

CANADA: DAY 1

- First Steps
- First Impressions
- First Experiences as a Newcomer

Experience a newcomer's *Day 1* in Canada through stories, archival images and artworks



Supported by



RBC Foundation
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Produced by



Canadian Museum of
Immigration at Pier 21
Musée canadien de
l'immigration du Quai 21

Canada

Background information for teachers of adult English language learners

Canada: Day 1 is the inaugural travelling exhibition produced by the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. This exhibition, through the voices of immigrants, brings to light the similarities and differences, the ups and the downs, of the experiences of one's first day in Canada.

Canada: Day 1 is presented through the following themes:

Transitions, Arrival, Encounters, Finding Your Way and Reflections.

The exhibition begins with **Transitions**. This section includes a brief introduction to the topic of diverse experiences of immigrating to Canada and presents a short video montage representing arrival to Canada. This video helps set the tone for the exhibit. The introduction serves to connect the visitor to the content right away. We want the visitor to think of their own life experiences and compare or contrast them to the messages in the exhibit.

In the next section, **Arrival**, the acts of leaving one's country and arriving in Canada are explored by focusing on what people packed for their trip and what they did not take. These items can be as tangible as dish detergent and books, or as intangible as family history and traditions. Telling the story of what people brought with them to Canada would not be complete without also focusing on what people left behind. The empty case in this section, along with Deanna Bowen's art piece, "Sum of the parts: what can be named" have been placed in this exhibit to encourage the visitor to consider what is left behind when someone immigrates to Canada. Sometimes it is a physical object, other times it is an intangible piece of personal identity.

Listening stations, where visitors can hear immigrants telling their own stories, reinforce the personal, emotional and authentic nature of these experiences. This section also focuses on the people allowed to immigrate and those who were prevented from immigrating to Canada. In this space, exclusionary policies based on "race," religion, ethnicity, disability, political ideals and geographic origin are

introduced. To learn more about exclusionary immigration policies, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions section of this document.

The next section, **Encounters**, highlights the experiences of meeting new people, encountering different authorities and strange landscapes. The listening stations in this section focus on similar themes of first interactions with people, weather, authority and landscapes. “I Scream Minjihee” the art piece by Jihee Min, is presented in this section.

In **Finding Your Way**, the challenges that new immigrants and refugees face as they attempt to navigate their way in Canada are presented to visitors. Often newcomers experience different levels of culture shock, while some struggle to learn a new language and customs. Getting your bearings, settling in, finding supports, finding a job and learning to navigate the social systems of Canada can be overwhelming, exhausting and exciting. The banners presented in this section of the exhibition, and the ways that visitors need to navigate around them, are symbolic of a newcomer navigating to find their way in Canada.

Finally, **Reflections** is where visitors get to share their personal experiences with immigration. Whether they immigrated themselves or have experiences with others’ immigration journeys, we invite visitors to contribute their reflections by drawing a picture or writing a story or poem –however they feel comfortable sharing –and placing those contributions in the suitcases provided. They are also encouraged to look in the suitcases to see what other people have contributed.

How can your students share their stories?

All people interested in sharing their story can contribute by filling out the online Story Form found on the Museum’s website (www.pier21.ca/share).

Is there a deadline by which people should share their stories?

There is no deadline for you to share stories with the Museum. The Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 will always be collecting immigration stories and the online Story Form will always be available.

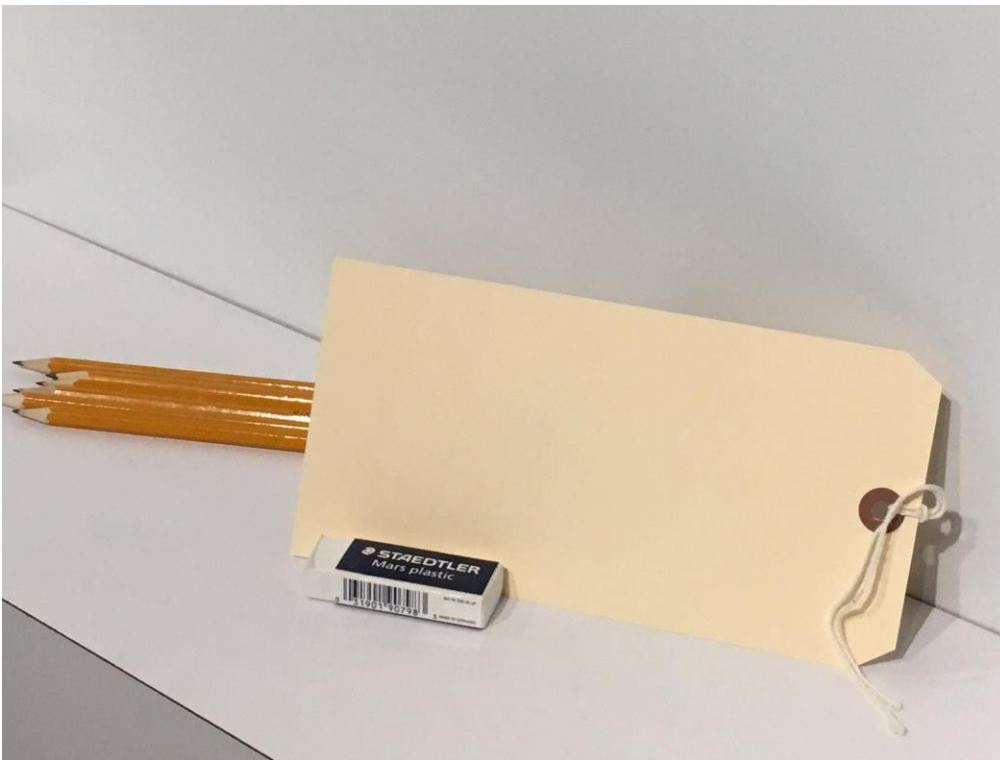
What should they include?

Recording the journey and life experiences of immigrants to Canada is an important part of illustrating the immigration themes that the Museum explores. Anything that your visitors can tell us about their immigration experience will be of great interest to the Museum.

Your students can also share their thoughts and experiences right in the exhibit.

In the area where the suitcase artifacts are displayed are some baggage tags, along with pencils. Visitors are invited to join the conversation. Students can share their thoughts and attach them to a suitcase so others can read them.

“If you immigrated, what were your first experiences in Canada?”



FAQs about the Canada: Day 1 exhibit

Where is the exhibit?

The exhibit is located in the Alberta Legislative Assembly Visitor Centre, which is close to the Legislative Assembly. It is in the Borealis Gallery.

You can find out more information here:

<http://www.assembly.ab.ca/visitorcentre/index.html>

How much does it cost?

The Canada: Day 1 exhibit is free.

Do we have to book a tour to bring our groups of adult learners?

Groups of 10 or more, please contact: 780.427.7362.

What times is the exhibit open?

You can find all the information about the times at the above link.

Summer Hours: June 1 to August 31

Monday to Wednesday and Friday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thursday: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Weekends and Holidays: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Winter Hours: September 1 to May 31

Monday to Wednesday and Friday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thursday: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Weekends and Holidays: noon to 5 p.m.

Closed

Christmas Day, New Year's Day and Good Friday

How long does the exhibit run?

Canada: Day 1 is a travelling exhibit and is in Edmonton at the Visitor Centre until December 4th.

Are there any learning resources to support teachers of adult English language learners who are planning to visit the Canada Day one exhibit?

Yes. There are Lesson Packs for teachers to use with their adult English language learners. The materials are loosely organized into three levels of complexity: Canadian Language Benchmarks levels 1-2, 3-4, and 5-6.

Are there any other accompanying community events connected to the Canada: Day 1 exhibit?

Yes!

On September 24th there will be a community event, *Canada: Day 1* Open House. It will run from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm. All are welcome. There will be some entertainment, a family-friendly game that people can take part in, and light refreshments (coffee, tea, cookies).

Are there any other tours or exhibits I can take my learners to while we are visiting the Canada: Day 1 exhibit?

Of course! You can book a tour of the Alberta Legislative Assembly. It is free and you can book it by calling **780-427-7362** for further information. There are lots of accompanying materials available for these tours at four levels: CLB 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8. You can access them here:

<http://www.assembly.ab.ca/visitor/teachers/ELL.htm>