



BC Archives, I-51578

A Century Ago

HSBC  School Visits Programs

Teachers' Guide

Grade 2/3



A Century Ago

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Program Level: Grade 2 – 3

Program Length: 75 minutes

Locations: Clifford Carl Hall St. Ann's, Helmcken House

Introduction:

Dr. J.S. Helmcken was among the earliest doctors to arrive to the colony in the 1850s. In addition to medicine, Dr. Helmcken was also interested in politics.

When Dr. Helmcken arrived to Fort Victoria he met and fell in love with Cecilia. Cecilia had been born in Canada. Her father was an important man James Douglas, Governor of Vancouver Island, and her mother was French Canadian and First Nations. In 1852 Dr. Helmcken and Cecilia got married. They built Helmcken House, on the same spot that it is located today, making it one of the oldest buildings in BC still standing on its original location. The Helmcken's children Amy, Jim, Harry and Dolly all grew up in the very house students will visit.

This program is offered together with **This Old Town** where students learn more about the role of a community in early pioneer life. **A Century Ago** focusses more on the **effects of technology** on a householder, a doctor and a school.

Prescribed Learning Outcomes

This program is designed to fulfil the following prescribed learning outcomes as stated in the Ministry of Education's Integrated Resource Package.

Grade 2 – Social Studies, Self/Family/School

- A5 – Select a solution to a classroom or school problem
- B1 – Identify changes that occur in a school and a community throughout the year
- B2 – Ways in which individuals contribute to a community
- C1 – Roles and responsibilities within the classroom and school
- E3 – Describe how the physical environment influences human activities
- D1 – Work done in the school
- D3 – Describe how technology affects individuals and communities

Grade 3

- E4 – Describe how physical environment influenced early settlement
- D1 – Compare ways in which needs and wants are met in communities
- D2 – Assess how technology affects individuals and communities

Pre-Visit Instructions

The students must be divided into **4 groups PRIOR** to arriving at the museum. If possible they should also wear nametags. Students are also encouraged to come dressed in 'old fashioned' costume, if they desire.

Volunteer docents will guide the students through their pioneer experience. Each group will work its way through the 3 stations in Helmcken House – the Parlour, the Kitchen and Arbutus Lodge and 1 station in St. Ann's School House. Students may not go through each station in the order presented below, but may start at any station and proceed through each of them until they have completed all four stations.

Program Itinerary

Station 1 – the Parlour

Background

Soon to be married, Dr. Helmcken needed a place to settle with his bride-to-be. The land came from Cecilia's father, James Douglas. Built in 1852, this HBC-style log cabin was built from local materials but was "very heavy, very expensive and very slow work...". Four children and two additions later, their simple cabin had grown into a busy family home. Meanwhile, Victoria was growing up around it – from a colonial outpost to the capital city of a new province. The parlour is the newest addition to the house and was built in 1883. It is often called Dolly's parlour as Dolly lived in the house, after the death of her husband, Mr. Higgins, until her own death in 1939.

Lesson Plan

At this station the students will learn more about the Helmcken family. Docents and students will also discuss why the doctor built his home on this spot farther away from town. Students will learn how the house was built and with what resources. Using maps of Old Victoria, students will brainstorm what resources and services were available for the Helmckens.

Students will discuss/do the following

- Using pictures around the room, students will be introduced the different family members and discuss their contributions – Harry became a successful lawyer, Jim became the first local children's medicine specialist, Amy was devoted to music and charity work, Dolly created art and took care of her father and this home.
- Using an historic map of Victoria, students will make observations about what the area was like. "Why would Doctor Helmcken build his house on this side of the harbour?", "What could the family do for entertainment?" etc.
- Students will discover how the house was built.
- Brainstorm a list of resources and services available to the Helmckens

Station 2 – the Kitchen

Background

The Kitchen at Helmcken house does not represent how it would have looked when the family lived in the house – as the early history of this room is a mystery. After Cecilia died, Dr Helmcken brought in a housekeeper to help with the children and meals. In later years, a Chinese cook helped out, and so did his daughter, Dolly, when she returned. After this building became a museum, the first curator and her husband used this as their kitchen.

Historically, kitchens doubled as laundry rooms. Wash day was the hottest, heaviest and hardest day of housekeeping.

Lesson Plan

This station will teach the children about the cleaning and laundry activities the pioneers did in their kitchen. Students will see what role pioneer children had in helping with laundry as they learn how to laundry and ironing the old-fashioned way. They just might gain a new appreciation for their family's washing machine!

Students will discuss/do the following:

- Group discussion – using the technology available in this room, how would you help with laundry? For example: get the washtub and board and put the soap in the “soap swisher”, wash, stretch and mend socks– clean out ashes, get kindling, light fire, get coal, pump water, etc.
- How would doing laundry be different in the summer and the winter?
- Hands on opportunity to use the tools used to clean clothes the pioneer way (dry demonstration; no water or soap).

Station 3 – Arbutus Lodge

Background

Trained in London, Dr. Helmcken came to Vancouver Island in 1850 as a Hudson’s Bay Company doctor (a position he held until 1885). He went on to help create British Columbia’s medical profession and lobbied for the creation of hospitals that still exist today.

The medical instruments collection of Dr. J.S. Helmcken is a remarkable microcosm of rapid change, from the fur trade era to the modern surgery. It reflects his different medical activities, treating gunshot wounds and broken legs, delivering babies, acting as coroner, as a public health officer, dispensing medicine to elderly patients and serving as a family doctor. He was trained in the new techniques of anaesthetics and electricity, watched the introduction of antiseptic medicine, and helped build hospitals. It is a collection that bridges medicine’s historical roots and its modern identity in western Canada.

Lesson Plan

Students are given a chance to explore the original house and bedrooms and make note of the differences between this part of the house and parlour and/or kitchen. If this is their first station, make particular note of the fact the bedrooms do not have electricity.

Students are encouraged to think more about Dr Helmcken’s role in the community as a doctor. How did he do his work, reach his patients and what tools did he have to help them?

Activity

- Group discussion about the life of a frontier doctor
- Read aloud Emily Carr’s reminiscence of “Doctor Heal-My-Skin”
- Hand out pictures of medical equipment and have students find the objects in the room

Station 4 – St. Ann’s Schoolhouse

Background

Four Sisters and a laywoman, made a two-month journey to Victoria from Montreal in 1858, to set up a school. The Helmcken daughters, Amy and Dolly both received very good educations from the Sisters. The schoolhouse was moved from its original location to this spot in the 1970s. As there are no photographs of the inside of this cabin from its school days, it is set up as a typical one-room schoolhouse, with an interpretive display on the Sisters of St. Ann’s.

Lesson Plan

By either role playing or discussing one room school houses, students will observe how the roles of teachers and students have changed over time and with the introduction of new technology.

Activity

Outside of the school have the boys and girls line up separately. Once inside of the school the students will discover the differences between their school and a one room school by participating in the following:

- **Discipline, neatness and good manners** - control sitting at the desks, a hygienic inspection, hands up, standing beside their desk to answer questions
- **The basic classroom equipment** – use of desks, slates (slate pencil, chalk and chamois), McLean workbook sheets and discussion about quill (1860's) and steel pens, ink bottles, chalkboards
- **The 3 R's** – Reading, writing and arithmetic (and more). Students will learn about the recitation bench, oral examinations and how pioneer students had to learn memorization


Students will make a list on their slates of the jobs that had to be done in the classroom. For example – fill the ink bottles, clean the slates, start the fire, fill the water bucket, sharpen the quills, ring the bell, etc. Then working together, they will discuss who had to do the different jobs.

During the conclusion activities students will get a summary of how technology affected people's lives in the past.

Pre & Post Activities

Pre-Visit Medical Activity

19th Century Medical Technology



Hello, I'm Dr. J.S. Helmcken.
Trained in London I came to Vancouver Island in 1850 as a Hudson's Bay Company doctor. I went on to help create British Columbia's medical profession and lobbied for the create hospitals that still exist today. I witnessed dramatic changes, from the end of heroic therapies, such as blood-letting, to the use of the x-ray. Let's have look at some of the tools I used in my early years in the profession.

In this activity, you will have an opportunity to examine some of the medical instruments from my collection. There have been many changes over the last century and your job is to predict and make inferences about the photographic images you are about to see.

Continue Exit

Visit the Royal BC Museum's Thunderbird Park: Place of Cultural Sharing website. Here students can try a [19th Century Medical Activity](#) where they can virtually search a medical catalogue to learn about the technology available to Dr. Helmcken and other early doctors. They will be shown an image and then using their mouse, they can draw the image. After that they are prompted to predict what it is used for and then search through the catalogue to find its match. Students can print out the page or do a series of eight and print off a certificate.

Post-Visit Schoolhouse Activity

Read out the following description of a fictional one room school house to your class.

“The year is 1871. Sugar Town has 21 children between the ages of 5 and 18 years old who go to the one-room school. The school’s teacher, Miss Clark, is getting married and moving away. The Local Trustees have a grant up to \$500 per year for the hiring of a new teacher.”

Based upon what the students learned during their visit to St. Ann’s Schoolhouse work together to come up with a “Help Wanted” sign for a new teacher. Include in your sign a list of responsibilities for the new teacher. How long is the day? How much money will he or she make? Is there somewhere for them to live?



For the Teacher's reference:

Rules and Regulations for Common Schools in BC as of 1869

The following Rules and Regulations for the management and government of Common Schools established under the "Common School Ordinance, 1869" and the "Common School Amendment Ordinance, 1870," was published as follows:

Hours of Teaching and Holidays

1. The hours of teaching each day shall be from 9 A.M. to 12, and from 1 to 3:30 P.M.
2. Good Friday, Easter Monday, and every Saturday shall be a holiday,
3. There shall be two vacations in each year: the summer vacation to continue for four weeks from the first Monday in August; the winter for eight days from the day before Christmas day.

Religious and Moral Instruction

1. No person shall require any pupil to read or study in or from any religious book, or to join in any exercise of devotion or religion, objected to by his or her parents or guardians, but within this limitation pupils shall be allowed to receive such religious instruction as their parents or guardians desire, according to any general regulations provided for the government of Common Schools.
2. With a view to secure the Divine blessing, and to impress upon the pupils the importance of religious duties, and their entire dependence on their Maker, it is recommended that the daily exercises of each Common School be opened and closed by reading a portion of Scripture and by Prayer. The Lord's Prayer alone, or the Forms of Prayer hereto annexed may be used or any other Prayer preferred by the Local Board and Master of each School; but the Lord's Prayer should form part of the opening exercises, and the Ten Commandments be taught to all the pupils, and be repeated at least once a week; but no pupil shall be compelled to be present at these exercises against the wish of his parent or guardian expressed in writing to the Master of the School.
3. The Clergy of any persuasion shall have the right to give religious instruction to the pupils of their own Church in each Common School at least once a week, at the hour of half-past three in the afternoon, on such days as shall be agreed upon by them and the Inspector General.

Teachers and Their Duties (continued from *Rules and Regulations for Common Schools in BC as of 1869*)

1. It is recommended that every Teacher shall, before entering upon his or her duties, obtain from the Local Board and agreement in writing for the payment of the salary proposed to be guaranteed, and such agreement may be in the form hereunto annexed.
2. Each Teacher shall keep a Register of Attendance, a Time Table of Lessons, and also a Visitor's Book.
3. It shall be the duty of the Teacher to maintain proper order and discipline, according to the authorized forms and regulations; punctually to observe the hours for opening and dismissing the School; to see that the exercises of the School are opened and closed each morning and evening, as hereinbefore recommended; and daily exert his best endeavours, by example and precept, to impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles and morals of the Christian Religion, especially those virtues of piety, truth, patriotism, and humanity, which are the basis of law and freedom, and the cement and ornament of society.

4. Such discipline shall be practised as would be exercised by a judicious parent in his family, but corporal punishment is to be avoided, unless it shall appear to the Teacher to be imperatively necessary.
5. For gross misconduct or violent or wilful opposition to his authority the Teacher may suspend a pupil from attending at the School, forthwith informing the parent or guardian of the fact and the reason of it, and communicating the same to the Local Board, but no pupil shall be expelled without the authority of the Local Board.
6. A public examination of the pupils of each School shall be held immediately before each vacation, of which due notice shall be given by the Teacher to the Local Board and the Inspector of the District.
7. All communications from any Teacher must in the first instance be made to the Local Board, who, will then if necessary refer the matter to the Inspector.

Math Worksheet

Name: _____

Doing laundry was one of the most labour intensive chores for a pioneer family. In addition to lighting the stove, scrubbing the clothes and hanging them out to dry, water had to be carried into the house from a nearby well.

Show your work and the answers to the following math problems:

1. The Helmcken family had a father, a mother and four children. On laundry day, there was laundry for how many people?

2. Doing the laundry required three tubs for water. Each tub holds five gallons of water. How many gallons do you need?

3. Water to fill the tubs had to be brought in from the well by bucket. A bucket can only carry one gallon. How many trips did you need to make to the well to fill all three tubs?

4. Each full bucket of water weighs almost 5 kg. How much weight would you lift if you carried all of the buckets from the well by yourself?



Image C-070004 courtesy of BC Archives

Answer Key to Math Worksheet

1. The Helmcken family had a father, a mother and four children. On laundry day, there was laundry for how many people?

$$1 + 1 + 4 = 6$$

1. Doing the laundry required three tubs for water. Each tub holds five gallons of water. How many gallons do you need?

$$3 \times 5 = 15 \text{ or } 5 + 5 + 5 = 15$$

1. Water to fill the tubs had to be brought in from the well by bucket. Each bucket could only carry one gallon. How many trips did you need to make to the well to fill all three tubs?

$$15 \times 1 = 15$$

1. Each full bucket of water weighs almost 5 kg. How much weight would you lift if you carried all of the buckets from the well by yourself?

$$15 \times 5 = 75 \text{ kg}$$

Construction Worksheet

Name: _____

Look closely at the archive image below. This photograph was taken in 1893 during the construction of the Legislative Building in Victoria – in the same neighborhood as Dr. Helmcken’s house.

Make a list below of the technology or equipment being used by the builders.



Image A-02574 courtesy of BC Archives

Teacher Resources

Recommended Links:

Royal BC Museum 'Medical Instrument Activity'

<http://www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/exhibits/tbird-park/main.htm?lang=eng>

BC Education – The Story of the One Room Schoolhouse

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/bc150/schoolhouse/treasures.html>

Books:

Blakey Smith, Dorothy, editor (1975). *The Reminiscences of Doctor John Sebastian Helmcken*. Vancouver: The University of British Columbia Press in co-operation with the Provincial Archives of British Columbia.

Down, Sister Mary Margaret, S.S.A. (1966). *A Century of Service, 1858-1958: A History of the Sisters of Saint Ann and their contribution to education in British Columbia, The Yukon and Alaska*. Victoria: The Sisters of Saint Ann