeed possible to design an online course around different student learning styles. She recommended using the constructivist approach in any online course, and fostering cooperation and collaboration among students. She also indicated several methods to ensure that students could use their own preferred learning style in any online course. If students are given a choice in how they wish to work on a set of assignments, they can learn better and can more likely enjoy the course and the course materials. This approach is quite similar to effective teaching in a traditional classroom setting.

Just as in a conventional course, motivation can play a major factor in the success of students taking online courses. However, researchers have indicated several methods of maintaining student motivation. Katz (2001) examined motivation levels in college students involved in online courses. Some wanted to receive only online lectures and to answer set questions. Others wanted more innovative and exciting activities, and wanted more control over their own learning. One possible solution to such diverse interests is to create a series of activities and give students a choice about which ones to complete. Katz also found that many of the students at a college level tended to learn in a similar manner, and that it was easier for college level instructors to design online activities for
that reason. Roblyers (1999) found that the choice of taking an online course was a positive motivator. He also discovered that many motivational factors seemed to be beyond the powers of an instructor. For example, previous experience with online materials and a positive attitude toward the course were imperative for motivation and these factors are typically formed prior to a student meeting the instructor. Nevertheless, orientation on the use of communication software and interesting course design can help overcome these disadvantages.

Hase & Ellis (2001) examined the overall design and goals of online learning. They, too, found that it was important that online students have experience in online software and in e-mail systems. They recommend that time be spent on orientation to ensure that students can become familiar with the online expectations and behaviors necessary to be successful in such a learning environment. They stress the constructivist model, and believe that negotiation of goals and assessments are necessary for students to achieve success. As well, there must be creative questioning and collaborative activities. The curriculum must be flexible and move beyond the traditional lecture model.

Commey & Stephenson (2001) build on these ideas. They cite four outcomes vital to learning: dialogue, involvement, support, and control. A successful online course is much like a regular F2F course. In each outcome, there is a degree of teacher and student control and management. A learner-managed course with more open-ended rather than task-specific methods course would usually be the most successful. However, with a course with an external exam, such as History 12, the outcomes could be altered to provide a balanced approach to learning. In this type of situation, they emphasize keeping groups small, assigning certain roles to students in group assignments, and
developing strategies that enhance interaction. They found that student motivation increases when the students know that the work they do will be on display. Finally, they note that structure allows students to know what they are doing and what they will be doing, which improves the pace at which they work (p. 44). Web based learning can permit students to negotiate assignments, provide appropriate dialogue, and learn better than a traditional lecture course (p. 49).

A successful online course is not exactly the same as a face-to-face course. Bonk, Kirkeley-Hara, & Paz Dennan (2001) note that the pedagogical design is vital for any course to provide an acceptable environment for student success. But there are other concerns in an online course. The social aspect is often missing and must be addressed in some manner in an online course. Course management differs as well. The structure of the course is often quite different from that of a F2F course. Students need orientation in these courses and gain expertise in the software. Assessment often changes in such courses. These are often technological concerns. Most face-to-face courses do not have to deal with students whose work “freezes up” or who loses materials because of viruses. The above-mentioned authors spend much of the space in their report indicating various manners of approaching these particular difficulties.

Whitlock (2001) has been involved in distance education for over 20 years. He identified his top attributes of a successful online course as follows (p. 188):

- Clearly defined objectives
- Clear signposting
- Ease of use
- Appropriate language
• Modular structure
• Variety of questions and problems
• Feedback of progress
• Testing (diagnostic and achievement)
• Logical sequence

Whitlock also notes that there are three kinds of online instruction: WEB based and self-contained, technological (i.e. video-conferencing) to transmit classroom activities in real time, and planned activities using the Internet either individually or in groups. He recommended that whatever technology is used, it must incorporate the noted attributes of successful online teaching in order for students to be successful. He also recommended that the instructor become an expert in the technology being used before using it to teach students. As well, instructors should become expert in task analysis, instructional design, goals and objectives writing, media selection, evaluation techniques, and storyboarding (p. 189). Since the instructor is the person dealing with students and student difficulties with the technology, the authors feel that the more knowledgeable the instructor the easier it is to deal with the inevitable difficulties. None of these skills can be adequately developed in a short two- or three-day workshop. Whitlock recommended that instructors be expert in all of these skills before attempting to develop or implement an online course.

Merisotis & Phipps (1999) examined research of online and distance education, especially in the undergraduate setting. Their recommendations for a successful online course follow the same procedures and beliefs as they do for a successful course within a
classroom environment. They stated that a successful course must incorporate all of the following (p. 5):

- Encourage contacts between students with faculty
- Develop reciprocity and cooperation and students
- Use active learning techniques
- Give prompt feedback
- Emphasize time-on-task
- Communicate high expectations
- Respect diverse talents and ways of learning

The authors emphasize that such activities are designed to enhance success in all classes, not just those taken outside the classroom. Once again, successful strategies in a regular classroom are recommended in an online setting as well. Good teaching remains constant, despite the technology employed.

Ciardulli (1998) recommended many of the same sentiments noted above. The activities that improve student success within a classroom will also do so outside the school environment. She cited using ice-breaker activities to have students become more comfortable with each other, the virtual classroom, and with the technology. She also claimed that daily activities or review were essential to maintain student interest and learning. She noted that cooperative activities were excellent methods to maintain student involvement in learning. The social aspect of learning must not be ignored in an online course.

Most of the studies tend to repeat the same information. Design a course around constructivism. Employ collaborative and cooperative exercises. Make the course
interesting. Ensure that the students and the instructor have some expertise with the technology being employed. However, Borthwick, Cassity, & Zilla (2002) make one other recommendation. In their research, they examined the difficulties faced by switching from a face-to-face environment to an online system. As the department switched over to a more online approach, these researchers also found that it was imperative that the course being transformed to an online course actually be appropriate for such a setting. If the course did not lend itself to collaborative activities and interaction among the participants, the course would not be successful in an online situation.

Current research on online courses has tended to emphasize consistent findings. In order to be successful, online courses must enable students to escape potential problems, such as difficulty with technology and isolation. There must be sufficient orientation in the software and help desks in the form of e-mail or online bulletin boards to permit students to work around these problems. As well, the course must encompass the best practices of the classroom as well as the potential of the Internet. The computer course cannot simply provide information and test for it later. It needs to provide a rich learning environment for the students involved. If the computer serves only as a platform for lectures, it will almost certainly fail to provide an efficient learning environment for most students. The courses must provide a series of varied and interesting activities. Without these, students will rapidly lose interest in the course. The social aspect of the online course cannot be ignored. There must be ample opportunity for students to interact with the instructor and with other students. Again, this situation must mirror the situation in most classrooms as much as possible.


Research Procedures

The specific format to be used in this project is design and demonstration. The plan was to design an online unit in History 12 and have it evaluated by the committee at UNBC and outside educators through a questionnaire. In order to prepare the survey, I researched how questionnaires are best designed. There is a great deal of literature available. As well, I will use my first draft of a survey to examine other online classes. I examined a Socials 11 unit in the Desire2Learn platform. This course is being designed by a colleague at Prince George Secondary School. The Socials 11 unit is being designed around the requirements of a provincial exam that becomes mandatory for students in British Columbia in the 2005-2006 school year. After completing my research and testing my draft survey, I modified it to more closely represent the stated goals of this Master’s degree project.

As interesting as it would be to teach the course and report on that as a project/thesis, such an occurrence would take a great deal of time. Instead, I have chosen to concentrate on the research and my attempt to build a unit around its recommendations. I have been teaching History 12 for over a decade, so I am familiar with the course and have a great deal of material collected electronically already. My goal was to use it in an effective manner in this planned unit, or adapt it so that it would translate into an online environment.

Procedures

1. Review of current research into online learning.

The literature review includes a large number of the research articles available. I have discovered that many of them echo the sentiments of other researchers. In general, the
best online practice reflects the best face-to-face practice. They also tend to agree that the online environment can provide a very rich environment for learning. The research I have studied indicates that there are specific requirements to build and teach an online course that creates an environment where students will find success.

2. Create a unit and ask qualified history teachers and experts to examine the course.

This process allowed me to seek input from knowledgeable educators to see if the unit I have designed actually meets the parameters I have established for a successful online course. I asked four people from School District 57 (Prince George) who are familiar with either History 12 or with best practices in curriculum and evaluation. Rory Summers has taught History 12 for many years, and Val Kilby is deeply involved in the development of online courses in School District 57. I have also asked a teacher from the Nechako Lakes E-Bus program to respond to my survey. Mac Cooper has been involved in teaching History 12 and teaching online courses through the E-Bus program for many years. Finally, a representative of the Ministry of Education has agreed to examine the unit. Mark Hawkes is the e-Learning Coordinator in the British Columbia Ministry of Education and a former History 12 teacher. I feel that the depth and breadth of their experiences can permit me to revise my rough draft of my online History 12 unit.

3. Use the research to determine best practice in online course design.

The research indicates that there are several important aspects in every online course (and indeed, every regular classroom course as well). Briefly these successful attributes consist of:

- Clearly stated goals and expectations
• Ease of use for students
• Interesting and relevant learning activities
• A well-structured pace to the lessons (neither too fast nor too slow)
• Activities that stress creativity and cooperation
• Frequent feedback from other students and the instructor
• Activities that give students the opportunity to do well on the course and do well in the provincial exam.

Beyond that, there are also other important attributes to be included in each set of lessons. These include making students comfortable with the software and interaction with the teacher and with other students. There must be a series of activities that provide interaction and choice, as well as maintain student motivation. There were activities that foster creativity and analytical thinking. I am fortunate that I have taught this course for over a decade, and that I have a great deal of materials and activities that can do all of the above. My challenge will be to adapt them to an online setting. All of these characteristics must be included in every teaching unit of the course.

4. Using History 12 IRPs, design a series of lessons built around the research recommendations and survey results.

The History 12 IRP is divided into six units. The first is the Study of History, which includes historiography and the ability to interpret primary and secondary documents. This unit is meant to be integrated throughout the entire course, so it will not be included as a separate unit in this study. The remaining units consist of events in different time frames: 1919, 1999-1933, 1933-1945, 1945-1963, and 1963-1991. I thought it reasonable to develop the introductory (1919) unit of study for History 12 because it included the
attributes listed above. Additionally, the unit included a test at the end to determine student learning. Test-taking, critical thinking, analytical thinking, and writing skills will also be assessed as they make up a great deal of the skills needed to be successful on the provincial exam. Since there is a thematically-based question worth so much of the student’s final mark on the exam, the methodology of learning to write this type of essay will be integrated into the units as well. However, I believe that if students are willing to take this course online, they should be able to access the available exams on the Ministry website.

In order to view the course, go to:

sd57.desire2learn.com
ID: krutherford
Password: changeme
Go to: Kim Rutherford’s Sandbox, (the bottom one), click on content, and follow the modules.

To see how Vclass will be used, go to:

www.elluminate.com/demos_events_landing.jsp
Click on: Recorded Demo

To examine the Integrated Resource Package for History 12, go to:
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/his12/histoc.htm

The online History 12 course is designed much like a regular classroom unit. Since many students are not successful in a self-paced environment, students will have to be “in” class at stated times, just like a face-to-face class. The pace of the course will not be set by the student but by the instructor, so students will not easily be able to put off an assignment for a later date. The goals of the unit are spelled out in the introduction to the unit in Module 2, and these objectives will be incorporated into the final unit test. To combat the potential feelings of isolation experienced by many online students, many of
the exercises are cooperative in nature. Students are required to work with other students and with the instructor in order to be successful. In short, the unit should offer all of the best from a face-to-face classroom environment and the best an online environment can offer.

The course will make use of two types of learning platforms. The first will be the Desire2learn (D2L) site (sd57.desire2learn.com). The lectures and exercises will all be included on that site. Students will not need a great deal of computer knowledge to manage this program. If they can send e-mail and chat, they can be very comfortable using the program. To test the students’ computer abilities, the introductory lesson asks them to view the Internet, answer questions, and e-mail them to the instructor. The lectures will be presented as a web page, and therefore cannot be altered by the student. However, students can go back to the past notes at any time to review. Within the D2L Web pages will be links to various other sites, such as the BBC World War I site (http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwone/) or www.schoolhistory.co.uk. These sites will allow students to expand their knowledge of the information presented on the D2L pages. As well, the schoolhistory site is filled with numerous games and activities to maintain student interest in the course.

All the assignments will be presented as WORD.6 documents. Most computers today use this word processing program. For those that do not, WORD.6 easily translates into various other processing programs. Because they are presented in a word processing format, students may type their answers to the questions right on the document and send them to the instructor through the D2L e-mail or through the FirstClass account that School District #57 uses. These can then be graded on the sheet itself and returned to the
student. This gives the students feedback on their work and gives them another place to study for tests and the exam.

It is important to note that the D2L program does not operate independently in this History 12 unit. Students will be required to have at least one textbook (*The World This Century*) as one of their sources. This can be supplied either by the Distance Learning section of School District #57 or by Prince George Secondary School, the "home base" of the course. Students who are quite far away from Prince George can also enlist the aid of a local high school to borrow the necessary text, a practice followed by many distance education students.

The third part of the course is not included in this presentation of the course. It is called Vclass and runs through the Elluminate platform. Through this program, the students and the instructor are connected by computer and microphones. Topics can be displayed on the student computers, and the instructor and the students can discuss it in real time. This permits the teacher to supplement the lectures, clarify the presentations, answer questions and probe student knowledge. It is an integral part of the course. It is vital to note that D2L, the textbook, and Vclass all work together as the instructional tools for the online course.

The exercises for the course are designed to ensure that students learn the materials and are prepared for the provincial exam. Students will learn the content of the course through the lectures, discussions, and the numerous available web sites. Some of the assignments (particularly the vocabulary exercises) are designed to expand student knowledge of the content necessary to be successful in the course. Students can also apply higher level thinking skills through many of the essay questions and exercises
dealing with interpreting documents. Since many of the questions on the provincial exam deal with applying higher level thinking skills, these exercises can help prepare students for the exam. Finally, many of the assignment questions ask students to apply their knowledge (such as making determinations about which actions of Lenin followed communist principles and which did not). The essay question (the “to what extent...?” exercise) and the study of documents encourage students to apply analysis and evaluation skills to the content. A very useful tool to monitor student progress will be the test, which approximates the types of questions students will receive on the final exam.

Constructivism plays an important part in the unit. Class discussions will encourage cooperation and collaboration. The first exercise of designing a peace treaty requires students to work together and build upon each other’s skills and knowledge to design an appropriate peace treaty. The D2L notes and the Vclass discussions build upon this exercise when we collectively examine the real treaties and analyze their flaws. Students are required to work together on the higher level thinking questions on the two topic assignments. The assignments will require students to pool their knowledge and abilities to produce a final product. This will approximate the cooperative learning aspect of a face-to-face classroom. Students experiencing difficulties will be able to work with other students and with the instructor through e-mails and discussion boards, as well as through Vclass. In the introduction, I have informed the students that I check my e-mail daily and encourage them to discuss their problems and difficulties with me or with the other students.

The advantage of the online course is the rich environment available on the Internet to expand and stimulate student learning right at the students’ fingertips. In a
regular classroom, the opportunities to work on this would be limited by the number of computers and computer labs available at a given time. The www.schoolhistory.co.uk site is an excellent example, and one I plan to use quite frequently during the course. Students can access the huge number of PowerPoint presentations to examine comment. The site also has instructions on how to interpret cartoons and other primary sources, a necessary tool for being successful on the final exam. The BBC site (http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwone/) has a series of videos about the First World War, clearly demonstrating the horrors of the “War to End All Wars.” It also contains a simulation that allows students to go on four missions, taking three types of weapons with them on each mission. The students will find that most of the missions either end in a major failure or in a draw, much like the actual battles in the war.

If I want my traditional classroom students to participate in this exercise, I have to book a lab in the school. I would have to help the students find the site and how to negotiate through it. However, in the online environment the students, by definition, are already on the Internet and have access to computers. These classes would not be a “special trip” to the lab. Instead, they would be a common aspect of the course.

In summary, the first unit of the online History 12 course I have designed will incorporate all of the positive aspects of a traditional course and allow students to experience the potential of an online environment. Students will be able to take notes, participate in discussions, do group work, write essays and assignments, and watch videos, just as they would in a regular class. The technology should help alleviate some of the feelings of isolation many distance-learning students feel when taking online
courses. Additionally, the students must log in at certain times in order to be "in" class.

This should keep them on task and participating, an essential part of any course.
Results

The design and content of the survey for the respondents to use to evaluate the course went through several phases. I looked through my UNBC texts for principles of survey design. I also examined the goals of the unit and designed questions around whether or not these goals appeared to have been met. I examined a unit designed by a colleague, JP Martin, and attempted to fill out the questionnaire I designed. In order to view Mr. Martin’s course, go to: sd57.desire2learn.com. The user ID is JPMartin, and the password is changeme. Click on JP Martin's Sandbox and then on Content. I discovered that I needed a wider range of challenges in order to answer questions about course design and effectiveness. As well, I found that my original format may have worked well as a paper survey, but did not lend itself well to ease of use when replying online. Therefore, I changed the format to a series of tables and text blocks to make it much easier for the respondents to reply through e-mail.

Of the seven people I had contacted to read over my project and complete a survey, four responded. Mark Hawkes, Rory Summers, Val Kilby, and Mac Cooper were able to complete and return the survey, while three others from District 57 did not. Nonetheless, I feel that I have a good mixture of respondents. Mr. Hawkes, Mr. Summers, and Mr. Cooper have extensive experience with the History 12 course, while Ms. Kilby has been involved with School District 57's technology initiatives for several years. Mr. Hawkes is the coordinator of online learning within the Ministry of Education in British Columbia and is therefore familiar with how a successful online course should be constructed and, unlike the other respondents, is not an acquaintance. I was especially grateful for the comments from Mr. Cooper, as he has been working on developing an
online History 12 course for the past number of years. I have summarized the results in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Summary of Survey Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The content of the course covers the materials listed in the IRP</td>
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<td>Assignments and other aspects of student work reflect the desired learning outcomes for the unit</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Content is presented in a clear and logical pattern.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The links are appropriate for the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities that give students the opportunity to do well on the course and do well in the provincial exam</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In general, the responses to the course as originally designed were positive. All of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with 12 of the 18 questions. The respondents
strongly agreed that the content of the course covered the IRPs, that the student learning outcomes were clearly stated, that the assignments were appropriate, that the students were able to write a great deal, that the links were appropriate, and that the teacher seemed familiar with the course. All of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the students had opportunities to interact with media, that they could work in cooperative groups, that the site was easy to navigate, and that the unit could prepare students for the provincial exam. On five of the questions, there was one undecided response. These questions included whether the students could properly display what they had learned, building on prior knowledge, the reading level, the format of the presentation, and the opportunities for the students and the teacher to interact. Finally, one respondent felt that the unit did not support the differing learning styles of students.

Of the comments I received, some dealt with the technology in general. Mr. Cooper was concerned about the possibility of the computers freezing up, a not uncommon occurrence on the Internet. Mr. Hawkes was questioning whether I had explored enough of the richness of the technology when he asked if I had planned to use videos, blogs, etc. Mr. Summers was concerned about a very real problem: how does the unit deal with the potential for students feeling isolated while taking a course online? Other comments involved stressing the need for prior reading and trying to have students connect past events with current events. In general, however, the responses were positive and all seemed to be content with the overall design and content of the unit.
Discussion

As Mr. Hawkes pointed out, and as several colleagues have informed me, the design of an online course is an evolutionary process. Even though I have been teaching this course for more than 15 years, I have found myself constantly making changes in the presentation of course materials throughout that time. An online course is really no different. I have taken many of the materials I already use in a traditional classroom and put them into the design of this unit. As I worked on the unit, I found that I could not ignore the incredible resources available on the Internet for students and teachers alike. For example, the www.schoolhistory.co.uk site is a treasure house of information for students. I felt that I had stressed the value of this site in the design of the course, but the respondents indicated that perhaps I should do more. As well, in the midst of designing the unit I was introduced to the world of blogging, a series of web sites that permit people to create a site for discussion and open it to anyone who wishes to enter the discussion. The value of this form of communication is extensive. A blog can be set up at any time, by anybody, on any topic. In the final version of any online course, it would work in a manner that would eliminate the need for a drop box within the D2L platform. Students could more easily communicate with each other and with the instructor, and outside parties could participate as well. Potentially, this could lead to exciting learning opportunities. For example, when studying the politics of the Middle East, one could ask the ambassadors from Middle Eastern nations to contribute their thoughts and beliefs on past and present events. It would resemble a guest speaker in a classroom, but there would be no geographic limits to having a guest speaker.
As a result of the criticisms, I revised the course in several areas. I stressed the need for students to read ahead in their texts. This will be found in the introductory page and several reminders are placed throughout the various lessons. I have also introduced students to several other excellent web sites they can access in order to gain more information about the course. As well, I have created a link for the students to the schoolhistory online games that they can use to review for unit tests and for the final exam.

I followed Mr. Hawkes' advice and examined the www.vark-lean.com site. I found that many of the suggestions included there are already included in my unit. I feel that the V-Class aspect of the course will help fill in any of the gaps in some of the learning styles of the potential students. Aural learners would most certainly benefit from such a program. As I noted earlier in the paper, it is difficult to access this aspect of the online unit because it would be just like a discussion in a classroom. While there would be general ideas about where the discussion was going, the students themselves would dictate the content of the discussion through their comments and questions. For example, when we discuss the actual contents of the Paris Peace Treaties, students typically ask why the “Big Three” were so narrow-minded in their policies and decisions. I normally ask other students to discuss and comment on such a statement, and hope it leads to the idea that the leaders basically came up with a series of treaties that were, on the whole, beyond their control. Even though the treaties seemed harsh, the French President was ousted from the government by the French people because he was too easy on the Germans. This type of conversation and discussion comes from the nature of the students, and really cannot be built into a structured written program.
Finally, the unit was criticized for not having enough different materials for students. I have taught this course for a number of years, and I have found that it is vital to catch the students’ interests in order to maintain their level of motivation. To this end, I have always kept the first unit relatively simple and straightforward in order to keep from overwhelming the students. In this unit, they are expected to interact on the peace treaty exercise, answer a series of questions, watch some videos, play some review games, learn to write a specific type of essay, and learn how to read primary and secondary sources. I did not feel that they needed any more activities that those in order to learn and appreciate the nature of the course.
Conclusions

There have been huge technological changes in the past few decades in the form of communication and computer usage. Students have become much more adept with computers, chat rooms, blogs, and Internet use. As well, there has been a recent push for the development of online courses for students who, for whatever reason, cannot take classes in a regular classroom environment. Therefore, it makes sense to develop courses that take advantage of student abilities and current technology. Contemporary research indicates that it is vital to develop courses that mirror many of the best practices of classroom teaching. These studies stress the constructivist approach to learning and state the online courses must be built around this method. Students must be able to replicate the pedagogical and social aspects of a regular classroom in order to be successful on an online course. To that end, my plan was to design an online History 12 course that includes the best ideas of the research into such courses. I believe that this unit works well as an introductory unit to the History 12 course.

If I were to do such a study again, there are several things I would do differently. For example, I would try to expand the number of people who would review the course. I found that I had to turn primarily to colleagues within the school district, and I feel that some of their responses could have been influenced by our personal relationship. I would contact the Provincial Specialist Association for Social Studies and asked members at random to respond to the unit. When I design the remainder of the course, I will be recommending that the local school district purchase rights to online videos so that students would be able to access more visuals beyond the written word.
Finally, this unit is not the final product, just as teachers never have a finished, unchanging unit for a conventional class. As I made my way through the development of this unit, I was told over and over again that the development of an online course was an endless project. Colleagues told me that whatever courses they had designed changed every time they taught them. Just as in a traditional classroom, the course is never taught twice in the same way. I would recommend that teachers take advantage of the unit and make revisions as they see fit. This unit is designed to be evolutionary.
References


Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Look at the course presented at the following site: sd57.desire2learn.com
The ID is: krutherford
Password: changeme
Click on Kim Rutherford’s Sandbox (the bottom one)
Click on Content and follow the links.

Remember that this course will also make use of Vclass, allowing more interaction between students and students and students and teachers. Examples of how the Vclass program operates can be found at:

www.elluminate.com/demos_events_landing.jsp
Click on: Recorded Demo

To examine the Integrated Resource Package for History 12, go to:

http://www.beed.gov.bc.ca/irp/his12/histoc.htm

Please fill in the following information:

Name

Address

Experience with online courses and/or with History 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The content of the course covers the materials listed in the IRP</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student learning outcomes are clearly stated</td>
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<td>The unit supports the different learning styles of the students</td>
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After you have examined the site, please complete the following survey. Place an X in the appropriate box.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>The students have opportunities to interact with a variety of media</th>
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<td>Students are given several opportunities to work in cooperative groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning activities permit students to build on earlier knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students use writing to display their learning of the course material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content is presented in a clear and logical pattern.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading level is appropriate for grade 12 students</td>
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<tr>
<td>The format of presentation is appropriate for grade 12 students</td>
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<td>The site is easy for students to navigate.</td>
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<td>The course would work well as a teacher-paced course</td>
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<td>The links are appropriate for the course.</td>
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<td>The teacher is familiar with the scope and desired outcomes of the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities that give students the opportunity to do well on the course and do well in the provincial exam.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comments: Please type any comments into the field below.

When you have finished, please return this to me as an attachment on e-mail

My e-mail address is: krutherford@sd57.bc.ca

Thank you very much for your participation.

Kim Rutherford
Prince George Secondary School, Prince George, BC
Appendix B: Survey Responses

Please fill in the following information:

Name
Respondent A

Experience with online courses and/or with History 12
Coordinating online courses at Prince George Secondary. Spent a year exploring quality online course delivery

After you have examined the site, please complete the following survey. Place an X in the appropriate box

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<td>The unit supports the different learning styles of the students</td>
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<td>The students have opportunities to interact with a variety of media</td>
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<td>The site is easy for students to navigate.</td>
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<td>The course would work well as a teacher-paced course</td>
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<td>The links are appropriate for the course.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The format of the course permits interaction between students and students and students and teacher</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
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<td>x</td>
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</table>

Comments: Please type any comments into the field below.

A terrific beginning Kim – layout easy to navigate and clear; good variety in learning opportunities; and gotta love the dog jokes! <grin>

When you have finished, please return this to me as an attachment on e-mail

My e-mail address is: krutherford@sd57.bc.ca

Thank you very much for your participation.

Kim Rutherford
Prince George Secondary School, Prince George, BC
Please fill in the following information:

Name: Respondent B

Experience with online courses and/or with History 12
Taught Histor12, but I have not had much experience with online courses

After you have examined the site, please complete the following survey. Place an X in the appropriate box:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<td>Students use writing to display their learning of the course material</td>
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<td>Content is presented in a clear and logical pattern.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading level is appropriate for grade 12 students</td>
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<td>The format of presentation is appropriate for grade 12 students</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>The site is easy for students to navigate.</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>
The course would work well as a teacher-paced course
The links are appropriate for the course.
The teacher is familiar with the scope and desired outcomes of the course
The format of the course permits interaction between students and students and students and teacher
Activities that give students the opportunity to do well on the course and do well in the provincial exam.

Comments: Please type any comments into the field below.

Taking an online course has its advantages and disadvantages – working in isolation is a disadvantage and students will need to have a lot of self-discipline in order to ensure that they meet the learning outcomes. Perhaps a discussion on the need to do a lot of pre reading on the units prior to starting the units would be advantageous – good luck!

When you have finished, please return this to me as an attachment on e-mail
My e-mail address is: krutherford@sd57.bc.ca
Thank you very much for your participation.

Kim Rutherford
Prince George Secondary School, Prince George, BC
Look at the course presented at the following site: sd57.desire2learn.com
The ID is: krutherford
Password: changeme
Click on Kim Rutherford’s Sandbox (the bottom one)
Click on Content and follow the links.

Remember that this course will also make use of Vclass, allowing more interaction
between students and students and students and teachers. Examples of how the Vclass
program operates can be found at:
www.elluminate.com/demos_events_landing.jsp
Click on: Recorded Demo

To examine the Integrated Resource Package for History 12, go to:
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/hist12/histoc.htm

Please fill in the following information:

Name
Respondent C

Experience with online courses and/or with History 12
Taught Hi 12 11 years at NVSS in Vanderhoof, B.C.
Taught online courses with Ebus for the last 5 years, including SS 9, SS 10, SS 11, and Hi 12.
Marked Government exam in Hi 12 3 times
Attended numerous SS LSA conferences, to gain more knowledge about how to teach Hi 12

After you have examined the site, please complete the following survey. Place an X in
the appropriate box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Student learning outcomes are clearly stated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments and other aspects of student work reflect the desired learning outcomes for the unit</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>The course provides activities that allow students to adequately display what they have learned.</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The unit supports the different learning styles of the students | X |
---|---|
The students have opportunities to interact with a variety of media | X |
Students are given several opportunities to work in cooperative groups | X |
Learning activities permit students to build on earlier knowledge | X |
Students use writing to display their learning of the course material | X |
Content is presented in a clear and logical pattern. | X |
Reading level is appropriate for grade 12 students | X |
The format of presentation is appropriate for grade 12 students | X |
The site is easy for students to navigate. | X |
The course would work well as a teacher-paced course | X |
The links are appropriate for the course. | X |
The teacher is familiar with the scope and desired outcomes of the course | X |
The format of the course permits interaction between students and students and students and teacher | X |
Activities that give students the opportunity to do well on the course and do well in the provincial exam. | X |

Comments: Please type any comments into the field below.

In general, I found the course appropriate and well-organized. I had some problems when I tried to enter a site and my computer froze up. What will students do if they cannot access the websites or face technology-related problems? Is this a matter for concern?
I noticed that you intend to have students communicate regarding the first paper— is this something that will be done online or in the classroom or by phone? I think this course is very promising! — Mac

When you have finished, please return this to me as an attachment on e-mail
My e-mail address is: kruthford@sd57.bc.ca

Thank you very much for your participation.

Kim Rutherford
Prince George Secondary School, Prince George, BC
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Click on: Recorded Demo

To examine the Integrated Resource Package for History 12, go to:
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/his12/histoc.htm

Please fill in the following information:

Name:
Respondent D

Experience with online courses and/or with History 12:
e-learning coordinator for Ministry, developer of TB education courses for healthcare
practitioners, taught History 12 in 1990’s

After you have examined the site, please complete the following survey. Place an X in
the appropriate box

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
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<td>Assignments and other aspects of student work reflect the desired learning outcomes for the unit</td>
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Reading level is appropriate for grade 12 students | X  
The format of presentation is appropriate for grade 12 students | X  
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The links are appropriate for the course. | X  
The teacher is familiar with the scope and desired outcomes of the course | X  
The format of the course permits interaction between students and students and students and teacher | X  
Activities that give students the opportunity to do well on the course and do well in the provincial exam. | X  

Comments: Please type any comments into the field below.

Kim:
I'll provide some comments on the items that I indicated were Undecided or Disagree:

"activities that allow students to adequately display what they have learned" -- it's hard to know without the entire course to go by. What I see so far are mainly answers to questions, with one essay. Many online courses never get beyond "read the chapter, answer the questions"...probably because it isn't easy to provide engaging, thought-provoking challenges and activities. Ideally, students will be given opportunities to demonstrate learning in the form of multimedia presentations and other means of expression that require higher order thinking skills.
"...supports the different learning styles of the students" – the predominant learning style addressed is Read/Write. Some of the linked websites provide multimedia, but the student is not given a specific option to take one learning style pathway over another, so it would be hit and miss for the Visual, Aural and Kinesthetic learners. You might find this site useful: http://www.vark-learn.com/english/index.asp

“activities permit students to build on earlier knowledge” – I don’t recall seeing this specifically, but I may just have missed it.

“Reading level is appropriate” – I’ve been out of the classroom for a while now, but I get the impression that reading ability has slipped over the years. Much of the text is written at an adult, academic level and might not engage the student, or even act as a barrier to learning. I’m not an advocate of “dumbing down” the language, but there may be a case to be made for talking to students in their own voice sometimes. The best way to find out would be to do an experiment using two different approaches to the same information...then ask the students which they preferred. (and test them to see whether their preference resulted in better performance)

“format of presentation is appropriate” – I guess I’d like to see more opportunities for interaction using IM, text/voice/video chat, forums, blogs, and wiki’s. The course pages could be more visually stimulating, as well. I’m not sure about the use of red font for highlighting...perhaps if these were hot linked to a glossary or additional information. It’s hard to know how much factual data to provide that’s already in the text or the linked websites...I wonder if it wouldn’t be better to limit the course pages to the highest level concepts/themes? Perhaps posing key problems or questions would be good. In some ways I think “less is more” at this stage of the course. The important thing is to engage the students and motivate them to seek out the detailed information that will explain things and enable them to solve challenges. Another useful strategy is to present a modern day situation (real or fictional) that parallels the past. That way you avoid the preconceptions that they have about what happened and why. Rather than ask them “what would you have done back then”, which holds little relevance, you can ask “using the insights you can gather from what happened back then, what would you do in this situation here and now?”

I know that it’s hard to get really creative when the entire course is geared to a provincial exam that tests factoid memorization more than critical thinking skills, but maybe there’s a bit of latitude.

Anyway, overall a pretty solid start on an online course. These things are evolutionary and I’m sure you will continue to refine and improve it as you gain experience and insight from running kids through it.

You might find this site useful for creating and administering surveys in the future:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/
When you have finished, please return this to me as an attachment on e-mail
My e-mail address is: krutherford@sd57.bc.ca
Thank you very much for your participation.
Kim Rutherford
Prince George Secondary School, Prince George, BC
Appendix C: Final Draft of the Unit
My name is Mr. Rutherford, and welcome to an online version of the History 12 course. I hope you find it interesting. Other than being online, the goals and expectations for the course remain the same as a face-to-face course. You need to be in class (connected online) at regular times. You’ll need to do homework. You’ll often need to work in cooperative groups with other members of the class. You’ll often have to work by yourselves. If you have problems or questions, you can ask your teacher or other students. You will have a test at the end of every unit we do, and you will have a provincial exam at the end of the course. The course itself covers the scope of world history from 1919 to 1991. We’ll begin by looking at peacemaking in 1919 and how that led to the Second World War in 1939.

I hope to ensure that you are not too anxious about taking an online course. In order to be successful, you need only a few skills other than those you would use in a regular face-to-face (F2F) classroom. You need to know how to navigate through the Internet. You need to know how to use e-mail. You need to know how to contribute to a chat room environment. Aside from that, you will find this course very similar to F2F classes.

Look around the site you’re in now. You’ll find everything you need to successfully navigate your way through the course. On the tool bar you’ll find content, e-mail, chat lines, and test bars. You should make yourself as comfortable with these features as you can. Shortly, you’ll use them as naturally as you would take out a binder or a textbook in a F2F class.

We will follow a fairly simple format for the class. You are expected to be online with the class for three hours a week. We will usually begin with a discussion of the answers to the assignment that was due that day, then some notes, and then a new assignment. If you are not online with us, it will be just like missing a F2F class—your parents or guardians will have to provide an excuse for your absence. Excessive absenteeism will lead to discipline—often this means you will be asked to leave the course. In the notes, you will find several items highlighted in red. This indicates that these are major ideas that you must be certain to know. They will be very helpful as you study for exams and for tests.

The marking scheme is also quite simple: 30% of your marks will come from the day-to-day assignments, 30% will come from the tests I give you, and 40% will come from the provincial exam.

In order to do well in this course and on the final exam, you will need to keep up-to-date with all classroom activities and readings. I CANNOT EMPHASIZE ENOUGH THAT YOU MUST DO YOUR READINGS, AND I HEARTILY ENCOURAGE YOU TO DO YOUR READINGS IN ADVANCE OF THE CLASSES. In this manner, you will be
more prepared to participate in the class discussions and you will find that you will get a great deal more out of the class. It also allows you to ask questions about materials you didn’t understand or for which you need more clarification. You will be sending your finished work to me through the e-mail listed on this site or directly to my school address: krutherford@sd57.bc.ca. Feel free to contact me at any time about any problems, concerns, or questions you may have. I check my e-mail at least once a day (usually at the end of the work day) so I will try to get back to you as quickly as I can. Remember, you also have classmates you can contact for help as well, just as you would ask a question of the student sitting next to you in a regular classroom.

There are a number of useful websites that will help guide you through the content of the course. One of the best is:

www.schoolhistory.co.uk

It contains a large amount of content, links to other helpful sites, and plenty of review games and activities. Try it out when you get a chance.

The following are the curriculum organizers for the course. I put them here so you can get a feel for the course: you are not expected to memorize these. You should have a look through them so you have an idea of what’s expected of you in History 12. Take a glance through them and meet me at the bottom of the page.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CURRICULUM ORGANIZERS

1. THE STUDY OF HISTORY
The prescribed learning outcomes (PLO’s) in The Study of History emphasize the skills and attitudes associated with appreciating history and developing the skills needed for
further study in history and related disciplines. Beyond the skills of conducting research, students must, for example, be able to analyse the relevance of historical documents and records, develop interpretations of the documents they select, and demonstrate a sound grasp of the historical chronology and context in which the events took place. The learning outcomes, therefore, focus on the appreciation of history, interpretation of history, the skills of the historian, and the writing of history. They are meant to be applied, where appropriate, throughout the course.

2. CONFLICT AND CHALLENGE: THE WORLD OF 1919

The chronology for this organizer begins with the issues and problems facing the peacemakers at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The world had just passed through the catastrophic conflict of the First World War, "the war to end all wars." The global scale of the tragedy set the stage for the challenges facing the world in 1919, particularly those arising from the peace treaty, the new strength of communist ideology, and the social, geopolitical, and economic upheavals that followed the war. This period introduces students to the concepts of nationalism and imperialism, and to the powerful influence of communist ideology around the world.

3. PROMISE AND COLLAPSE: 1919 – 1933

A brief period of apparent promise of renewed peace and prosperity followed the First World War. During the 1920s, international agreements suggested a willingness among nations to resolve conflicts through negotiation. The contentious issue of German reparation payments was alleviated, and the League of Nations, despite its political weaknesses, worked to improve living and working conditions. This period of hope ended with the global economic collapse of the Great Depression. Nations met this crisis by turning inward and
seeking individual solutions. The Great Depression brought to the foreground issues and hostilities that the Paris Peace Conference had either failed to resolve or had created, leading the world to a new period of "turmoil and tragedy." In studying this period, students examine the worldwide implications of the establishment of fascism and communism in Europe and the important influence of economic factors on events, especially in the United States. This period also introduces the growing movement toward national self-determination in many colonized countries.

4. TURMOIL AND TRAGEDY: 1933 – 1945

During this period, the League of Nations failed to come to terms with the reality of fascist aggression. Hopes for recovery and reconstruction were dashed. The problems associated with the aspirations of ethnic minorities intensified with the arbitrary national boundaries imposed at the Paris Peace Conference. The Great Depression, which saw the collapse of many national economies, aided the rise of dictators who used aggression as an instrument of national policy. The failure of the League to stop this aggression added to the turmoil around the world. At the same time, the inability of the leaders to settle disputes peacefully encouraged Japanese aggression in the Pacific and helped the expansionist policies of Mussolini and Hitler. The result was the tragedy and horror of the Second World War. This period introduces students to the causes of the Second World War, especially the influence of the Great Depression on the growth of totalitarian regimes, as well as the characteristics of totalitarian and democratic systems. Students also examine how a number of major developments of this period, especially new weapons technology, the concept of "total war," and the use of mass communications had a lasting impact on events for the remainder of the century.

5. TRANSFORMATION AND TENSION: 1945 – 1963
The end of the Second World War marked a major transformation in world affairs. The defeat of Germany and Japan created a realignment of power. On a global scale, the war led to a decline in European influence and renewed efforts for colonial independence. The emergence of the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. as the two major powers and their competition for spheres of influence created a mood of increasing tension characterized as the Cold War. Underlining this tension was the presence of the nuclear threat. Significant events of this period include the struggles for new national status in India, Africa, the Middle East, and South-East Asia; the spread of communism; and the buildup of confrontations between the two superpowers that culminated in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. In studying this period, students explore the far-reaching effects of the Cold War, including the emergence of new economic and political alliances, and the growing strength of independence movements in the colonial territories. Students also examine the struggle for individual rights and the new imperative for international cooperation that accompanied the nuclear age.


After the Cuban Missile Crisis, relations between the superpowers gradually eased into a period of détente, characterized by agreements on the control of nuclear arms and the settlement of post-Second World War issues such as “the German question.” Nevertheless, conflict continued in many parts of the world, including the Middle East, South-East Asia, and some of the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. But even these conflicts were eventually fully or partly settled. The breakup of the Soviet empire set a seal on the end of the Cold War, while contributing to a resurgence of nationalism in areas such as the Balkans. The gradual emergence of China influenced the realignment of power in the world. Approaching the end of the 20th century, the world experienced a surge in scientific and technological knowledge. At the same time, it faced the challenges of global issues such as nuclear proliferation, terrorism, and widespread economic and social problems. As they study this period, students examine conflicts in Asia and the Middle East and their effects both on domestic events in the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. and on the international balance of power. Students also explore the rise of popular movements seeking new rights and freedoms, including the struggle for women’s equality. Other developments of importance during this period are the advance of computer technology and the growing competition for natural resources. Finally, students examine the ongoing impact of the most significant developments of this period: the ending of the Cold War, the breakup of the U.S.S.R., and the resurgence of nationalism.
In order to get you ready for the demands of an online course, this will be your first assignment. Go to the following link http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/specs/pdfs/hispec_0405.pdf and answer the following questions. If you do not have a copy of Adobe Acrobat on your computer, go to http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/specs/grade12/ and follow the instructions to download Adobe (it is free). You can do this by writing the answers and then posting them in the drop box. There are not that many questions, so take about 10-15 minutes to answer them and then send them back to the drop box.

1. How many multiple-choice questions will there be on the exam?
2. How many essay questions will be on the exam? How many points are each of the essays worth?
3. How many Themes and Perspectives do you need to study for the exam? Describe the first one listed on page 8 (listed as page 4 in the Adobe Document).

The rest of the class will be held in the discussion box—see you there in about 20 minutes. If you have any trouble getting work into the the drop-box, you can ask me either through e-mail or through the VClass microphones.

What would you call a dog with no legs?
Answer: Next class
OVERVIEW - CONFLICT AND CHALLENGE: THE WORLD OF 1919

BY THE END OF THIS UNIT, YOU ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO

- describe nationalism and imperialism in the world of 1919 and evaluate its significance
- identify key issues in the peacemaking process at the end of the First World War
- explain the social, economic and political effects of the First World War on the post-war world
- summarize the causes and effects of the 1917 Russian revolutions

DURING THIS UNIT WE WILL BE EXPANDING ON THESE POINTS:

- NATIONALISM AND IMPERIALISM - definitions and examples of the terms - identification of the nations which have remained imperial powers or have lost that status - examples of conflicts between nationalism and imperialism in the Middle East
- PEACEMAKING AT THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR - key figures (Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Wilson) - problems facing the peacemakers - disagreements between the Big Three - participation in the peace conference - key terms of the treaties
- THE POST-WAR WORLD - changing status of women - decline of imperialism - war debts - increased demands for self-determination - new nations and frontiers in Europe - communism in Russia - US return to isolationism - the problems of maintaining the peace including the weakness of the League and collective security, unrest in Germany and the Ruhr Crisis
- REVOLUTIONS IN RUSSIA - Russia in 1917: social, political, economic conditions - nature of the March Revolution - problems of the Provisional Government - nature of the November Revolution - Treaty of Brest-Litovsk - Civil War - War Communism - NEP

READINGS FOR THIS UNIT ARE:
World This Century - Introduction, Ch 2, 3, 6 (pages 80-85), 8 (pages 104-107 & 111)
Woodrow Wilson and the United States entered the war in 1917 after Germany began to sink American ships using u-boats (submarines). Wilson was an idealist who saw American participation as a way to make the world a better place. To that end he proposed the Fourteen Points, his vision of a more peaceful world once the war ended.

- 1-5: Open negotiations between countries, freedom of navigation, and a reduction of armaments. These would ensure that countries would not make secret deals involving war and that the US would get what it really wanted: the freedom to trade with any nation it chose to whenever it chose to.
- 6-8: Germany to leave Russia and Belgium, and return Alsace and Lorraine to France.
- 9-13: stressed self-determination. This meant that peoples could choose their own types of governments and be free to live in a part of the world in a nation with people who thought and felt the same way as they did. This was a nationalist ideal, but would prove to be difficult to put into practice.
- 14: A League of Nations, a central body where all nations could come together, discuss problems, and solve them through diplomacy rather than warfare.
• France had born the brunt of the fighting on the western front throughout the war.
• France's industrial regions were devastated and France had lost 1.5 million young men in its war against Germany.
• France had been defeated by the Germans in the war of 1870-1871, and had lost the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. She had entered the war in 1914 in the hopes of winning these regions back, but the horrors of the war led to an increased determination to exact revenge against Germany.
• Clemenceau and the French people wanted Germany stripped of all wealth and military power so as never to be a threat again.

David Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Britain

• Before the war, Germany and Britain were each other’s major trading partners.
• Lloyd George wanted that trade to continue once the war came to an end.
• He felt that Germany should be punished, but not destroyed as the French wanted.
• Like most western politicians, he was afraid of communism (and there was brief communist rebellion in Berlin, Jan. 1919). His fear of communism spreading into Germany affected his beliefs about how Germany should be treated in 1919 when the Peace making began in Versailles, just outside Paris.

To get a feeling for how the leaders and the people of their nations felt about Germany,
you should examine the following website: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwone/index.shtml. While there, you should look at the movies, read through the diaries, check some of the photographs, etc. You should also examine the Kids Section and try out the Trench Warfare game. Another great online resource would be http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/gcselinks/wars/firstwwlinks/trenches_worksheets.shtml. Here, you can examine some PowerPoint presentations on the effects of the war. You should be doing all of this with the following thought in mind: If you were left in charge, what kind of peace treaty would you negotiate with Germany after the war? Remember what the war was like and how angry people were at the end of the war.

What do you call a dog with no legs?
Nothing, 'cause he won't come when you call him anyway.

Where would you find a dog with no legs?
Answer: Next class
Assignment:

You are meeting in the great halls of the **Palace of Versailles** to decide on a peace treaty. There are several situations you need to deal with including the extent to which Germany should be held responsible for the problems caused by the war and what to do with territory surrounding Germany. To help you make these decisions, you will need to work as a group. Answer the first set of questions below based on building a treaty that will ensure peace in the future. Then, examine the map and develop a fair division of Europe based on the principles of peace and self-determination. Your task is to answer the questions in a manner that you believe will lead to an everlasting peace in Europe. Remember, World War I was supposed to be "the war to end all wars."

**Problems**

1. What will you do with the German emperor (Kaiser Wilhelm II)? He fled to Holland just as the war ended. Should you simply leave him there or ask Holland to return him for war crimes? Why?

2. Who should be blamed for starting the war? Germany? Austria? Russia? Why?

3. Who should pay for the war? How much should they pay? Why?

4. What should happen to Germany’s armed forces? Should Germany be forced to reduce her army, navy, and air force? If so, by how much? Remember, Germany must be allowed to keep a force capable of defending herself if attacked, but not large enough to launch an attack on Europe.

**Map Questions**

1. Look at the orange provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. They belonged to France before the war of 1870-71 when Germany took them as part of her “spoils of war.” Should they remain German or be turned over to France? Should the people of this region vote on this (hold a plebiscite)? Why?

2. A new nation has been created to the east of Germany: Poland. However, Poland needs access to the sea. There is an orange area called the Polish Corridor. Should this area be turned over to Poland? After all, most of the people who live there are German. But without it, the new nation of Poland cannot hope to thrive. Defend your response.

3. Should East Prussia remain a part of Germany or should it become
independent? If the Polish Corridor is handed over to Poland, what assurances are there that the German people in East Prussia can travel freely to and from Germany?

4. Look at the yellow section within Germany’s borders (the Rhineland). France wanted to see this area either turned over to her as compensation for the war damages inflicted by Germany or somehow kept free of a potential invading German army. If the French either took the area or placed soldiers there, it could spark another war. What solutions can you come up with to keep Germany from launching an army or a series of air strikes against France?

5. Most of the fighting during the war took place in northern France. As a result, France’s industries based in that region were destroyed. As well, the fuel of the time was coal, and France’s coalfields were also destroyed. Germany has a coal producing region in the Saar. Should Germany turn the Saar over to France? Why or why not?

Europe, 1919
This is to be a cooperative effort. You are to use the Discussion boxes and the chat rooms to discuss your answers with each other before you turn in one finished product. I will be monitoring the discussions and students will be graded on their level of participation and the quality of their discussions. To get you started, students whose last names begin with the letters A-M will tackle the first set of questions, and the students whose last names begin with N-Z will tackle the map questions. You must choose the person whose name comes second in your section of the alphabet to submit the final document. Once you are satisfied with the responses to your own section, you can help out with the other section.

Remember, in an exercise like this, there are no wrong answers. You can only lose
points if you do not defend your decisions well. The defence of your decisions will be found in discussions and in the final answers turned in to me. You have until the next class to finish this assignment.

Marking System:
10 marks for your participation in the discussions
10 marks for the group’s final submission

The assignment must be turned in before the next class. Remember, e-mail the final discussion to me at krutherford@sd57.bc.ca

Where would you find a dog with no legs?
Probably the last place you put him.
When I was growing up, we had a dog with no legs. Every night after supper we ...
Answer next class.
The Results of the Paris Peace Conference

Treaty of Versailles (Peace treaty with Germany)
The Germans were not permitted to negotiate. Instead, they were presented with an ultimatum: sign or be invaded. The final treaty included:

- A War Guilt clause. Germany had to admit that she was responsible for starting the war and should be responsible for all costs associated with fighting the war.
- Germany would have to pay reparations (war damage payments). These costs were not determined at Versailles. Eventually, they would be set at $33 billion US, an astronomical amount for the era.
- Germany lost territory in the east to the new nation of Poland. In order for Poland to have access to the sea, Danzig was determined a city under the control of the League of Nations and that Poland should get a “Corridor” to Danzig, which cut off East Prussia from Germany. German who wished to travel from Germany to East Prussia would have to travel through the Polish Corridor (which was Polish territory but was filled with Germans).
- Alsace and Lorraine were returned to France
- All possessions in Africa and the Pacific were lost to Germany and turned over to the victors
- The Rhineland was demilitarized. Germany could not place soldiers in this area, even though it remained German territory.
- The Saar (Germany’s coal-producing region) was turned over to France for 15 years. After 15 years, the people of the Saar would vote on whether to join Germany or France.
- Germany was unable to unite with Austria (Anschluss), even if the majority of people in both countries wished to do so. Self-determination was not an option for the losers, it seemed.
- The German military was reduced to 100,000 men, and Germany was permitted only a small navy but no air force.

Germany’s Chancellor (Prime Minister) resigned rather than sign. Germany thought it was being unduly punished, while the French voted Clemenceau out of office because the treaty was too “easy” on the Germans.
**Protests**

- Germany’s navy was to be turned over to Britain. In protest, German sailors sank the entire fleet at Scapa Flow to ensure that the British could not have the German navy.

**New Nations**

- Austria dismembered into:
  - Austria
  - Hungary
  - Czechoslovakia
  - Poland
  - Yugoslavia
Romania

- but many of these new nations contained large minorities, and much of the new minorities were made up of Germans. What about self-determination? The idea of self-determination in Europe proved unworkable right from the beginning.

Peace?

- Czechoslovakia and Poland fought over Taschen. The "Big Three" (United States, Britain, and France) forced Poland to back down.

- Poland attacked Russia (Russia in the middle of a civil war) and Poland greatly expanded her borders. Wilson's League of Nations was unable (and unwilling) to stop Poland. Eventually the Russians pushed the Poles back. Russia would not forget the Polish attack, and would extract their revenge in 1939.

For more on the peace treaties, go to the following site:
www.historylearningsite.co.uk/treaty_of_versailles
This will help with your understanding of the treaty, the people involved, and the reasons for the implementation of the treaty. It will also be a very useful guide to answer the questions that follow.

When I was growing up we owned a dog with no legs. Every night after supper we took him out for a drag.
How many elephants can you fit in a Volkswagen? Answer next class
TOPIC ONE: PEACEMAKING:
Read through your notes and Chapter 2 of The World this Century and answer the following questions. When you have finished, e-mail your responses to me at krutherford@sd57.bc.ca. They must be submitted BEFORE we begin our next class, as we will be discussing the answers in our next class.

QUESTIONS
1. Identify the “Big Three” of the Paris Peace Conference and describe their individual goals and/or guiding principles.

2. Describe the decisions made at the Paris Peace Conference under these headings:
   (Note: There will be some repetitions.)
   - Punishments inflicted on Germany
   - Changes to the map of Europe
   - Attempts to ensure future peace
   - Mandates

3. Explain why Germany was willing to sign the Treaty of Versailles.

4. Identify the problems created by the Paris Peace Conference and its decisions.

READINGS
World This Century - Ch 2

VOCABULARY: Write a brief description of each of the following:
Lloyd George, Wilson, Clemenceau, armistice, 14 Points, self-determination, mandates, diktat, League of Nations, war guilt clause, disarmament, Polish Corridor, Alsace and Lorraine, Saar, plebiscite, reparations, Rhineland, demilitarization.
To What Extent...

This question requires you to examine two sides of a topic and determine which side seems to be more valid, and why.

**Question:** To what extent did the Paris Peace Treaties meet the goals of France?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples that support the question</th>
<th>Statements that disagree with the question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Conclusions that can be drawn from the question:

Now, write the essay and send it to the assignment drop box. For this first essay, we will all be looking at each other's to get a feel for what a good essay looks like.
Colonies After the War

It was felt by many Western European nations that the goal of the modern nations was to help those nations that were unable to "stand up to the strenuous conditions of the modern world." This was actually an excuse for Western European nations to add to their empires (imperialism).

To that end, the victorious nations decided to divide the former German and Turkish colonies among themselves under the mandate system.

There were three types of mandates:
A. Those soon able to look after themselves (Britain took Palestine, Iraq, and Transjordan, France got Syria and Lebanon).
B. Less advanced nations with no immediate prospect for independence—mostly areas in central Africa
C. Areas far from independence—sparsely populated, no economic development

Two Results

1. French and British empires greatly increased, which angered many nations, especially Germany.
2. No one in the affected colonies was consulted. Arabs had assisted the Allies in defeating the Turks because of the promise of independence, yet it was not forthcoming. Also, Britain allowed limited immigration of Jews into Palestine with the eventual goal of creating a Jewish state there. This was certain to create trouble in the future.

*How many elephants can you fit in a Volkswagen?*
*Four: Two in the front and two in the back (don’t you know anything about elephant jokes?)*
*How can you tell there’s been an elephant in your refrigerator?*
*Answer next class*
Working with Documents

Historians study documents in order to determine what can be learned from them. There are two types of documents: primary and secondary. Historians use several methods to determine if the information found in such documents is reliable.

**Primary Sources:** letters, statements, autobiographies, writings from the era, newspaper articles, cartoons, etc. Anything that can be seen to come from the era being studied are called primary sources.

**Secondary Sources:** Anything written long after the event being studied has taken place. Your history textbook is a good example. Biographies are also secondary sources.

Your goal as a historian is to determine what you can learn from these sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Reliable</th>
<th>Unreliable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Primary     | • Written by someone involved in the event or by a knowledgeable observer (newspaper, magazine)  
• Personal connection with the event  
• Involved in the event, so should have a good idea of what actually happened | • Writer could be biased-wants to present a topic in order to make him/herself look good  
• May have been involved, but may not know everything about the event (“just a cog in the wheel”) |
| Secondary   | • Written by someone who has access to more information about the event-the passage of years could present more information being turned up  
• Less biased, more balanced approach to history | • May be presenting history in a biased manner  
• Can play up one event and play down another  
• Can present history in such a way to make his/her cause more just than that of another |
As well as primary and secondary sources we must also examine content. In other words, is what is being said actually true? If it is factually correct, it can be said to be valid. If not, it is not a reliable source.

Bias is an important aspect in the study of history. Does the author say things in a manner to make the audience think in a particular way? For example, we have just finished looking at the treatment of Germany by the Big Three after the First World War. Would the German view of reparations agree with the French views? Even though they are examining the same facts they would be presenting them in a very different way. Almost everything you read is biased: your job is to decide if the bias in the work makes it unreliable. Your text has biases, but they are not so biased to make the text invalid. However, Adolf Hitler’s speeches about the Treaty of Versailles were made in order to get people to support his policies. But this does not make his speeches useless. Instead, they can be used to determine his ideas and what German people generally believed in the 1920s and the 1930s.

To summarize, you must determine whether or not a source is primary or secondary, whether the information being presented is accurate, and whether or not the bias makes the work invalid and unreliable.

So, to practice, let’s try the following exercise: Read through the two sources and answer the questions that follow.
## Documents

### Document ONE

In 1919, we delegates flooded the great Hall of Mirrors in Versailles some twenty miles from Paris. We were quite overwhelmed by the prospect before us: create peace from the remains of the most-bloody conflict in history. We needed to find a way of making the French happy with the result while, at the same time, not destroying Germany. Despite some early difficulties, I believe we achieved our goal of creating a lasting peace in Europe.


### Document TWO

As the delegates met to pick the carcass of Germany, they were torn only by one central concept: to what extent should we destroy Germany? What the idiots of Paris did not realize was that it was an impossible task: Germany can never be destroyed. There was no great overwhelming desire to create a lasting peace. They feared the power of Germany, and the power of Germany had to be destroyed. That was the only goal of Versailles.

Adolf Hitler, speech to the Reichstag, 1935

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1. **What is reliable about Document ONE?**

2. **What is unreliable about Document ONE?**

3. **What is reliable about Document TWO?**

4. **What is unreliable about Document TWO?**

5. **In what ways do the documents agree with each other?**

6. **In what ways do the documents disagree with each other?**
THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Russia before 1917

- Ruled by Tsar Nicolas II (autocrat). He believed he should be the sole ruler of Russia. However, Russia was changing and he was unable to keep up with the changes.

Russia and the First World War

- War went badly for the Russians. The armies were slaughtered in the early battles with the Germans and the Austrians to the point that Germany chose to concentrate on fighting on the western front since Russia was not much of a threat on the eastern front.
- The people who suffered most from this were the working class in the cities and the peasant class in the countryside. The lack of freedoms, the shortages of food, and inflation led to riots and strikes.
- On the battlefront, the troops were short of food and equipment.
- In typical fashion, Tsar Nicolas II felt he could solve the problems by becoming the battlefield commander of the army. When the Russian army continued to lose, people blamed the Tsar for the losses.
- Nicolas left his wife, Tsarina Alexandra, in charge of the administration of Russia. She was dominated by Rasputin, and together they fired the most able of the Russian civil service. Things got so bad that the Russian people started to believe that Alexandra was working for the Germans.

Gregory Rasputin
• Rasputin was murdered in 1916, but the damage to the Tsarina’s reputation could not be reversed
• To learn more about Rasputin, the Mad Monk of Russia, go to www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/RUSrasputin.htm

March Revolution

• It is important to remember that the Russian Revolution was actually TWO revolutions.
• The first was initially unplanned. It began in March, 1917, with a strike of textile workers in Petrograd (St. Petersburg was re-named Petrograd during the war-St. Petersburg sounded too German), and other unhappy workers joined in
• When the Tsar could not end the strikes, he simply abdicated (gave up his position as Tsar.
• Members of the Duma suddenly found themselves as the new leaders of Russia. The established a Provisional (Temporary) Government under the leadership of Alexander Kerensky

Kerensky

• The Provisional Government was opposed by a group known as the Bolsheviks and their leader, Lenin. The Petrograd Soviet was the leading group who spoke openly against the Provisional Government.

Communism (Marxism)
Karl Marx
• Communists believe that the business owners (the bourgeoisie) exploited the working class (the proletariat). Communists believe that the workers should own all business, and that there should be no private ownership at all. They base their beliefs on the works of Karl Marx. Communists want to have a classless society with a one-party system ruling the nation. Eventually, all workers will decide to rise up and overthrow the bourgeoisie and a world government would be created. In Russia, the communists were known as Bolsheviks, and their councils were called soviets.

• These ideas are very much at odds with the ideals of capitalism, where private ownership is seen as a virtue and the process of gaining wealth is deemed to have trickle down effects which help everyone. Capitalists also believe in democracy, where most people have the right to vote for any number of political parties they may support.

• To get a better idea about communism, go to www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/TUmarx.htm

**Lenin and The Bolsheviks**

**Lenin**

• Returned from exile in Switzerland, and immediately led a public attack on the Provisional Government. Lenin had been exiled for his extreme political views, and the Germans were happy to send him back to Russia in hopes he could create a situation in which Russia would drop out of the war. As it would turn out, the Germans were to be more right than they initially wanted to be.

• Issued the April Theses
1. No cooperation with the Provisional Government
2. Soviets to have all power
3. Land nationalized (land taken from large landowners and given to the peasants—this was done to get the support of the largest group of people in Russia)
4. He issued Order No. 1, which would allow the soldiers to elect soviets and vote on whether they would obey certain orders from the military leaders. This, and a call to end the war, was done in order to gain the support of the soldiers.
5. The slogan of Lenin was “Peace, Land, Bread”. Peace for the soldiers, land for the peasants, and bread for the industrial workers.

- However, the soviets were still too weak to take power, and when the Provisional Government began a crackdown on the soviets, Lenin was forced to flee to Finland.

**Soviets Seize Power**

- Russian General Kornilov attempted to take power. He saw the weakness of the Provisional Government, and decided to take power himself. To stop him, the Provisional Government had to enlist the support of anyone who would help. They helped to arm the Bolsheviks in order to put down Kornilov’s revolt.
- In November 1917, the Bolsheviks took over major buildings and institutions in Petrograd. Within a short time, they were in charge of most of the urban centers of Russia.
- But the divisions within Russia remained, and set the stage for a civil war in Russia.

In order to answer the set of questions that follow concerning the Russian Revolution, use your text and the following website:
www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Russian_Revolution

Enjoy.

*How do you know that an elephant has been in your refrigerator?*
*Answer: Footprints in the butter.*

*How do you know there have been TWO elephants in your refrigerator?*
*Answer next class*

Once you finish this topic, there are two places for you to go in order to review for the upcoming test.

Go to www.schoolhistory.co.uk/ and play some of the interactive games. As well, at the bottom of the schoolhistory page is a series of links. Go to the JohnDClare site and click on revision. There, you can click on the Treaty of Versailles and the Russian Revolution to review your knowledge of the content until you are more
comfortable with it. Remember, if you have any problems or questions at all, e-mail me or the other students in your class.
TOPIC TWO: REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

QUESTIONS:
Answer the following questions by reading through your notes and Chapter 3 of The World This Century. Submit your answers to me by e-mail at krutherford@sd57.bc.ca BEFORE the next class as we will be discussing the answers during our next class.

1. Identify the circumstances that led to a revolution in Russia in March 1917.

2. Identify the circumstances that led to a revolution in Russia in November 1917.

3. Describe the problems faced by Lenin's government between 1917 and 1924 and the results of the governments' responses. Use a 3-column chart to do this: (If you have WORD 6.0, there is a table making option on the tool bar. If not, make the chart in a way that works for you and makes sense to the reader). You should find at least three major problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
<th>RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. To what extent did Lenin's government implement the principles of communism? Again a chart would be a good approach. This time with 2 columns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIONS THAT FOLLOWED COMMUNIST PRINCIPLES</th>
<th>ACTIONS THAT DID NOT FOLLOW COMMUNIST PRINCIPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

READINGS

World This Century - Ch 3

VOCABULARY: Write a brief description of each of the following:
Tsar, autocrat, Rasputin, Kerensky, Trotsky, March Revolution, November Revolution, Provisional Government, Brest-Litovsk, War Communism, NEP, Comintern, civil war, Reds, Whites, Bolsheviks, Red Guard, soviets, duma, proletariat, bourgeoisie, constituent assembly, Kronstadt mutiny, "Peace, Bread and Land"