**Social Studies Grade 8 : March 2014**

Chapter 3: Making A Living in the 19th Century

Early immigrants depended on resources of the land and the sea. They were largely **self-sufficient**, providing most of what they needed for themselves, although there was always a reliance on **merchants** and **traders** for foodstuffs that could not be grown on the island.

There were 2 staple industries during the 1800's :

1. cod fishery

2. seal fishery

The three main areas of employment related to the cod fishery :

1. the fisherman (inshore, Labrador, bank)

2. the merchant (store for supplies they couldn’t get themselves)

(Eg. nets for work /sugar for food paid by cash /trade)

3. the boat builders

**Consumer VS. Subsistence Economy**

What is a subsistence economy?

Consumer Economy:

-what we have today (need banks)

-we pay money (credit card, debit, cash) for the items we need (groceries) or want

In the 1800's these things did not exist as they do today.

Subsistence Economy:

-when people make/grow/build most of what they need to live

- the area where you live limited what you could do yourself

**IMP**: Be able to tell how people took care of their needs in a subsistence and a consumer economy (Table from page 48)

Make sure you know what activities happened in what seasons from page 49.

The Inshore Fishery: pg 51

-happened near the shore

-men would make several trips each day

-men used handlines

Handline: long lines with weighted bait hooks attached used to catch cod.

Fish Flake: a raised wooden platform that allowed air to move around the drying fish

Why was curing fish so important?

* the quality of the “cure” affected the grade the fish would be given, the grade , in turn, effected the price paid to the fisherman so,

bad cure = low price

quality cure = higher price

Who cured the fish?

* once the fish were caught and split, they needed to be cured.
* curing was an onshore job
* women and children would be responsible for curing the fish

1. keep flies away
2. cover when wet/ raining
3. turn & dry evenly on both sides
4. use correct amount of salt for best results

Women and children would also:

1. tend vegetable garden
2. look after livestock
3. wash clothes/household chores
4. haul water for cooking/washing
5. cooking and meals

Men would also:

1. mend and repair fishing gear
2. fix boats
3. build fish flakes
4. hunted for animals
5. hauled wood for fuel/ resources

**Labrador Fishery**

-a migratory fishery conducted by non-residents of Labrador.

* every year thousands of NLers left in June to go fish the coast of Labrador and would come back home to the island in Sept.
* sometimes entire families went to the Labrador fishery. It was very difficult journey because:

1. women and children had to travel for a week in very small boats not meant to carry passengers,

2. they would also be filled with the fishing supplies needed for the season.

3. the weather coming home in late Sept/Oct could be dangerous

* Labrador residents welcomed the arrival of Nlers every spring and would often have a dance or a “time” when they arrived

There are 2 groups involved in the Labrador Fishery:

1. **stationers**:

- stayed on shore and dried their fish from one location.

**–** they only went as far as Cape Harrison

1. **floaters**:

-these fishermen stayed on their boats and travelled from one fishing ground along the coast to another.

- they would not stop to lay out the fish and dry it, so they would have to use a lot more salt to preserve the fish .

- they went as far as Cape Chidley

**Bank Fishery:**

* refers to the Grand Banks, Rose Blanche Bank, and St. Pierre Bank where the fish gathered to spawn and feed
* this fishery used large vessels called “schooners”
* the schooners sailed out to the fishing Banks with smaller boats “dories” and a crew of men, when they arrived a 2 man crew got in the dories and left the schooner to fish by handlines with bait the way they do in the Inshore fishery. They would return to the schooner several times a day to get more bait and unload the catch.
* This was a dangerous because:

1. having to ride out gales and storm on the open sea

2. navigate through fog

3. dory could capsize easily

4. run down by other boats

5. stranded from the schooner

In the 1800’s the bank fishery caused lifestyle changes:

1. the season was extended , started earlier and ended later

Men: had less time to cut wood so families had to purchase coal for fuel

Women: less time for gardens & other food production because they were drying the fish, so families had to buy more food than they had before

MOVE FROM: self-sufficient ---------------------- consumer economy

**The Truck System**

In a paragraph, be able to describe the role of merchants in the lives of fisherman and their families. Use these notes as an outline for your answer. Use TDSC format if possible

***TRUCK SYSTEM:*** the method of trade between

fisherman and merchants

***FEATURES OF THE TRUCK SYSTEM:***

-cashless system where no money was exchanged

-the fisherman brought their season’s catch to the merchant

-the fisherman received credit for goods available from the merchant (fishing gear, food, clothing)

***FISH GRADING:***

-Fish was valued by it’s grade. (7 different grades)

-The grade was determined by the ***culler. (Merchant appointed)***

-the higher the grade the higher the price.

**Lowest grade**- West Indies

**Highest grade**- Spain, Portugal and Italy

- when fish was plentiful the cullers were very strict on quality BUT when fish was scarce and catches were low, cullers were less strict...this meant the fisherman could never be sure how much credit the catch was worth.

***ISSUES OF FAIRNESS IN THE TRUCK SYSTEM:***

-prices for fish & goods available in the stores were set by the merchant, this meant the fishing families were in a difficult position because they could be easily exploited by the merchants.

-often there was only one merchant in an outport community so the fisherman could not negotiate for a better price with a different merchant ( no competition)

-sometimes at the end of a bad season the fishing family would be in debt to the merchant (didn’t catch enough fish to pay for the fishing supplies) began a cycle of debt that a family could carry for years

- some **merchants were unfair to fishermen** by

1. overcharged for goods

2. paid unfair prices for fish

3. refused credit to fishermen

-some **merchants were fair to fisherman** by

1. supported families during bad years (saying they needed the profit of good years to balance out the supplying of food & goods when the fisherman didn’t make money)

2. the merchants faced financial risk because of the unsteady price the fish could bring in the marketplace and they could not recover the debts owed to them

3. supported the community & respected the men, trying to help them when they could (rescue efforts

**SEALING INDUSTRY**

Two branches of the seal industry were:

1. *landsman’s hunt*- near the shore (like the inshore fishery)

2. *offshore hunt -* “the front”- off Labrador

- “the gulf”- Gulf of St. Lawrence

(Much larger ships with crews)

Uses for Seals:

-food

- clothing

-oil

\*OIL was the main profit item from seals, commercially it could be used in many items including: -lamps, machine lubricants, softening textiles, paint, explosives, margarine

At one time 84% of exports in Nl were from seal oil

Why was the seal fishery the most dangerous ?

1. the location of the seal herds (on foot on the icefloes)

2. the season of the hunt (Feb-March)

3. the method used to hunt the seals (gaff/towing)

What was the Southern Cross?

The *Southern Cross* was a sealing ship in NL during the 1900's. For many years it had been successful but in 1914 it was lost at sea. The ship was returning from the Gulf of St. Lawrence with a full load of seal pelts when it encountered a severe blizzard. There were 173 men aboard the ship. All were lost at sea. It is remembered as one of Nl worst sealing disasters.

Gaff- long iron tipped pole used to kill seals

Sculping- the practice of removing the pelt with a thick layer of white fat still attached.

Skinner- parson who removed the fat from the skin, they could do 450 seals in 10 hrs.