**How to Host a Hackathon for Hill 70**

**Building a Battle of Hill 70 Virtual Memorial**

In France, a permanent monument will be built to commemorate the Battle of Hill 70. In Canada, using the Hill 70 website, young people will also build a virtual memorial. The Hill 70 virtual memorial will transform the creation of the memorial from a distant monument into an authentic and relevant activity taking place today and in Canada. In classrooms, through “hackathons”, or independent study, students will research information available about each of the individuals who died during the Battle of Hill 70. Using the website, students will have access to the names and limited biographical details about every member of the Canadian Corps who died between August 15th and August 25. The research provided by the students can be posted to the Canadian Virtual War Memorial at Veteran’s Affairs.

**What is a hackathon?**

A hackathon is a gathering of people using technology to solve a problem. Participants usually find solutions using their computer skills and working in a defined framework. Participants may work individually or in small groups. Hackathons usually conclude with each team or individual making a presentation of their work.

**What can students learn from participating in a hackathon?**

Using the hackathon technique in school lets students develop and apply research skills in a meaningful way. Without their participation, the virtual memorial to the soldiers who fell at the Battle of Hill 70 will be incomplete. All participating students will use a common database, an initial common set of websites, and a common reporting format. It is recommended that students work with a partner to enhance team working skills. Students will also have an opportunity to practise their presentation skills during the final phase of the hackathon.

**How does a hackathon work in a school?**

Schools are ideal sites for conducting a history hackathon. Schools generally have the technical capacity and the teacher expertise to support the research process. Hackathons can be “sprints”, a brief 30 minute event, or longer. It is not necessary to plan a hackathon lasting beyond the length of a classroom period.

**What are the steps for a classroom hackathon?**

Getting ready:

* Go to the Education section of the Hill 70 website [www.Hill70.ca](http://www.Hill70.ca). Everything you need will be at that site.
* Make sure there are enough computers available for each team of students and one for the teacher.
* Preview the research outline and the research websites.
* Preview the Battle of Hill 70 film by following the link to YouTube on the website.

Getting started:

* Introduce the topic of creating the virtual monument using the above named film on the website.
* Motivate students by describing the importance of remembering the sacrifice of young Canadians in service of their country; describe the students’ role in creating a national memorial; describe a hackathon, and explain what they should find on the websites.
* Assign students to their research teams.
* Students select a soldier’s name from the casualty list in the Education section of the website.

Conducting the Hackathon:

* Teachers may consult the Lest We Forget Project at Library and Archives Canada for an excellent description on online research.
* Students search the websites listed in Appendix A and record the information on the research outline in Appendix B, Parts I & II.
* Students download the research outline, Appendix B, Parts I & II, to record their information.
* Students can use Google Image to search for images of the Canadian soldier they are researching. Other sites may also have additional information which students can record.
* Check with the students a few minutes into the hackathon to determine their progress.

Wrapping up the Hackathon:

* Students present their findings to the class. For brevity, students may have to limit the information they present.
* Students email their findings to the Canadian Virtual War Museum hosted by Veteran’s Affairs.

**Thank you for participating!**