

Final Report: War of 1812 Art and Poetry Exhibit, 2012



The War of 1812 Art and Poetry Exhibit was funded by the History Education Network and presented by a class of University of Winnipeg Collegiate grade 11 Canadian History students and their instructor Jennifer Janzen.

The objective of the project was:

To research a person or event of the War of 1812 and write a poem and create an art piece that explained and represented the Historical Significance and Historical Perspective of the person or event of the war.



At the beginning of October, students started studying primary documents from the War of 1812, beginning with “War in Disguise”, an excerpt from the biography of Samuel Leech, *Voice From the Main Deck*, and “The Battle of Baltimore”, later changed to the “Star Spangled Banner”. Students also looked at the causes and consequences of First Nation participation in the War of 1812, watched excerpts from *The War of 1812* by PBS, and began researching primary and secondary documents about a topic that was of interest to them. From these documents, students focused on specific words, phrases and details that they incorporated into their poems.

Along with their poetry, students chose an image that was representative of their topic. Some students drew their own image, while others found images from primary or secondary documents. Monique Martin, an artist and teacher

from Saskatoon, came to the school and conducted a workshop to teach the students about 19th century print making. Students learned how to carve, ink and create multiple copies of their art piece using a press from 1812. One of their prints was mounted with their poetry and displayed at the art/poetry exhibit on November 9th, 2012.

Another aspect of the students' learning and participation was teaching others about the War of 1812. Students were required to write an expository essay, explaining the Historical Significance, Historical Perspective and their personal

interest in the topic. These essays were the basis of their presentations. On the evening of the art/poetry exhibit, students had three opportunities to speak to



friends, parents and community members about their topic as small groups circulated around the art/poetry pieces. It was a very successful evening. The students were very engaged and excited about their work, and had no difficulty sharing their enthusiasm.



Along with the student

presentations, Joel Ralph, from *Canada's History*, did a short presentation about Stoney Creek, and Pat Martin, MP of Woseley, discussed his views on the importance of history and youth in Canada. The evening ended with baking using recipes from the 19th century.

In addition to the student work on the War of 1812, Monique Martin and Jennifer Janzen participated in a *TeachMeet*. This event was a meeting of teachers and administrators from Manitoba school to hear about the project and share ideas about teaching history. This event was held at *Canada's History* offices on November 1st, 2012.



The final aspect of the project was a webinar which was held on November 13th, 2012, from 3:30 – 4:00 through *Canada's History*. This event was another opportunity to discuss the project and share ideas with other teachers in a different forum. This broadcast was taped and linked on *Canada's History* website.



The University of Winnipeg Collegiate and the students greatly appreciated the grant money from THEN/HiER without which we would not have been able to bring in Monique Martin to create the fantastic art pieces that were such a success at the art/poetry exhibit.