

The Historical Significance of General Sir Isaac Brock: Part 2

by Elizabeth Freeman-Shaw

Suggested grade level: Intermediate/Senior

Suggested time: 2 class periods

Brief Description of the Task

In this lesson students will explore why General Sir Isaac Brock is considered to be historically significant, and wrestle with whether or not he should be.

Historical Thinking Concepts

- Historical Significance
- Use of Evidence (primary and secondary)

Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- participate in an activity that allows them to understand the concept of **historical significance**
- identify the role and **historical significance** of General Sir Isaac Brock in the War of 1812
- review secondary accounts of Isaac Brock to determine the case for significance
- synthesize data into qualities of greatness
- use excerpts from primary sources to determine the validity of historians' conclusions.

Materials

Each student will need copies of all Primary Sources and Worksheets (in the Appendices file).

Prior Knowledge

It would be an asset for students to be familiar with:

1. Earlier events leading up to the declaration of war, key personalities, the political structure of British North America, and the causes of the war.
2. The concept of **historical significance** (See The Historical Thinking Project website, <http://www.historicalthinking.ca/concept/historical-significance>)

Assessment

Students may be evaluated based on the work completed with:

- Worksheet 1 – Decoding Secondary Sources
- Worksheet 2 – Note-taking, Secondary Sources
- Worksheet 3 – Examining Primary Sources

Detailed Lesson Plan

Focus Question: Why is it that even though General Brock was killed in the early hours of the Battle of Queenston Heights and Colonel Roger Sheaffe lead the British forces to victory, Brock is more remembered than Sheaffe?

Part A – Exploring a Controversy

1. Have students read each of the following excerpts and summarize/decode what the author of each is suggesting. From these they should identify the controversy surrounding why Brock is given great prominence in history while Sheaffe is not. Students may use **Worksheet 1 – Decoding Sources** (in the L12 Appendices) to assist with this activity.

Excerpt 1:

“ Brock died in the early hours of the battle. Sheaffe was given command and led his men to victory. He was knighted for that victory, and he replaced Brock as Lieutenant-Governor of the colony, as well as commander of the army in Upper Canada. In his short time in office, Sheaffe instituted

such reforms as guaranteed medical care for wounded veterans, a piece of legislation that remains on the books today."

"It's always puzzled me how Brock became the hero," mused Paul. Stephen* even suggested the Brock Memorial might be renamed to remember Sheaffe's role at Queenston Heights. [*Roger's great-great grandsons Stephen and Paul]*

"Why not change the name of the Brock monument to the Sheaffe and Brock monument?"

Source: A return of arms for Canada's forgotten leader: The story of Roger Hale Sheaffe forever overshadowed by his more popular predecessor, Sir Isaac Brock. *Niagara This Week*, June 21, 2012

<http://www.niagarathisweek.com/community/article/1379189--a-return-of-arms-for-canada-s-forgotten-leader>

Excerpt 2:

"When Brock was killed in a daring direct assault, Sheaffe took command, leading his force from the fort in a wide flanking movement to join with the Indians and a party from Chippawa [sic] under Captain Richard Bullock to attack the American flank on high ground. The invaders were routed and almost 1,000 prisoners were taken, with insignificant British losses. John Beverley Robinson, a militia officer at the time, recalled Sheaffe's conduct in battle as "cool though determined and vigorous." His manoeuvre had been brilliant and on 16 Jan. 1813 he would receive the deserved honour of a baronetcy for his achievement, though in the public's memory Brock was the victor."

Source: Sheaffe, Sir Roger Hale - Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online, <http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?BioId=38304>

Excerpt 3:

"While Brock was certainly an important military figure in Canada, some dispute the lavish attention and praise accorded to him. After all, it could be argued that, at Fort Detroit, he was simply pitted against a mediocre opponent. His victory, in this case, would have owed more to the ineptitude

of the American commander than to any feat of strategic genius. Even the victory of Queenston Heights was not assured until well after he had been killed, although it is difficult to assess the effect that his death had on the morale of the British units present.

Yet if a country gauges its heroes by the way in which it remembers them, then it can truly be said that Sir Isaac Brock occupies a place of prominence in Canada, where a city, a university, countless streets, public buildings and parks have been named in his honour. Historians and military buffs alike wonder what Brock might have accomplished had he not been shot in the prime of his life, like General James Wolfe and Lord Horatio Nelson before him. In the end, his legacy will have been to inspire the inhabitants of a fledgling colony to have confidence in their leaders, confidence in themselves and confidence in their emerging sense of nationhood."

Source: *Quartered in a far-away colony, Isaac Brock would emerge as one of Britain's most ablest and tragic figures*, by Alain Gauthier

<http://www.warof1812.ca/brock.htm>

2. When students have finished completing the worksheet, the teacher should pose the following questions:

- How do we decide what is significant? Who or what is remembered?
- Why are certain people more remembered than others?
- What determines an individuals' historical significance?

If the teacher has not posted the criteria for historical significance in the classroom, students should be able to use prior knowledge developed in Lesson 11 to identify the criteria:

a) Resulted in change

(Deep consequences for many people, many people affected, and the affect/consequences lasted for a long period of time.)

b) Revealing

(The event or individual sheds light on an aspect of the past; helps us understand the past in a new way.)

3. The teacher presents the fact that there is no doubt that Sir Isaac Brock has been identified as a historically significant individual in Canada. (He has a city, university, streets, public buildings, and parks named after him.)
4. The teacher recaps that this prominence is not without some controversy. (He died early in the battle of Queenston Heights and perhaps was not the determining factor in the victory.)
5. Introduce the investigative component of the activity that will involve:
 - a) Reviewing secondary accounts of Isaac Brock to determine what the case for significance was.
 - b) Determining the validity of historians' conclusions using excerpts from primary source documents.
 - c) Completing an organizer to determine the Historical Significance of Brock based on the evidence collected in the activity.

Part B - Examining Secondary Sources

1. Teacher instructs students to read and take notes from secondary overviews of Isaac Brock to establish the case for significance. As they read (individually, or in pairs, or small groups) they should collect data and make jot notes in **Worksheet 2 – Note-taking, Secondary Sources**. This is an organizer of +qualities and - qualities (in Lesson 12 Appendices).
2. Based on the information collected students start to generate some general qualities of greatness for Brock.

Some suggested sites of varying difficulty (Differentiation)

- 1) <http://www.warof1812.ca/brock.htm>
- 2) <http://www.brocku.ca/about/sir-isaac-brock>
- 3) http://www.historica.ca/isaac_brock.php
- 4) <http://www.1812.gc.ca/eng/1317828221939/1317828660198#a1>

5) student textbooks

3. Following the data collection the teacher will review key elements of Brock's accomplishments with the entire class and discuss the broad qualities displayed by Brock (e.g., leadership, relationships with First nations, military skill/strategy, personal qualities).

4. After this discussion the teacher should ask the students to consider which source(s) seem to be the most reliable? Why? Students should be asked to justify their conclusions. (This may be done as an Exit Card to be assessed.)

5. Students should then be directed to examine the differences between the Brock University site (<http://www.brocku.ca/about/sir-isaac-brock>) and the Dictionary of Canadian Biography (http://www.historica.ca/isaac_brock.php). Upon what does the author of the Biography site base his conclusions?

In discussing this, the teacher can review the differences between Primary and Secondary Sources. A comparison might be made between someone telling an account of a school event that he or she did not attend, as opposed to an eyewitness account.

Students should be told that in recounting the past historians rely on evidence (traces of the past and accounts of the past).

Then the students should be told that they will be exploring primary source evidence to see if that evidence can verify the secondary source accounts of Brock's significance.

Part C - Examining Primary Sources

Note: there are 18 Primary Source Excerpts mainly in their original form. Depending on the grade and ability of the students, the teacher should determine the best way to explore and report on these sources. Below is only a suggestion.

1. The teacher will instruct the students that they will be analyzing a variety of primary sources from the War of 1812. When reviewing these primary sources students should focus on:

- How historians made their conclusions (do the primary sources match the conclusions made by historians?)
- Gathering further evidence to determine why Brock is considered significant.

2. In small groups, [or by assigning a pair of students to an excerpt], have students decode a selection of the 18 primary source excerpts provided (L12 Primary Sources file). They may use **Worksheet 3 – Examining Primary Sources** (in L12 Appendices) to help with the recording of their information.

3. In their small groups, students should discuss what they have discovered regarding the task. They should be prepared to share their results and defend their conclusions with the whole class.

Part D: Determining Historical Significance

(For Assessment or Evaluation)

1. Using all the evidence and resources provided, students are given **Worksheet 4 – Historical Significance** (in L12 Appendices) to complete individually.

Based on this, for a deeper assessment students can respond to the prompt in a product suited to students' learning needs (i.e. written, visual, pamphlet, blog post etc):

- Why is General Sir Isaac Brock remembered as one of the most significant participants of the War of 1812?
- They must utilize the Historical Significance criteria on the worksheet. 1

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

Source 1 – On the Defenses of Upper Canada

Major-General Isaac Brock to Sir George Prevost.

York, Upper Canada, Dec. 2 1811.

“Sir,--...The military force which heretofore [had] occupied the frontier posts being so inadequate to their defence, a general opinion obtained [based on the opinion that] that no opposition in the event of hostilities was intended. The late [recent] increase of ammunition and every species of stores, the substitution of a strong regiment and the appointment of a military person to administer the Government, have tended to infuse other sentiments among the most reflecting part of the community, and I feel happy in being able to assure Your Excellency that during my visit last week to Niagara I received the most satisfactory professions of a determination on the part of the principal inhabitants to exert every means in their power in defence of their property and support of the Government. They look with confidence to Your Excellency for such additional aid as may be necessary in conjunction with the militia to repel any hostile attempt against this Province.

... From Amherstburg to Fort Erie, my chief dependence must rest on a naval force for the protection of that extensive coast. But considering the state to which it is reduced, extraordinary exertions and great expense will be required before it can be rendered efficient. At present it only consists of a ship and a small schooner, the latter of a bad construction, old, and in want of many repairs, yet she is the only King's vessel able to navigate Lake Huron, whilst the Americans have a sloop and a fine brig, capable of carrying twelve guns and in perfect readiness for any service. If consequently the garrison of St. Josephs is to be maintained and an attack on Michilimackinac undertaken, it will be expedient to hire or purchase from the merchants as many vessels as may be necessary for the purpose.”

Cruikshank, E. A. (Ed.) (1896-1908). *Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812-1814, 9 Volumes*. (Volume 3, pp. 21-24). Welland, Ontario: Tribune Press.

Source 2 – Reporting at Brock's request on Defenses

Captain A. Gray, Assistant Deputy Quarter Master General, to Sir George Prevost.
York, 29th January, 1812.

Sir,

...On my arrival at Kingston, I inspected the state of the marine and have the honor to communicate the following particulars for Your Excellency's information:

...The Royal George lays alongside the wharf, dismantled and her rigging laid up in the sail loft, and reported to be all in good order and in readiness to refit at the shortest notice. But it is a singular circumstance that they have as yet found no way of mounting: the carronades sent up last summer to arm this and the other vessels on the lakes...

...Little is done to the Moira furtlier than preparing the materials, as they say they wanted orders from Quebec as to lengthening her. . .

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

...The officers serving in this division of the Province are in some instances extremely inefficient, and, in short, totally unfit for the situations they hold, especially the deputy-assistant quartermaster-general, and several naval officers. The former Gen. Brock has it in contemplation to remove to York as soon as Your Excellency has fixed upon a proper person to succeed him...

...General Brock is likewise anxious to get rid of the old Commodore on Lake Erie. This gentleman has likewise been above 50 years in the service, and is 85 years of age...

Cruikshank, E. A. (Ed.) (1896-1908). *Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812-1814, 9 Volumes*. (Volume 3, pp. 35-37). Welland, Ontario: Tribune Press.

Source 3 – Brock's suggestions regarding defense and prospects in the event of war

Major General Brock to Colonel Baynes.

York, February 12, 1812.

Sir, ...

...The measures which I intend to propose are:

1. — A militia supplementary act. Sir George will hear the outlines from Captain Gray.
2. — The suspension of the Habeas Corpus — a copy of the act now enforced in the Lower Province.
3. — An alien law.
4. — The offer of a reward for the better apprehension of deserters.

If I succeed in all this, I shall claim some praise, but I am not without my fears. I shall send you the militia act the moment it passes into a law. The more I consider the new provisions, the more I am satisfied (giving, of course, every proper allowance to the disposition of the people) they are peculiarly calculated to meet the local situation of the country. I have not a musket more than will suffice to arm the active part of the militia from Kingston westward. I have therefore to request that the number of arms may be sent according to the enclosed requisition to the places therein specified on the communication, between Glengarry and Kingston. Every man capable of bearing a musket along the whole of that line ought to be prepared to act...

Cruikshank, E. A. (Ed.) (1896-1908). *Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812-1814, 9 Volumes*. (Volume 3, pp. 38-39). Welland, Ontario: Tribune Press.

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

Source 4

25th February 1812

York U.C.

Major General Brock to Sir George Prevost

Sir,

...The many doubtful characters in the militia made me very anxious to introduce the oath of aligenation (allegiance?) into this bill... And should Your Excellency ultimately determine to promise some of the waste lands of the Crown to such Scotch emigrants as enlist in the Glengarry Regiment, I have no hesitation in recommending in the strongest manner the raising of a Canadian corps upon similar offers, to be hereafter disbanded and distributed among their countrymen in the vicinity of Amherstburg....

... The Americans are at this moment busily engaged in raising six companies of rangers for the express purpose of overawing the Indians... Their intrigues among the different tribes are carried on openly and with the utmost activity, and as no expense is spared it may reasonably be supposed that they do not fail of success. Divisions are thus uninterruptedly sowed among our Indian friends and the minds of many estranged from our interests. Such must inevitably be the consequence of our present inert and neutral proceedings in regard to them.

It ill becomes me to determine how long true policy requires that the restrictions now imposed upon the Indian Department ought to continue but this I will venture to assert that each day the officers are restrained from interfering in the concerns of the Indians, each time they advise peace and withhold the accustomed supply of ammunition, their influence will diminish, till at length they lose it altogether. It will then become a question whether that country can be maintained...

Cruikshank, E. A. (Ed.) (1896-1908). *Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812-1814, 9 Volumes*. (Volume 3, pp. 43-45). Welland, Ontario: Tribune Press.

Source 5

22 April 1812

York

Major General Brock to Sir George Prevost

Sir,

...I beg leave to assure Your Excellency that I receive with no small degree of pride the praise bestowed on my endeavours to improve the militia system of this Province...I have...already commenced to give it operation, and make not the least doubt that a sufficient number will be found ready to volunteer to complete the flank companies, and I beg leave to parade (train) the flank companies six times in each month...These companies...will be composed of the best description of inhabitants...According to my present arrangements, the number embodied will not exceed 700, and when the companies are completed throughout the provinces they must be calculated at 1,800...

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

...I have likewise to request that such a portion of clothing as Your Excellency can conveniently spare...may be forwarded to enable me to clothe such companies as are the most likely to be called upon duty...

Cruikshank, E. A. (Ed.) (1896-1908). *Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812-1814, 9 Volumes*. (Volume 3, pp. 56-57). Welland, Ontario: Tribune Press.

Source 6

15th May 1812
York U.C.
Major General Brock to Sir George Prevost

Sir,

...I returned three days ago from an excursion to Fort Erie, the Grand River, where the Indians of the Six Nations are settled . . . Every gentleman with whom I had an opportunity of conversing assured me that an exceeding good disposition prevailed among the people. The flank companies in the districts in which they have been established were instantly completed with volunteers, and, indeed, an almost unanimous disposition to serve is daily manifested. I shall proceed to extend this system now that I have ascertained the people are so well disposed, but my means are very limited...

Cruikshank, E. A. (Ed.) (1896-1908). *Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812-1814, 9 Volumes*. (Volume 3, pp. 56-57). Welland, Ontario: Tribune Press.

Source 7 – On public moral and preparedness of Militia—

25th May 1812
Brock to Liverpool
York, Upper Canada

My Lord,

I have much Satisfaction in being able, on my return from an excursion thro' different parts of this Province, to report to Your Lordship, that I found every where a good disposition, and a high degree of industry among the Inhabitants.—A very general determination has been manifested by all ranks, to defend the Province, in the event of hostilities with the United States, and every Gentleman, whose judgment and Loyalty can be relied on, assures me, that the people taken in a wide sense, are as sincere, as they are ardent in their professions.—The Flank Companies* formed under the Supplementary Militia Act passed last Session of the Provincial Parliament, were readily completed with Volunteers of the best description...

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

This Force amounts to about Two Thousand, and could be augmented (increased), I am confident, to treble that number, had I sufficiency (enough) Arms for them-- ...I have thought it my duty, to make application to the Governor in Chief for a fresh supply of Arms and Accoutrements, and his Excellency has been pleased to promise to attend to my wishes the moment he possesses the means.

The Militia who are preparing for service, receive no sort of compensation either in pay or Clothing—This consideration, the handsome manner they volunteered...

I could not but view a question, the decision of which may at a future period dispose of a large portion of the Waste Land of the Crown, as proper to be submitted to the consideration of His Majesty's Executive Council,...in the expediency of humbly submitting His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, for his gracious permission to act upon these principles stated in my representation (accompanying documents) [to award this land to the Militia]...

I made it my business to visit lately, the (Indians of the) Six Nations, who are settled on the Grand River—They appear well disposed to join His Majesty's Troops, whenever called upon.—

(*Flank Companies were the extract divisions of veteran soldiers added to the Militia with 6 days of training per month.)

Wood, William Charles Henry. (Ed.) (1920). *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*. 3 vols. Toronto: The Champlain Society, pp. 1-305-306.

Source 8

26 July, 1812
Fort George
Brock to Sir George Prevost

“Sir—Since my despatch to Your Excellency of the 20th instant (July) I have received information of the enemy having made frequent and extensive inroads from Sandwich up the River Thames...

Everything shall be done in my power to overcome the difficulties(shortage of militia and declared neutrality of First Nations of Grand) by which I am surrounded, but without strong reinforcements I fear the country cannot be roused to make exertions equal, without support, to meet the present crisis.

The actual invasion of the Province has compelled me to recall that portion of the militia whom I permitted to return home and work at harvest. I am prepared to hear much discontent in consequence...That it cannot be maintained with its present force is very obvious, and unless the enemy be driven from Sandwich it will be impossible to avert much longer than impending ruin of the country...

I herewith have the honor to transmit two letters...the second from Mr. Dickson, a gentleman every way capable of forming a correct judgment of the actual state of the Indians” [Brocks intelligence]

Cruikshank, E.A. (Ed.) (1912). *Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada and the Surrender of Detroit, 1812*. Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, pp. 144-146.

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Source 9

29th July 1812
York
Major General Brock to Colonel Baynes

Dear Colonel—

“...My situation is most critical, not from anything the enemy can do, but for the disposition of the people—the population, believe me, is essentially bad—a full belief possesses them all that this Province must inevitably succumb—this prepossession is fatal to every exertion. Legislators, magistrates, militia officers, all have imbibed the idea, and are so sluggish and indifferent in their respective office...

What a change an additional regiment would make in this part of the Province. Most of the people have lost all confidence. I, however, speak loud and look big...”

Cruikshank, E.A. (Ed.) (1912). *Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada and the Surrender of Detroit, 1812*. Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, pp. 152-153

Source 10

29th August 1812
Brock to Liverpool
York, Upper Canada

On Tecumseh—

“Among the Indians whom I found at Amhestburg, and who had arrived from distant parts of the country, I found some extraordinary characters. He who attracted most of my attention was a Shawnee chief, Tecumset (sic), brother of the Prophet, who for the last two years has carried on contrary to our remonstrance [against our protests]an active warfare against the United States—a more sagacious or a more gallant Warrior does not I believe exist. He was the admiration of every one who conversed with him...”

With reference to the conditions of First Nations owing to the disruption in merchant trading in the interior—

“The consequence has been fatal to many—Deprived of ammunition the poor *First Nations* [Indian] was unable to provide the necessary quantity of food or cover his nakedness with the skins of animals...Should hostilities recommence I much fear the influence the British possess over them will be found diminished: no effort however of mine shall be wanting to keep them attached to our cause—If the condition of this people could be considered in any future negotiation for peace it would attach them to us for ever.”

Wood, William Charles Henry. (Ed.) (1920). *Select British Documents of the Canadian War of 1812*. 3 vols. Toronto: The Champlain Society, pp. 1-508-509.

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

Source 11

7th September 1812

Major General Isaac Brock to Sir George Prevost
Fort George

Sir,-- On my arrival here yesterday morning I found that intimation had been received by Major General Sheaffe to renew hostilities at noon tomorrow...His field artillery is numerous, and I have reason to believe heavy ordnance has been considerably increased....I expect an attack almost immediately. ..We stand greatly in need of officers, men, and heavy ordnance...We now have 300 Indians on the ground and two hundred more are expected to-morrow...They may serve to intimidate, otherwise I expect no essential service from this ...degenerate race.

Cruikshank, E.A. (Ed.) (1912). *Documents Relating to the Invasion of Canada and the Surrender of Detroit, 1812*. Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, pp 242-243

Source 12

Concern over Defenses of Quebec

Tupper recounts:

“On the 17th July, 1807, in consequence of an expected rupture between England and the United States, Colonel Brock addressed a letter to Mr. President Dunn, in which he said that the number of militia armed and instructed in the province did not exceed 300, while he thought that as many thousands could easily, and with perfect safety, be formed into corps; and that Quebec, the only military post in the country, was not in a condition to make much defence against an active enemy, as the walls on the western side were old and decayed, and could not possibly sustain a continued heavy fire. He added, that he wished to throw up such works as would remedy this glaring defect; but as the garrison was totally inadequate to such an undertaking, he required from 600 to 1,000 men every day for six weeks or two months, besides a vast number of carts, &c., to complete the necessary defences of the citadel.”

Tupper, Ferdinand Brock Esq. (Ed.) (1847). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* Second. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., pp. 60-61.

Source 13 – On the conditions after reporting to Niagara

Major-General Brock to Lieut.-General Sir G. Prevost, Bart., at Quebec_.

YORK, December 2, 1811.

“The military force which heretofore occupied the frontier posts being so inadequate to their defence, a general opinion prevailed that no opposition, in the event of hostilities, was intended. The late increase of ammunition and every species of stores, the substitution of a strong regiment, and the appointment of a military person to administer the government,

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have tended to infuse other sentiments among the most reflecting part of the community; and I feel happy in being able to assure your excellency, that during my visit last week at Niagara, I received the most satisfactory professions of a determination on the part of the principal inhabitants to exert every means in their power in the defence of their property and support of the government. They look with confidence to your excellency for such additional aid as may be necessary, in conjunction with the militia, to repel any hostile attempt against this province.”

On Morale

“I shall beg leave to refer your excellency to the communications of Lieut.-Governor Gore with Sir James Craig, for a correct view of the temper and composition of the militia and Indians. Although perfectly aware of the number of improper characters who have obtained extensive possessions, and whose principles diffuse a spirit of insubordination very adverse to all military institutions, I am however well assured that a large majority would prove faithful. It is certain that the best policy to be pursued, should future circumstances call for active preparations, will be to act with the utmost liberality, and as if no mistrust existed; for, unless the inhabitants give an active and efficient aid, it will be utterly impossible for the very limited number of the military, who are likely to be employed, to preserve the province.”

On the state of the naval force

“From Amherstburg to Fort Erie, my chief dependance must rest on a naval force for the protection of that extensive coast; but, considering the state to which it is reduced, extraordinary exertions and great expense will be required before it can be rendered efficient. At present, it consists only of a ship and a small schooner--the latter of a bad construction, old, and in want of many repairs; yet she is the only king's vessel able to navigate Lake Huron, whilst the Americans have a sloop, and a fine brig capable of carrying twelve guns, both in perfect readiness for any service. If, consequently, the garrison of St. Joseph's is to be maintained, and an attack on Michilimackinack undertaken, it will be expedient to hire, or purchase from the merchants, as many vessels as may be necessary for the purpose. The Americans can resort to the same means, and the construction and number of their vessels for trade will give them great advantage: besides, their small craft, or boats, in which troops could be easily transported, exceed ours considerably; indeed, we have very few of that description. I therefore leave it to your excellency's superior judgment to determine whether a sufficient number of gun-boats for both lakes, so constructed as to draw little water, ought not be added to our means of offence and defence. It is worthy of remark, that the only American national vessel on Lake Ontario, built two years ago, and now lying in Sackett's harbour, has remained without seamen until within the last fortnight, when the officers began to enter men as fast as possible.”

Tupper, Ferdinand Brock Esq. (Ed.) (1847). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* Second. London: Simpikin, Marshall & Co., pp. 123-127.

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

Source 14

Glegg [Aide de camp of Brock] recounting the meeting with Tecumseh at Detroit:

Captain Glegg, the aide-de-camp, being present, had an opportunity of closely observing the traits of that extraordinary man, and we are indebted to him for the following graphic particulars: "Tecumseh's appearance was very prepossessing; his figure light and finely proportioned; his age I imagined to be about five and thirty; in height, five feet nine or ten inches; his complexion, light copper; countenance, oval, with bright hazle (sic) eyes, beaming cheerfulness, energy, and decision. Three small silver crowns, or coronets, were suspended from the lower cartilage of his aquiline nose; and a large silver medallion of George the Third, which I believe his ancestor had received from Lord Dorchester, when governor-general of Canada, was attached to a mixed coloured wampum string, and hung round his neck. His dress consisted of a plain, neat uniform, tanned deer skin jacket, with long trousers of the same material, the seams of both being covered with neatly cut fringe; and he had on his feet leather Mocassins (sic), much ornamented with work made from the dyed quills of the porcupine.

The first and usual salutation of shaking hands being over, an allusion was made to the late firing of musketry, and Tecumseh at once approved of the reason given by Major-General Brock for its discontinuance. It being late, the parties soon separated, with an understanding that a council would be held the following morning. This accordingly took place, and was attended by about a thousand Indians, whose equipment generally might be considered very imposing. The council was opened by General Brock, who informed the Indians that he was ordered by their great father to come to their assistance, and, with their aid, to drive the Americans from Fort Detroit. His speech was highly applauded, and Tecumseh was unanimously called upon to speak in reply. He commenced with expressions of joy, that their father beyond the great salt lake (meaning the king of England) had at length awoke from his long sleep, and permitted his warriors to come to the assistance of his red children, who had never ceased to remain steady in their friendship, and were now all ready to shed their last drop of blood in their great father's service. After some speeches from other chiefs, and replies thereto, the council broke up.

General Brock, having quickly discovered the superior sagacity and intrepidity of Tecumseh, and his influence over the Indians, and not deeming it prudent to develop before so mixed an assemblage the views which were at that moment uppermost in his thoughts, and intended to be carried so quickly into execution, directed Colonel Elliott to inform this Shawanee chief that he wished to see him, accompanied by a few of the oldest chiefs, at Colonel Elliott's quarters. There the general, through the medium of interpreters, communicated his views, and explained the manner in which he intended to carry into execution his operations against Fort Detroit. The chiefs listened with the most apparent eagerness, and expressed their unanimous assent to the proposed plan, assuring General Brock that their co-operation, as pointed out, might be depended on. On General Brock asking whether the Shawanee Indians could be induced to refrain from drinking spirits, Tecumseh assured him that his warriors might be relied on, adding, that before leaving their country on the Wabash river, they had promised him not to taste that pernicious liquor until they had humbled the "big knives," meaning the Americans. In reply to this assurance, General Brock briefly said: 'If this resolution be persevered in, you must conquer.'

Tupper, Ferdinand Brock Esq. (Ed.) (1847). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* Second. London: Simpikin, Marshall & Co., pp. 243-244.

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

Source 15

On Tecumseh in Tupper

Major-General Brock remarked:

Among the Indians whom I found at Amherstburg, and who had arrived from distant parts of the country, there were some extraordinary characters. He who most attracted my attention was a Shawanee chief, Tecumseh, the brother of the prophet, who for the two last years has carried on, contrary to our remonstrances, an active war against the United States. A more sagacious or a more gallant warrior does not, I believe, exist. He was the admiration of every one who conversed with him. From a life of dissipation he has not only become in every respect abstemious, but he has likewise prevailed on all his nation, and many of the other tribes, to follow his example."

Previously to crossing over to Detroit, Major-General Brock inquired of Tecumseh what sort of a country he should have to pass through in the event of his proceeding further. Tecumseh, taking a roll of elm bark, and extending it on the ground, drew forth his scalping knife, and with the point presently edged upon the back a plan of the country, its hills, woods, rivers, morasses, and roads – a plan which, if not as neat, was fully as intelligible as if a surveyor had prepared it. Pleased with this unexpected talent in Tecumseh, with his defeat of the Americans near Brownstown, and with his having, by his characteristic boldness, induced the Indians, not of his own tribe, to cross the river prior to the embarkation of the white troops, Major-General Brock, soon after Detroit was surrendered, took off his sash and publicly placed it round the body of the chief.

Tecumseh received the honor with evident gratification, but was the next day seen without the sash. The British general, fearing that something had displeased the Indian, sent his interpreter for an explanation. Tecumseh told him, that not wishing to wear such a mark of distinction when an older, and, as he said, an abler warrior than himself was present, he had transferred the sash to the Wyandot chief, Roundhead.

Tupper, Ferdinand Brock Esq. (Ed.) (1847). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* Second. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., pp. 253-254.

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

Source 16

Brock on events at Detroit-intelligence of American & Hull's intentions leads to action

Major-General Brock to his Brothers._

LAKE ONTARIO, September 3, 1812.

You will have heard of the complete success which attended the efforts I directed against Detroit. I have received so many letters from people whose opinion I value, expressive of their admiration of the exploit, that I begin to attach to it more importance than I was at first inclined. Should the affair be viewed in England in the light it is here, I cannot fail of meeting reward, and escaping the horror of being placed high on a shelf, never to be taken down. Some say that nothing could be more desperate than the measure; but I answer, that the state of the province admitted of nothing but desperate remedies. I got possession of the letters my antagonist [Hull] addressed to the secretary at war, and also of the sentiments which hundreds of his army uttered to their friends. Confidence in the general was gone, and evident despondency prevailed throughout. I have succeeded beyond expectation. I crossed the river, contrary to the opinion of Colonel Proctor,----, &c.; it is, therefore, no wonder that envy should attribute to good fortune what, in justice to my own discernment, I must say, proceeded from a cool calculation of the _pours_ and _contres_.

Tupper, Ferdinand Brock Esq. (Ed.) (1847). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* Second. London: Simpikin, Marshall & Co., p. 284.

Source 17

Brock's restraint at Niagara-following Prevost's orders

Major-General Brock to Sir George Prevost_.

FORT GEORGE, September 18, 1812.

I have been honored with your excellency's dispatch, dated the 7th instant. I have implicitly followed your excellency's instructions, and abstained, under great temptation and provocation, from every act of hostility. The information received from a deserter, and which I had the honor to detail in my last, is far from correct, and, where credit is to be given, the facts apply solely to the regular force. The militia, being selected from the most violent democrats, are generally inclined to invade this province--provisions are in tolerable plenty--the only complaint arises from a want of vegetables. It is currently reported that the enemy's force is to be increased to 7,000, and that on their arrival an attack is immediately to be made. I am convinced the militia would not keep together in their present situation without such a prospect, nor do I think the attempt can be long deferred. Sickness prevails in some degree along the line, but principally at Black Rock. The flank companies of the royal Newfoundland have joined me. A sergeant and twenty-five rank and file of the Veterans arrived at the same time, whom I propose sending to Michilimakinack.

The Indians were likewise looking to us for assistance: they heard of the armistice with every mark of jealousy, and, had we refused joining them in the expedition, it is impossible to calculate the consequences. I have already been asked to pledge my word that England would

Lesson 12, Primary Sources

enter into no negotiation in which their interests were not included, and, could they be brought to imagine that we should desert them, the consequences must be fatal.

Tupper, Ferdinand Brock Esq. (Ed.) (1847). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* Second. London: Simpikin, Marshall & Co., p. 314-315.

Source 18

Personal Letter to Brother commenting on similar topics to Prevost

Major-General Brock to his brother Savery_.

FORT GEORGE, September 18, 1812.

You doubtless feel much anxiety on my account. I am really placed in a most awkward predicament. If I get through my present difficulties with tolerable success, I cannot but obtain praise. But I have already surmounted difficulties of infinitely greater magnitude than any within my view. Were the Americans of one mind, the opposition I could make would be unavailing; but I am not without hope that their divisions may be the saving of this province. A river of about 500 yards broad divides the troops. My instructions oblige me to adopt defensive measures, and I have evinced greater forbearance than was ever practised on any former occasion. It is thought that, without the aid of the sword, the American people may be brought to a due sense of their own interests. I firmly believe I could at this moment sweep everything before me between Fort Niagara and Buffalo--but my success would be transient.

Tupper, Ferdinand Brock Esq. (Ed.) (1847). *The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B.* Second. London: Simpikin, Marshall & Co., p. 315-316.

Lesson 12, Appendices

Worksheet 1 - Decoding Sources

Source	What this source tells me	Significance for understanding of topic

Lesson 12, Appendices

Worksheet 2 – Note-taking Secondary Sources

Source (Primary/Secondary)	+ qualities (evidence)	- qualities (evidence)	Criteria I might consider
Textbook			
http://www.warof1812.ca/brock.htm Isaac Brock. The War of 1812 Website			
http://www.brocku.ca/about/sir-isaac-brock Sir Isaac Brock, The Hero of Upper Canada. Brock University			
http://www.historica.ca/isaac_brock.php Isaac Brock, Saviour of Canada. Historica			
http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?id_nbr=2288 Isaac Brock. Dictionary of Canadian Biography			

Lesson 12, Appendices

Worksheet 3 - Examining Primary Sources

Source	What this source tells me: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ About the events✓ About Brock✓ About Others	Relates to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Leadership✓ Military Skills/Strategy✓ Relationship with First Nations✓ Personal Qualities

Lesson 12, Appendices

Worksheet 4 – Historical Significance

Primary or secondary source (page numbers, if relevant):		
Event or person (or people) that is historically significant in this source:		
Brief description:		
Significance Criteria In what ways is this event or person historically significant?	Does it apply? (Y/N)	In what way does this event or person meet the criteria?
Resulting in Change		
Profundity: How were people affected by the event or person?		
Quantity: How many people’s lives were affected?		
Durability: How long lasting were the changes?		
Revealing How does this event or person help us to understand the past?		
Resonant or Relevant How does this event or person shed light on issues or problems that concern us?		
Of what larger story or argument might this event or person be a part?		
How might the historical significance of this event or person change over time?		