

Study Questions and Further Sources for

“Building Blocks: Canada’s Chinatowns”

The prompt to read this information appears on p.139 of *Acting on Words*.

For Further Thinking

1. Phung organizes her essay around personal memory and history, which is another type of memory. How does Phung’s memory of the older Chinese man and his comment that Canada’s history is short and its people naïve function in the essay?
2. What is Phung’s central argument? What challenge is she attempting to overcome in researching this particular history?
3. To what extent is the essay limited or not by relying on only one book?
4. Phung’s essay relies heavily on research for the bulk of its content. How does Phung ensure that her own voice and perspective remain present in the essay?
5. Does Phung answer the question of why every major city in North America has a Chinatown but not a Ukrainiantown, a Germantown, an Irishtown?
6. Phung states, “Somehow along the way, Canada’s past got forgotten. Young Canadians never ask how Canada got here today.” Is this true?
7. Phung’s essay is strongly personal; describe other rhetorical strategies used in her essay (these strategies are described in Chapters 9 - 16 of the *Rhetoric*).

Looking Back and Ahead

1. What qualities does Phung’s essay share with such works as “Saskatchewan’s Indian Peoples” (p. 166) and “The other Canadians and Canada’s Future” (p. 416)? How does it differ in tone from these essays despite its similarities?
2. Many of the essays in this text discuss minority ethnicities, or immigrant experiences. How does Phung’s essay compare to these others? How does her

essay engage readers whose own identity differs from the one discussed in the essay?

3. Again, comparing Phung's essay to others in *Acting on Words*, how does she engage the past in a way that is relevant to contemporary society?

For Further Reading

Chan, Anthony B. *The Chinese in the New World* Vancouver, BC: New Star, 1983.

Cho, Karen. *In the Shadow of Gold Mountain*. Nation Film Board of Canada: 2004.

Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre. <http://www.ecmcc.ca/> (2006)

Li, Peter S. *Chinese in Canada* (Second Edition). Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Pan, Lynn. *Sons of the Yellow Emperor: A History of the Chinese Diaspora*. Kodansha Globe: New York, 1994.

Wong, K. Scott. "Chinatown: Conflicting Images, Contested Terrain." *Melus* (Vol. 20, Issue 1), 1995.