Living Local: An Exploration of Twentieth-Century Aleza Lake, British Columbia

Grade 12
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Teaching Kit Overview

Dear Educators,

This teaching kit offers educators the unique ability to explore the history and process of Canadian forestry through the study of Aleza Lake, a small community just east of Prince George. Included in this teaching kit is a collection of information about the geography, geology, biology, ecology, history, and practicality of Aleza Lake’s involvement in the burgeoning forest industry of the early twentieth century. The kit itself is meant to be read by the educator, but outlines the information given as lesson plans and activities that can be completed over a short or long term, making it flexible to the needs of your classroom.

Goals

• Learn about the history of the Aleza Lake community during the twentieth century
• Understand the important role of forestry in the lives of people in and around the Aleza Lake (and Prince George) area from the past to the present day
• Familiarize yourself and students with the idea of progression and how the vision of what forestry might look like in the early 1900s has transformed in the past 100 years
• Interpret the many ways that a variety of sciences intersect in the world of forestry
• Introduce students to the basics of historical study

Getting Started

To begin, familiarize yourself with the resources in the kit. There are summaries, maps, photos, timelines, and activities.
Organization

The Teacher’s Resource that you are reading is organized into chapters by themes. Each theme begins with a summary of information or history followed by a variety of information and resources to expand your students’ understanding of the topic. Use the activities at the end of the manual to strengthen your students’ competencies. The themes are meant to be starting points – you know your classroom best and which direction to guide your students.

Chapter 1 Introduction
Chapter 2 The Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station
Chapter 3 The Aleza Lake Community
Chapter 4 Canada and the Great Depression
Chapter 5 Archeology and History – The Connector Trail
Chapter 6 Archives and Research

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Curriculum Relevance: Grade 12 – The Study of Local 20th-Century History

Discover the importance of forestry to our local history through a variety of sources. Learn about how resources have been used and how their value and their use has changed over the last 100 years. Encourage students to use history to look to the future of their community and society.

History 12

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

It is safe to say that the land, people, and industry of Central British Columbia has changed significantly over the course of the twentieth century. What is more difficult to explain is what these changes were, how they happened, and why they matter. This kit will focus on answering the following questions within the geographical context of Aleza Lake, British Columbia, a small community about 60km east of Prince George:

How have places like Aleza Lake and Prince George changed over the last 100 years?

How has the forest industry provoked these changes?

How might forestry look in the future?

How do we find out what our history actually looks like?
Forestry: Planning for the Future

Concerned for the future, the forest industry began looking for innovative ways to continue logging while still producing a **sustainable yield**.

Efforts were made by the Canadian government to invest in research that would help them discover how to achieve sustainable logging. In 1911, the B.C. Forest Service was created, soon followed by the Provincial Research Branch of the government. These government sectors would provide the staff, funding, and legwork for many of the steps made towards the research and implementation of sustainable yield for decades to come.

Comparing today’s P.G. to the P.G. of 1923

Let’s begin by looking at how our present community is different than it was nearly 100 years ago. While Canada’s recorded history is not very old, it is important to recognize that history has progressed very quickly for Canadian communities and peoples. Rapid evolutions of technology and science have propelled small towns into large urban centres built on the value of local resources. However, other communities have become smaller and retained their rural culture. Let’s focus on some of the changes between Prince George and Aleza Lake in 1923 and 2019.
Chapter 2 – The Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station

The early 1900s saw a time of rapid development for Canada’s forest industry. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway made tracks through Prince George in 1913, creating easy access to BC’s interior. The East Line brought traffic through the Upper Fraser area, which was one of the reasons the Aleza Lake Experiment Station site was built where it was. The site was accessible and provided a space that could eventually be reached by the main highway via new roads.

Through the late 1910s, the British Columbia Forest Service (BCFS) implemented a focus on two principal forest regions: the Spruce-Balsam forests of the Central Interior and the Douglas Fir woodlands of the southern coast. In 1913, Bob St. Clair, a member of the BCFS, recommended the creation of two experiment stations at Aleza Lake and Cowichan Lake. Finished by the end of the 1920s, these two experiment stations, though built with the same idea in mind, would interact very little over the course of the next few decades.

The Aleza Lake Experiment Station (ALES) was built first and completed near the beginning of 1924, under the supervision of Percy Barr, a recent graduate of the forest engineer program at UBC. Barr recruited the help of several individuals to outline the site, build the necessary housings, and begin experimental trials in the forest surrounding the Aleza Lake Experiment Station. He used the Experiment Station as a home base for his own research, studying the plants and wildlife in hopes of

Ralph Schmidt, an historian who conducted an in-depth study of the Aleza Lake Research Station in the early 1990s, asserts that the ALES was established with two major priorities:

1. To demonstrate sustained yield forestry at a practical level; and
2. To conduct research, especially of factors influencing natural regeneration after logging.

finding ways to help the forest grow back healthily after it was logged. Using the information he gathered, Barr spearheaded the research done to maintain B.C. forests long-term.

By logging in such a way to ensure they did not run out of trees every year and learning the best methods to help trees grow back after harvest, Barr and his crew looked to develop a methodology called “sustainable yield forestry.” Barr welcomed sixteen other men into his crew in 1925 to assist in his research. These efforts would continue until the Great Depression in the early 1930s, which would hinder the economic abilities of many businesses, including the ALES.

The Young Men’s Forestry Training Program

In 1935, following the implementation of Canada-wide relief camps to combat the economic depression, the Canadian government developed the Young Men’s Forestry Training Program (YMFTP). This program would give young men, and eventually boys in the Youth Forest Training Program (YFTP), the skills needed to work in forestry and maintain jobs in a time when nearly half a million Canadians were seeking work. Funding was given to the B. C. Forest Service, who chose the Aleza Lake Experiment Station site to be turned into one of the YMFTP camps. This brought a surge of new families into the area, as well as funding for the ALES to continue research, though it was not the same as it had been previously. Older trials would be maintained, but new ones would rarely be started. These programs continued until the beginning of World War II, which ended both the Young Men’s and Youth Forestry Training Programs in favour of other ventures.
Trials that had already begun could still be monitored over time, but no new trials would be started for many years. Several of the employees at the ALES also moved on in the early 1930s, and by 1934, the Experiment station was boarded up.

The ALES site, however, was still used after World War II, as research foresters and surveyors used the station as a base for their operations throughout the 1940s. In 1949, resident forester Larry de Grace was hired to reactivate the ALES as a research site, bringing with him several researchers studying variety of topics, such as forest nursery and regeneration, harvesting methods, and scarification.1

As funding for research depleted, however, the B. C. Forest Service was forced to shut down the ALES on December 11th, 1963. On this day, any buildings that could not be relocated elsewhere were burned down to reduce the cost of maintaining them, and a legacy of research history was lost. Few artifacts and

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1 Ralph Schmidt, The Aleza Lake Experiment Station (British Columbia Forest Service, 1993), 13.
records survived and it is rumoured that many of them were only saved by employees who were hoping to keep the memory of the ALES alive. The main station was left abandoned and the only people who interacted with the site were dedicated forest researchers who periodically checked in on the trials that had been conducted in the research forest out of personal interest.

New hope was found in 1992, however, when the funding was found for the site to re-open as the Aleza Lake Research Forest. In conjunction with the University of British Columbia and the University of Northern British Columbia, the Aleza Lake Research Forest Society (ALRFS) was created to continue to maintain the forest itself and the research that had been conducted in the area for nearly a century. Today, the society is taking a vested effort in looking at the historical and scientific properties of the legacy created with the establishment of the ALES and what the future might hold for the ALRFS.
Chapter 3 – The Aleza Lake Community

The community at Aleza Lake existed prior to the development of the Aleza Lake Experiment Station though precise dates are unknown. People began to settle in that area in the early 1900s in anticipation of the Grand Trunk Railway that would be extended between McBride and Prince George in the year 1913 (referred to as the East Line). Its location in the heart of the British Columbia wilderness made Aleza Lake a popular home base for those looking to make their name in forestry.

Aleza Lake is one of three lakes found alongside what is now known as the Upper Fraser Road: Hotchkiss Lake, Aleza Lake, and Hansard Lake. These lakes were connected by little creeks, and the community of Aleza Lake stretched along the roadside so that it accessed all three of these bodies of water.

The Dakelh, or Carrier, people of the area called the lake Tatsibun, meaning "waves lake." The name Aleza was given to the lake and community in 1913 for Grand Trunk Pacific Railway station, named after a Carrier woman who lived and often fished there.

Ethelwynne MacArthur grew up at Aleza lake and recollects her life there through an oral history interview and her memoir, *The way it was: A history of Aleza Lake* (1983). She recalls Mr. Lorne Lyle, who moved to Aleza Lake in 1917 and opened up a general store. Mr. Lyle coached many of the Aleza Lake sports teams, including hockey, softball, and baseball. Lyle also held a position as the postmaster, earning enough money and reputation to help fund the building of a cemetery, a school, and a skating rink.

Newspapers record the presence of several growing organizations and groups in Aleza Lake, such as the Red Cross society, Boy Scouts, sports teams, knitting clubs, and after school groups. Many used the lakes for recreation; many people used rowboats, fished and hunted game, went swimming, and had picnics near the water. Travel from Aleza Lake to Prince George was essential to enjoy the amenities of the larger city. After roads were rebuilt in the 1930s to allow wagons

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and cars to use them, travel became even more popular and residents of Aleza Lake began to rely more heavily on Prince George for things like hospitals, police, and major social events.

Many of the residents of the community spent their time working as loggers, millwrights, researchers, and business owners. Those who did not own businesses often owned land. The many homesteaders who farmed the area often provided teaching, boarding, cooking, and care-taking. The school at Aleza Lake only went up to grade eight with the closest secondary school located in Prince George. A few of the men who worked at the Aleza Lake Experiment Station lived with their families in the community of Aleza Lake, though the majority of them lived on-site at the experiment station.

A job in forestry could pay anywhere from .45 to .75 cents a day, depending on one’s job, and encouraged many to move to Aleza Lake. MacArthur remembers the Northland Spruce Lumber Company as one of the most successful in the immediate area, though there were several other mills opening and closing up and down the East Line. When the Northland Spruce Mill closed in 1927, it caused problems for those whose livelihood were connected to the harvesting of local trees. David Mills, who conducted research on the socio-economic history of Aleza Lake in 2007, states that there were actually quite a few failed mills in the surrounding area, and that, “while the East line could be profitable and was still minimally regulated, many investors lost money or went out of business as a result of inexperience in the Northern B.C. logging/milling environment”.

Trappers, traveling through the community selling furs, as well as homesteaders and entrepreneurs, who kept their businesses going through the 1930s, helped Aleza Lake survive the Great Depression that turned many other small communities into ghost towns. New roads were built to connect Aleza Lake to the main highway in the 1930s. Prior to this, trains were one of the only means of transportation in and out of the community.

When the Aleza Lake Experiment Station became used as a Young Men’s Forestry Training Program site during the Great Depression, many of the people situated there stayed on-site and did not have much contact with the town of Aleza Lake.

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Today, major industry has shifted its focus into larger hubs, such as Prince George, and the smaller communities of Aleza Lake, Giscome, and Willow River have all amalgamated into one large rural community on the outskirts of Prince George. There are still a few residents out at Aleza Lake, and many people who remember living there before people started leaving to move into larger cities.
Chapter 4: Canada and the Great Depression

The Great Depression effected the entire industrialized world. In 1929, when the stock market in the United States crashed, thousands of people lost the money they had invested in businesses and companies that did not survive the crash. Canada, just like many other countries, found that the economic failure meant that many local businesses and government grants that funded employees would no longer be able to do so. As a result, thousands of men and women lost their jobs and families found it extremely difficult to survive. With the decline in employment, the production of important goods also reduced dramatically. The price of basic necessities, like groceries, skyrocketed. Families were forced to purchase basic items with credit, which often resulted in debt that further hindered their ability to get back on their feet during the economic crisis. Throughout the 1930s, the Canadian Government put together several “relief programs” meant to aid citizens in this difficult time.

Aleza Lake and the rest of the Upper Fraser survived this time rather well compared to more urban areas of Canada. The lumber economy stayed fairly steady, though many mills were forced to close down. Still, employment remained available and those who did not make the decision to move away from the area in search of work were able to live in Aleza Lake until the end of the depression by growing their own food. This does not mean that the area was left unaffected by the Great Depression. Local relief programs, such as the Young Men’s Forestry Training Program (YMFTP), were housed in the nearby area for much of the 1930s, bringing new people into Aleza Lake for a short period of time.
Chapter 5: Archaeology and History – The Connector Trail Discovery

In 2017, while studying LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) imagery of the Aleza Lake Research Forest, the ALRF society discovered a long lost trail. It was an ever-so-slight impression on the satellite imaging, but a hike through the forested area confirmed that there was indeed a trail shape present that had not been cleared in quite some time. Deemed the “Connector Trail” for its placement between two other major trails in the research forest, this discovery began a journey into the rejuvenation and continued research about this trail.

Why is this important?

You might be wondering why it matters whether there was a trail through the Aleza Lake Research Forest or not. There are new trails there now, who cares about this old one? Part of the significance, at this point, is working to discover why the trail exists in the first place. Its location is quite near the original site of the Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station, making it a possibility that this trail originates as far back as the 1920s. According to older maps drawn close to that time, however, no trail quite lines up with the one discovered.

Another possibility is that this trail is older than anticipated. The area including and surrounding the Aleza Lake Research Forest has been used by the First Nations peoples for thousands of years, meaning that this trail might have been left behind by Indigenous groups that frequented the area. Regardless of whether this trail was made by early twentieth-century research scientists or travelling indigenous peoples, more research must be done to discover the history of this area, while respecting everyone involved in this land.

What happens now?

Beginning in 2018, the Aleza Lake Research Forest (ALRF) began working with the Lheidli T’enneh people to look at the significance of this trail discovery. This is a long process that involves several steps before the trail can be cleared and opened to the public. First, it was mapped to find where the trail might have started and ended. In 2019, archaeologists, working in conjunction with the ALRF and the Lheidli T’enneh, have been sent out to investigate the importance of this geographical area to various parties and how the trail might have been created.
This is only the beginning. Once initial archeological studies have begun to look at the area, further research can be done regarding the trail itself.

*Below is a map depicting the planned clearing of this historic trail.
Archives and Research

What is an “Archive?”

While many of us may be familiar with museums and libraries for their collections of information and artifacts, we may not know how an “archive” is different.

Archives collect, preserve, and provide access to materials that have historical and cultural value. Usually, archives are based around a geographic region or topical theme. The Northern BC Archives (located at UNBC) collects materials related to the history and culture of Northern British Columbia and UNBC. These materials are organized in a special way to preserve their context to understand how each document relates to another.

Archives do not often collect books or artifacts, unless they are directly related to the other materials collected by the archive. Usually, artifacts go to museums where they can be displayed and books go to libraries where they can be checked out. Archives collect personal and administrative papers, photographs, maps, architectural plans, technical drawings, sound recordings, films and videos, pamphlets, reports, postcards, art, etc. Where libraries collect published books and videos, archives collect original, unique, unpublished materials. Where almost any library would have copies of the Harry Potter books, only one archive would have original, unpublished drafts of those books.

What are Primary Sources?

Archives collect “primary sources.” These are sources that are immediate, first-hand accounts of a topic, from people who had a direct connection to it. These often include newspapers, diaries, journals, interviews, photographs, etc. These are different than “secondary sources.”

What are Secondary Sources?

Secondary sources are also materials that can be used for research, but they do not come from first-hand accounts like primary sources. Secondary sources include books, movies, novels, bibliographies, biographies, reference books, reviews, and articles that were written or created by those who did not directly witness the topics, events, and people they describe.
Activities

1. Analyzing Sources – Excerpt from Ethelwynne MacArthur’s *The Way it Was: the History of Aleza Lake*

LENGTH: 30-45 minutes

**Goals:**

1. To practice recognizing the historical significance of a source.
2. To learn how to evaluate a source as historical evidence.
3. To determine whether the source is a primary or secondary source.

**Materials:**

Students can do this task in groups or as individuals. Copy/print as many copies of the source as is necessary for your class. The questions can be tackled as a large group or as small groups at the discretion of the educator.

**Pre-Activity:**

Introduce your students to the source. Today, they are historians that have been given this history from Ethelwynne MacArthur herself. Knowing her history as a resident of Aleza Lake, the students must read the text and decide whether it is a good source to be studied or not. The “big project” that they are researching as historians is the history of Aleza Lake, making this source potentially very important.

Make sure to have covered the differences between primary and secondary sources discussed in the “Archives and Research” section of this kit.
Activity:

1. Give your students time to read EXCERPT #1 (if you have a class of quick readers, they can do EXCERPT #2 as well). Ten minutes per excerpt is recommended. They cannot make notes at this time, just read the text.

2. Students can discuss as a class or in small groups that the text is about. Give your students another 10 minutes to answer the following questions:
   - *Was the author present for the history they are telling?*
   - *What time period is the author talking about?*

3. Give students another ten minutes to re-read the text, this time using pens, pencils, and/or highlighters to mark the information that they think is important to a project about the history of Aleza Lake.

4. As a class, try to answer the following questions:
   - *Would this be an important text to study the history of the Aleza Lake community?*
   - *How does MacArthur talk about the past? Is she telling a story? Or is it more like a lecture?*
   - *What are some confusing parts of MacArthur’s history? Did everything make sense?*
   - *Was this a primary or secondary source?*

5. If you have enough time, get your class to read EXCERPT #2 the same way they read the first excerpt.

6. Repeat steps 2-4.

7. Compare the two texts. Answer the following questions:
   - *Which text had more details? Why do you think that was?*
   - *What are some things we could check to see if Ethelwynne MacArthur’s story is telling the truth?*
   - *What happened to the bear at the end of EXCERPT #2?*
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- Would that happen today?
- What is different between today and 1920 that makes the story of the bear make sense?

- What do these stories tell us about Ethelwynne MacArthur?
  - How old do you think she is?
  - What do you think was important to her as a person?
    - Did she like animals?
    - Did she have friends?
    - Did she like going to social events?

8. This analysis can be extended by trying to understand the author. Ask your students to write a short story or biography (1-2 pages) about the person that they think Ethelwynne MacArthur was according to her stories.

Note:

A complete copy of The Way it Was: A History of Aleza Lake by Ethelwynne MacArthur is available as part of the Special Collections at the Northern BC Archives, located at UNBC.

A photograph of the pet bear described in Ethelwynne MacArthur’s story is provided below. If you would like to explore this story further, her oral history includes the story of the bear and can be found here:

- Audio: search.nbca.unbc.ca/index.php/2017-6-1-41
- Transcript: search.nbca.unbc.ca/index.php/2017-6-2-41 (click on the page symbol for the full pdf)
The following text is an excerpt from *The Way it Was: the History of Aleza Lake* written by Ethelwynne MacArthur in 1983. MacArthur lived in Aleza Lake for the majority of her life and wrote this history with the intention of sharing it with her family and friends. This history was written long after many of the events she talks about, though she did live through and attend many of them.

EXCERPT #1:

In the very early times the Fraser River was flowing past the future site of the small village of Aleza Lake. Then, by some unknown ground upheaval or by the formation of large sand bars, the Fraser River changed its channel, eventually leaving three lakes in the vicinity of Aleza Lake.

The most westerly lake was very small and was known to the village folk as the Little Lake; sometimes called Hotchkiss Lake. It was named such after the first homesteaders on its shores. This lake was connected by means of a narrow creek to a much larger lake.

The larger lake was one of great beauty and utility. It provided nesting grounds for geese, ducks, fish hawks and especially loons. Their haunting cry could be heard in the early morning and at dusk from May until September. There was plenty of fish in this lake but in the warm summer months their flesh had a musty taste due to the muskeg bottom. Beautiful white water lilies grew along the south shores and, according to Dr. B. G. Griffith of the University of British Columbia, Aleza Lake is one of the few lakes in B. C. to produce such lovely flowers. These lilies are much smaller and more delicate than the common yellow ones. They are pure white and leaves are small. The lilies were a favourite food for the numerous moose feeding on the lakeshore. The north side of this lake had several cranberry bogs which produced ugly, grey berries until the first heavy frost turned them a glorious red. To one and all, this lake was known as Aleza Lake, named for the daughter of an Indian Chief.6

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The natives of the village were very patriotic folk and always celebrated the First of July with a picnic and dance at the store. Everyone, young and old, came and brought a picnic lunch, which was shared by all. Mrs. Williams would make her puff-pastry tarts with homemade pin-cherry jelly and whipped cream - food for the Gods. Then everyone lined up for snapshots. One such picture shows the A. Williams family, the Phillips family, the McDowell family, the J. Miller family, the Hotchkiss’, the Youngs, the Newsome family from Willow River (Mr. Newsome was the storekeeper in Willow River), the two Smith families, Ole Hanson, Bill the Finn, Louis Braaten, Joe Nosick and Lorne Lyle with his pet bear.

One of the village novelties was this pet bear cub. In the spring of 1923, some trappers were coming into town from their trap lines when they met up with a female bear and her tiny male cub. She became so vicious they had to shoot her. The little cub was much too small to care for himself so they brought it to the
village and gave it to Mr. Lyle. He fed it with a bottle and nipple for a time and kept it in a box on the porch. Mr. Bear finally had to have a collar put around his neck and was confined to the back yard, tied on the clothes line so he had the run of the yard. It became a pampered pet and was especially catered to by the Trappers. The east bound train arrived every other day at 2:00pm so one or more of the Trappers would undo the bear’s chain from the clothes line and take him over to meet the train, where they bought him a Dixie cup of ice cream and a bottle or Orange Crush from the newsy on the train. The cub would amuse the train passengers with his antics, begging for more ice cream and putting his tongue way down in the pop bottle to get the last drop. Some days, no one was around to take him to the train, and when that cub heard the train whistle he would run up and down the cloths line whining and crying like a small child. Sometimes he would slip his collar and the call would go out, “The bear is loose, put the children in a safe place”. Children were his one dislike; he must have been jealous of them. The bear spent the winter denned up on one side of the ice house well insulated with sawdust, but when he came out in the spring he was no longer a cute pet, he was a mean bear. He would not stay back in the woods where he was taken many times and finally had to be disposed of.7

2. Analysing Sources – Excerpt from John Revel’s *Devil’s Club, Black Flies, and Snowshoes: A History of Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station 1940s to 1964 (and beyond)*

LENGTH: 45 minutes - 1 hour

Goals:

1. To practice recognizing the historical significance of a source.
2. To learn how to evaluate a source as historical evidence.
3. To determine whether the source is a primary or secondary source.

Materials:

Students can do this task in groups or as individuals. Copy/print as many copies of the source as is necessary for your class. The questions can be tackled as a large group or as small groups at the discretion of the educator.

Pre-Activity:

Introduce your students to the source. Today, they are historians that have been given this history, written by John Revel in 2007. Knowing that he has worked as an RPF (Registered Professional Forester) at the Aleza Lake Experiment Station in the past, students must determine whether his history is useful in their study of the Aleza Lake area. The “big project” that they are researching as historians is the history of Aleza Lake (the community and the experiment station), making this source potentially very important.

Make sure to have covered the differences between primary and secondary sources discussed in the “Archives and Research” section of this kit.

Activity:

1. Give your students time to read EXCERPT #1 (if you have a class of quick readers, they can do EXCERPT #2 as well). Ten minutes per excerpt is recommended. They cannot make notes at this time, just read the text.

2. Students can discuss as a class or in small groups that the text is about. Give your students another 10 minutes to answer the following questions:
• Was the author present for the history they are telling?
• What time period is the author talking about?

3. Give students another ten minutes to re-read the text, this time using pens, pencils, and/or highlighters to mark the information that they think is important to a project about the history of Aleza Lake.

4. As a class, try to answer the following questions:
  • Would this be an important text to study the history of the Aleza Lake community?
  • Would this be a useful text to study the history of the Aleza Lake Experiment Station?
  • How does John Revel talk about the past? Is he telling a story? Or is it more like a lecture?
  • Are there some questionable details in this history? Did everything make sense?
  • Was this a primary or secondary source?

5. If you have enough time, get your class to read EXCERPT #2 the same way they read the first excerpt.

6. Repeat steps 2-4.

7. Compare the two texts. Answer the following questions:
  • Which text had more details? Why do you think that was?
  • What are some things we could check to see if John Revel is telling the truth?
  • What is the powder that Frank Hellenius is talking about in his interview?

8. If you have also done the analysis of Ethelwynne MacArthur’s history, compare the two and discuss with the class how the two histories about the same place are similar and different.
9. On the next page is a map of the area that Frank Hellenius is talking about in his interview. Using his story, ask your students to circle all the places that he visited.

- **How did Frank and his family travel to all of these places? Can you make some guesses?**

- **Frank moved from Victoria to Aleza Lake. How do you think these two places would have been different in the 1950s? Why would they be different?**
  - *You can make a VENN diagram of these two cities to organize the answers your students come up with.*

- **Put yourself in the Hellenius family for a moment. What do you think would be the hardest to adjust to if you had to live in their shoes for a day?**
As part of his history, John Revel conducted interviews with other people that lived/worked at the Aleza Lake Experiment Station between the 1940s and 1970s. He summarized these interviews and included them in the history. Below is one summary that he wrote based on an interview with Frank Hellenius, who lived there as a child.

EXCERPT #1:

I was born in Yellowknife, NTW on January 3, 1944, the son of Rolf and Kathleen Hellenius. My father ran a successful sawmill on Slave River, mainly cutting timber for the mines in Yellowknife.

We moved to Victoria in 1948, where I attended Grade one and had lots of friends and schoolmates. In 1952, my father accepted the position of Station Foreman at the Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station. He went on ahead and our family arrived at Aleza Lake via rail in July 1952. At first, we lived in a small house in the town site of Aleza Lake, later moving in to the vacant Ranger House. The Deputy Ranger’s house was completed in 1953 and we moved in there for the duration of our stay at Aleza Lake.

I attended classes in the two-room school from Grade 2 to Grade 8. My mother was my teacher in Grades 5 to Grade 8. At first, I missed my Victoria friends and was quite lonely but I soon accepted the Aleza Lake lifestyle amid my three brothers. Lawrence and I had girlfriends in Sinclair Mills but that didn’t last. I went to Grade 9 in Prince George and stayed at the dorms. In the summers, I had various jobs with the Department of Highways, Fightner Lumber, etc. I think my first job was fighting fire near Giscome. I helped my dad build the Loup Lake Road to the west line between 1961-1963. We always used more powder than necessary to get a “big bang”. Dad didn’t like to waste powder!8

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8 John Revel, Devil’s Club, Black Flies, and Snowshoes: A History of Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station 1940s to 1964 and Beyond (UNBC Press, 2007), 25.
Unlike the first excerpt, this next section is a summary that John Revel wrote about the closing down of the Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station. He says that it happened in 1965, but other histories mention that this actually happened earlier, in 1962.

EXCERPT #2:

In 1965, the last remaining buildings on Camp Creek were the foreman house and the barn. The foreman house, built in 1927, was purchased by Pat Scully for $75 plus tax. With the help of two heavy D7 cats, it was transported to the Aleza Lake town site and, at a later date put on a pile driven basement. It is now the home of Pat and Betty Scully and is a reminder of the high quality lumber and construction in the early days.  

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9 Revel, Devil’s Club, Black Flies, and Snowshoes, 21.
3. Introductory Inquiry-Based Discussions

Sometimes, asking students to come up with their own questions through discussions of primary sources can be the most useful tool for educators of any age. This is usually done at the beginning of a lesson, to get students thinking about history, but can be done at the end of a lesson as well to summarize some of the lessons learned. Display one or two of the photos provided in this kit to your class and ask some of the following questions:

- **What is the first thing you notice about this photo?**
- **How is it different from photos you might see today?**
- **How is it the same?**
- **Without knowing anything about the people/places in this photo, could you guess who they are/where they are?**
- **Who do you think was taking this photo?**

This exercise can be done with any of the photos provided. If you are doing this after the lesson, come up with your own questions to ask that can extend the inquiry further.
4. Searching for Information?

How do we know about what happened in the past?

What kinds of sources are available to us as historians? There are the many items, books, stories, and other ways that information has been collected over the years. By studying sources, historians can look at what people have said about the past and figure out what happened and how.

**BRAINSTORM** – What types of things can be used as sources?

- Books
- Videos
- Pictures
- Audio (music, recordings)
- Artefacts

Among these sources, the ones that usually stand out are the sources that actually came from the time period you are studying. These are called **primary sources**. If you were studying the life of Pharaoh Tutankhamen in Egypt, which of the following would be a primary source?

a) His personal diary, written while he was alive.

b) A newspaper article someone wrote about him last year.

(The answer is A).

Included in this kit are several clips from oral histories taken over the last two decades. They talk about the different aspects of living and working in Aleza Lake for adults and children.

Listen to the clip “2017.06.13a_CHILDHOOD” with your class then answer the following questions. It includes an excerpt of Mr. Bud Cox remembering what it was like to live as a child at Aleza Lake. Listening twice may be helpful.

a) **When did Mr. Cox first live in Aleza Lake?**

b) **How old was he?**

c) **Did he go to school in Aleza Lake?**
d) What are some other things this clip teaches us about Aleza Lake?

(If you’re stuck for answers, think about how Mr. Cox talks about the population boost that forced the community to build a whole new school to house all its students).
5. Do Some Searching of Your Own

Now that you have had some experience searching for answers through primary and secondary sources, it’s time to see what you can find for yourself.

One of the best places to start a search is with the basics. The scientists, researchers, and foresters of the Aleza Lake Forest Experiment Station were trying to learn as much as they could about the forest so that they could better take care of it in the future.

**Instructions:**

**This activity must be done using a smartphone with a data or internet connection**

Each student should bring a writing utensil and something to write on.

TEACHER: Download the “Seek” app on your smartphone. It will be the one developed by “iNaturalist” in the app store.

Spend 30mins to an hour outdoors with your class using the phone to take pictures of trees, insects, animals, and other aspects of nature. The app uses a complex algorithm to tell you what the genus, and sometimes even species of the item you are looking at. Write your discoveries down secretly.

STUDENTS: For each thing that you take a picture of, get the students to either draw a sketch of it or to write down its basic characteristics.

When you return to the classroom, give the students some time to research what they found on the internet. Did they take down the appropriate information to be able to find the object online and identify its name?

Students get a point for each thing they successfully identify.

This activity can be as big or as small as you want it to be. The important thing is to have fun and get outside.

NOTE: A basic understanding of biology and the way organisms are classified is not required but might be helpful.
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Bibliography


The Mark of Progress, 1959. 2016.5.3.16.1. Northern BC Archives, University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George, BC. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzR2Fuso2z0.

“Work Resumed at Forest Station at Aleza Lake.” Prince George Citizen, May 26, 1927.
The complete digital photograph collection in the Aleza Lake Research Forest Fonds at the Northern BC Archives.
Additional Resources

Aleza Lake Research Forest Field Education Centre:

https://www.aleza.ca/information-and-bookings

The Aleza Field Education Centre, located within the Aleza Lake Research Forest also known as The Learning Forest. The management and operation of the Forest is devoted to education and research with respect to sustainable forest management, silviculture, and forest ecology.

Set atop a hill looking out over the upper Fraser River area to the north, the AFEC is immersed in the quiet of the working forest, offering a true outdoor experience. Designed to facilitate field courses, research and other training events, the AFEC is also perfect for hosting meetings, retreats, training, school field trips, and other related events.

GO Grants:

https://www.hctfeducation.ca/go-grants/

GO Grants provide field trip grants for British Columbia K-12 classes and schools to help get students outdoors to learn about B.C.’s fish, wildlife, habitats, and biodiversity. GO Grants cover transportation, project materials and or program fees to support student learning and connecting in nature.

Northern BC Archives:

https://libguides.unbc.ca/archives/home

The Northern BC Archives & Special Collections acquires, preserves, and provides access to materials of permanent value that relate to:

• The institutional history of UNBC
• The culture and history of Northern British Columbia

The Archives serves research and scholarship by making these records available to researchers, students, faculty, and the general public at no cost.
Appendix