

Thinking Historically about Leisure and Park Use in Toronto' High Park by examining historical photographs

A brief introduction to the Big 6 Historical Thinking Concepts

The new curriculum encourages teachers to facilitate student's learning and use of 6 Historical Thinking Concepts (Seixas and Morton, 2013). These concepts: **Evidence, Historical Significance, Cause and Consequence, Continuity and Change, Historical Perspectives and Ethical Dimension** (outlined on the <http://historicalthinking.ca> website), each have suggested *Guideposts* which are in fact big ideas related to each concept that give us a "way-in" to the historian's way of thinking. The *concepts* themselves can only be understood with historical content and can be seen as **strategies that historians use in response to 6 key historical problems**.

Context: There are many photographs of people doing leisure activities in High Park over the course of the 20th century, as well as photographs of the changing use of the land in the park space. Some of these photographs are housed in the Toronto Archives and others are housed on a Facebook Group called Vintage Toronto <https://www.facebook.com/VintageToronto>

Purpose of the activity: To do some of the historical thinking, using the guideposts of the Big 6 historical thinking concepts while using primary source photographs of various uses of High Park as the content focus.

Materials:

- A series of photographs from a variety of different eras
- Big 6 Dice (see template). I created this dice template during the Historical Thinking Summer Institute in July 2013 that was led by Dr. Peter Seixas in Toronto. The Dice is to be used to create a game (of change of sorts) in having students work with the Historical Thinking Concepts.
- A copy of the Guideposts for Historical Thinking

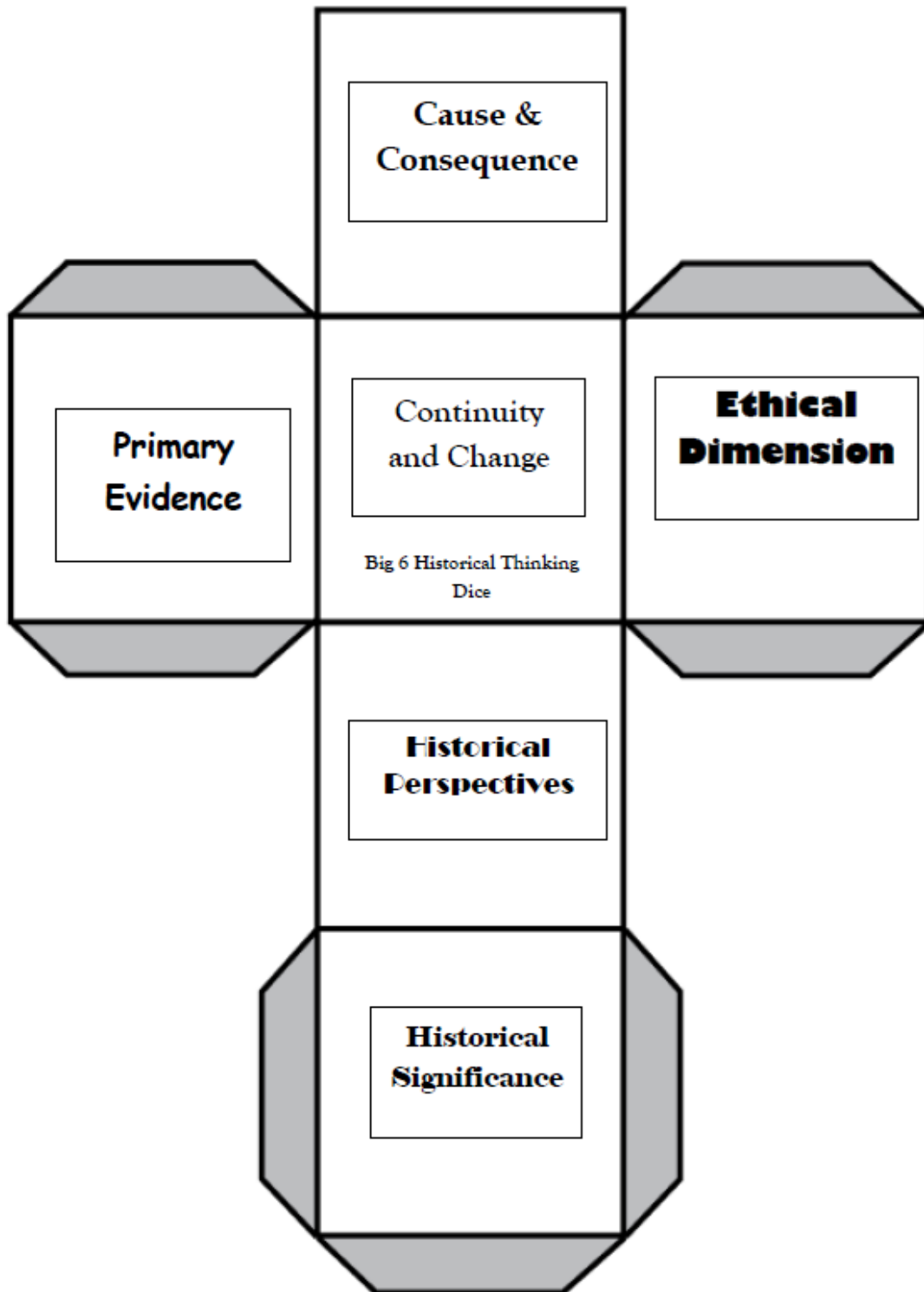
Task:

- Each group of participants is to be given a series of primary photographs (3 to 5) complete with captions and dates.
- Each group is then to roll the dice. Whichever side the dice lands on will determine the historical thinking concept focus of their discussion and analysis.
 - Ex. Cause and Consequence, Continuity and Change etc.
- Using the suggested Guideposts provided, each group is to interpret and analyze the photographs in order to gain understanding of the leisure activities that took place in the park and/or to understanding the different ways that the landscape and spaces in the park have been used.
- Time permitting, each group will share their analysis of one of their photographs, while connecting it to one of the Historical Thinking Concepts

Created by Katy Whitfield, Canadian and World history teacher at Vaughan Road Academy, Toronto District School Board, and Graduate Student in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at OISE-UT. E-mail: katy.whitfield@sympatico.ca

"BIG SIX" DICE

Created by Katy Whitfield Historical Thinking Summer Institute, July, 2013



PRIMARY SOURCE PHOTOGRAPHS OF PEOPLE USING DIFFERENT SPACES IN HIGH PARK FOR LEISURE AND LEARNING



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 468A

Source A:
Group of
snowshoers
on horse-
drawn
sleigh - [ca.
1920]



Source B:
Courtesy
Toronto Public
Library --
Forest School,
High Park. -
1922

Source C: Courtesy Toronto Public Library -- High Park 1907



Source D: Courtesy Toronto Public Library -- High Park 1923



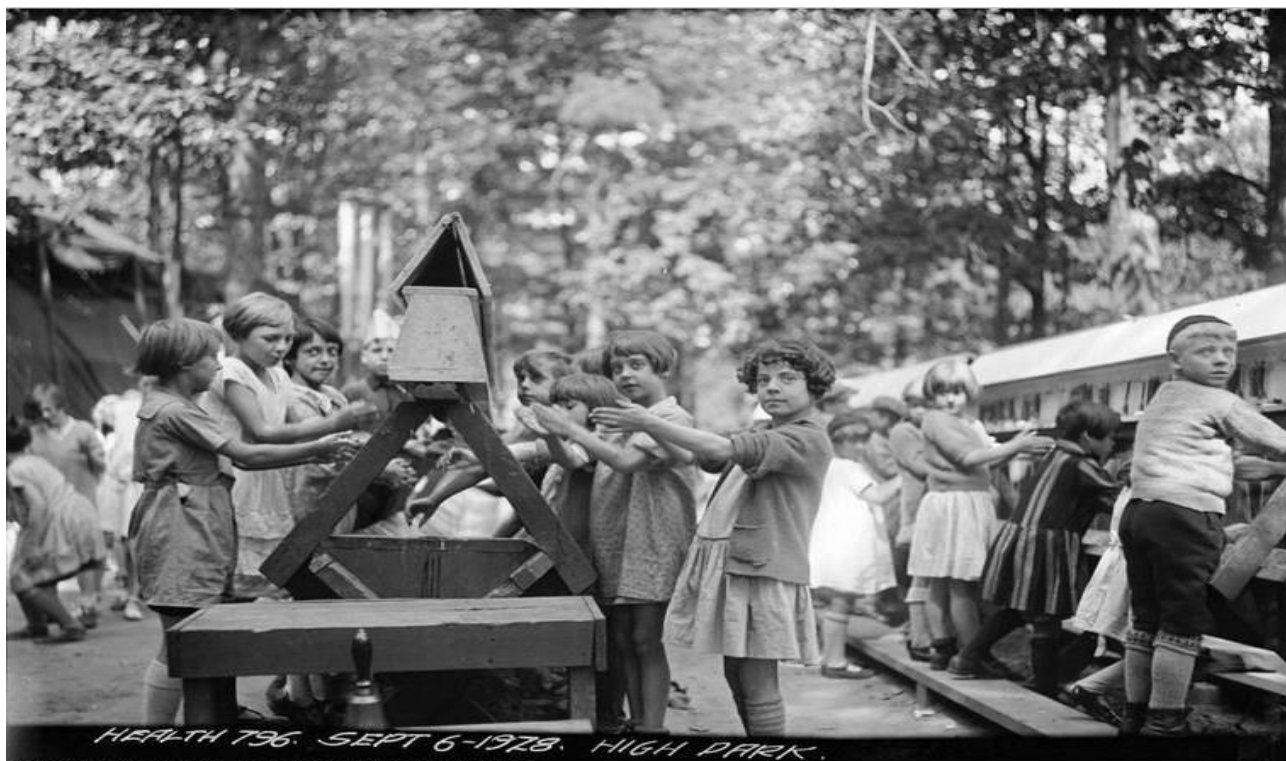


Source E: Courtesy Toronto Public Library -- High Park, toboggan slides. -- 1913



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, f1231_it0629

Source F: Fishermen in Grenadier Pond, High Park - July, 1939



Source G: Washing up at the High Park Forest School - September 6, 1928



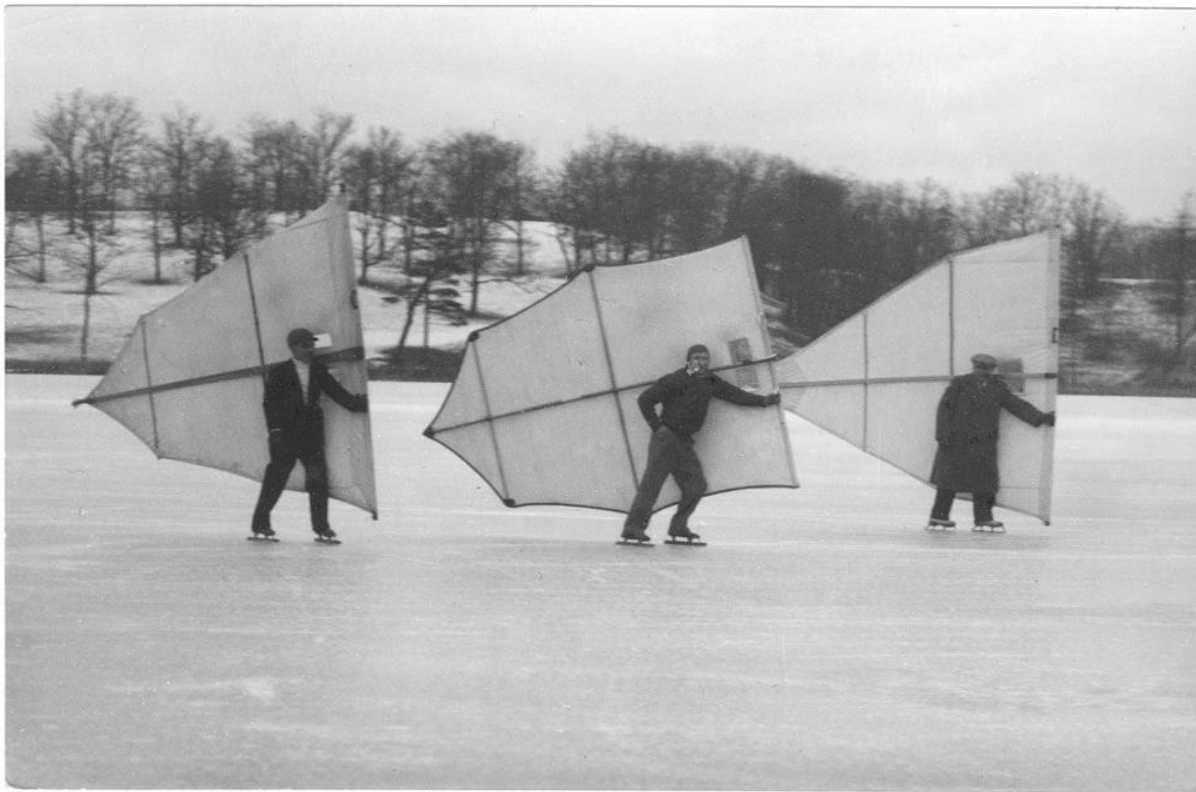
Source H: A group of Chinese Canadians gathered in High Park, 1919. Photo courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.



Source I: Snowshoeing in High Park circa 1910



Source J: Skiers in High Park, 1925



City of Toronto Archives, Series 393 f1548_s0393_it24115d

Source K: 1933 sail Skating grenadier Pond, City of Toronto Archives



City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, s0372_ss0011_it0054

Source L: 1913 Forest School High Park...objective was to provide underprivileged and/or undernourished children who ordinarily would have spent their summer days on the streets of Toronto a place to go for good food, good activities, good health and education. City of Toronto Archives

Sources: All images were taken from the Toronto Archives and Toronto Public Library Archives and Vintage Toronto