1981 FIRST DYKE MARCH IN CANADA

(20-30 minute session)

Grade: 5 to 8

Learning Outcomes & Lesson Focus

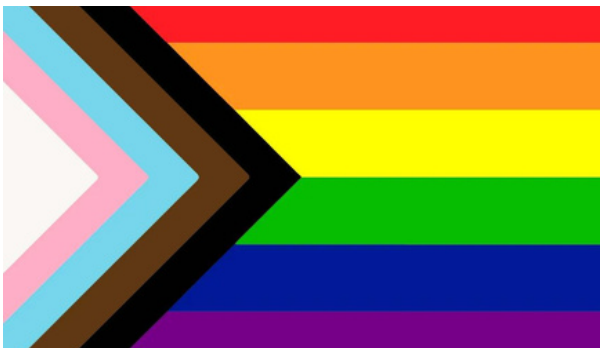
Students will:

- Identify the origins of the Dyke March and how it has changed over the years
- Identify what the catalysts were for creating a Dyke March

Lesson Focus

As a result of the learning activities within this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify what the Dyke March is and when it first occurred in Canada
- Identify the catalysts for its implementation



Resources

Lesson Materials/Supplies

- Internet access for students to research history and events

Audiovisual

- The First Ever Dyke March (YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfcoSDN9tN8&t=29s

Print/Publications

- Canadian Queer History: Marches and Festivals - https://www.queerevents.ca/queer-history/marches-festivals
- Making a History of Our Own - https://dykemarchtoronto.wordpress.com/our-history/
- Eating Fire: A History of the Dyke March - https://www.queerevents.ca/queer-corner/blog/history/history-dyke-march
- Links to Manitoba Curriculum - Kindergarten to Grade 8 - Physical Education/Health Education - Human Sexuality https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/physhlth/hs_k-8/
- Manitoba Teachers' Society: @2LGBTQIA Lesson Plans - https://www.mbteach.org/mtscms/2018/04/17/lgbtq-lesson-plans/
- *** CPHS Pride organization resources, if available, can be the primary resource for any research being completed by the students

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Notes to Teacher

The use of the term Pride, even outside the context of Gay Pride or the LGBTQ2+ (GSRD) communities, is sensitive due to its connection with religious or other beliefs. It will likely be necessary to acknowledge that there are both positive and negative connotations to the term pride. It might be necessary to provide lead-in knowledge to the students which introduces that discrimination and harm has taken place based on who people "love" or "are attracted to".

Acronyms

- LGBTQ2+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, 2-Spirit
- GSRD: Gender, Sexual, and Relationship Diversity
    - There are many versions of acronyms for this community with letters being added, removed, or reordered based on who is being represented and how. There is no perfect or authorized version for use in education, rather, being aware of any local cultural sensitivities can assist in utilizing culturally competent language.

There is an expectation that questions might arise on the term "dyke" and what its significance is within the greater LGBTQ2+ (GSRD) how it differs from other similar aspects of the more common or broader Pride activities. It might be necessary to discuss that while the LGBTQ2+ (GSRD) communities have similarities which bring them together towards many common goals and addressing specific needs, many of the communities such as those who are dykes wish to honour their own community by highlighting their achievements as well as their struggles.

Suggestions for Instruction

- Begin with a discussion around what distinguishes the Dyke community from the LGBTQ2+ (GSRD) community. While the Dyke community consists of lesbians who are typically grouped within the term 'Gay' and within the Gay Pride movement, many feel that gay women experience different and long-lasting discrimination than that of gay men.
- The first marches for the Dyke community were adhoc and not planned as an organized march. The first march occurred in Vancouver, British Columbia in May of 1981, which coincidently was the first march of its kind in the world. A spectacular act of protest, it challenged not only the injustices of government but also the male dominance within LGBTQ2+ (GSRD) spaces. The main reason for the creation of the various Dyke Marches was to protest what many women saw as the control of Pride events by white gay men at the expense of lesbians in general and women of colour in particular. A follow-on march occurred on October 17th, 1981 in Toronto, which was the last Dyke March in Toronto until 1996.
- A number of other marches around the world, including an April 24th, 1993 event in Washington, DC (the first to officially use the name Dyke March) have had significant impact on lesbian visibility, some also claiming to be the first. Dyke Marches occur regularly now, coinciding with larger Pride events, yet are distinct activities.

Suggestions for Assessment

Observation

Teacher Assessment: Checklist

Observe whether the student can identify when and where the first Dyke March in Canada occurred, as well as the reasons for its inception.

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

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