**Famous European Explorers – Interview Project**

In this project, you will examine experiences and motives around European exploration and the colonization of North America by developing questions and conducting mock interviews that reflect what is known about assigned historical figures – the early explorers of Canada.

**Step 1**

Choose one of the following famous European explorers:

* Giovanni Cabotto (John Cabot)
* Jaques Cartier
* Samuel de Champlain
* Martin Frobisher
* Henry Hudson
* Rene-Robert Cavelier de La Salle
* Pierre Gaultier de La Venendrye
* Samuel Hearne
* Alexander Mackenzie
* John Franklin

Using the provided cornel notes pages, take notes on your chosen explorer focusing on the following topics: (See the corresponding cornel notes pages to focus your researching)

* personal background
* why they wanted to, or decided to explore
* major obstacles or problems that they encountered
* significant accomplishments or impacts for Canada or the World

**Step 2**

You will use your research to prepare scripts, i.e., questions and answers, for a mock interview with your chosen figure. As a class, we will develop criteria for powerful interview questions, such as open-ended, lots of information about the topic, specific to the person. We will come up with sample questions as a class, and you will also have to come up with some on your own.

Some Examples of good questions are:

* How did you hear about the opportunity to explore/settle in the new world? (open-ended because it encourages an in-depth answer rather than a yes or no answer)
* What role did your government have in helping you make the decision to explore/settle in North America? (informative because it allows for general and detailed information)
* Why did you decide to explore/settle in the new world? (specific because it allows the person to tell his or her story)

We will be looking at this document to help us come up with good ideas for effective questions:

[Asking Powerful Questions](http://www.onlineguide.learnalberta.ca/content-og/ssmt/html/askingpowerfulquestions_mt.html) (Modelling the Tools)

Each one of you will be responsible for writing a minimum of six (6) questions.

**Step 3**

We will discuss the qualities of a good answer in an interview;

e.g.:

* answer offers a clear position or conclusion
* answer is plausible (it could really have been what the person would have said), given what is known about the event/person
* answer is supported with specific facts, is historically accurate.

You will script answers to their questions, using their research (your notes) and these criteria as a guide. Of course, your answers will be different, depending upon who is being interviewed. For example, Cartier's answers will differ from Cabotto's. You will need to base your answers on their research of the person and his or her actions and the political, social or cultural circumstances of the time.

**Part 4**

Finally, we will be conducting mock interviews by asking and answering the questions that you and your classmates prepared for your character. We will be recording the interview using our computers (a headset microphone and recording software on the laptops) – and ultimately we will create interview podcasts. If you like you can create a mock radio talkshow (though keep in mind that they would have not really had talk shows in the 17th century.) It is important to try to avoid stereotyping, so pay close attention to detailed and accurate information when you develop your character's responses. Feel free to add humour and characterization (accents, personality, etc.) but make sure that you ultimately stay focused on the interview questions.