Cedar Falls, 1918

Source set. CHC2D, Thinking Like a Historian, Lesson 4

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cedar Falls is an invented Ontario town. These practice sources are original, but they are based on what really happened in many Canadian towns in the fall of 1918.

Source A: Diary of Ellen, age 13

October 14, 1918. Mother has kept us home all week. The schools, churches and the picture theatre are all shut by order of the Board of Health. Mr. Halloran from the hardware store died on Saturday; they say he was well on Wednesday. Father still goes to the mill because if he doesn't work, we don't eat. I am to wear a gauze mask when I go for the milk.

Source B: Public notice

NOTICE. By order of the Cedar Falls Board of Health, all schools, churches, theatres, pool rooms and public meetings are CLOSED until further notice, to check the spread of Spanish Influenza. Persons who are ill must stay at home. Spitting in public places is prohibited. October 10, 1918.

Source C: Cases and deaths reported to the Board of Health

Week ending	New cases reported	Deaths
Oct. 5	12	0
Oct. 12	96	4
Oct. 19	310	17
Oct. 26	245	21
Nov. 2	120	9
Nov. 9	41	3
Nov. 16	15	1

Source D: Photograph description

Description of a photograph (typical of many taken in 1918): Four women in long white aprons and cloth masks stand on the steps of a church hall that has been turned into an emergency hospital. Rows of cots are visible through the open door. A hand-painted sign reads “Emergency Hospital. Volunteers Needed.”

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Evidence to Conclusion

Independent. CHC2D, Thinking Like a Historian, Lesson 4

Name: _____ Date: _____

Source	What it tells us	Limits (who made it, why, what's missing)
A: Diary		
B: Notice		
C: Data		
D: Photo		

1. Describe the trend in Source C. When did cases peak? When did deaths peak? Why might they peak at different times?

2. Which two sources agree (corroborate)? On what?

3. Write a conclusion: how did the 1918 influenza affect Cedar Falls? Use evidence from at least two sources and name one limit of the evidence.

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