

# GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING CANADIAN HISTORY

THE CHANGING FACE OF CANADA



1400

### First Nations and early Europeans

At the beginning of the 15th century, the land that is now Canada was home to many different First Nations. Some of the most well-known were the Huron, Algonquin, and Iroquois. The first Europeans to arrive in North America were the Vikings, who landed in Newfoundland in 980 AD. The first permanent European settlement in North America was founded by the French in 1604 at Port-Royal in Acadia.



1713

### First European colonies

By 1713, the British had gained control of the eastern part of North America through the Treaty of Utrecht. The French had retained the western part of the continent, including the Mississippi River valley. The British colonies were concentrated along the Atlantic coast, and the French colonies were concentrated in the interior.



1763

### The Seven Years' War

The Seven Years' War (1756-1763) was a global conflict that resulted in the British gaining control of the eastern part of North America. The French had been defeated, and the British had gained control of the eastern part of the continent. The French had retained the western part of the continent, including the Mississippi River valley.



1774

### The Quebec Act

The Quebec Act (1774) was a law passed by the British Parliament that granted the French-speaking population of Quebec the right to practice their religion and to use their language in court. This act was a significant step towards the recognition of the French-Canadian population.



1783-1818

### The Constitutional Act

The Constitutional Act (1791) was a law passed by the British Parliament that divided the Province of Quebec into two parts: the Province of Ontario and the Province of Quebec. This act was a significant step towards the creation of a federal system of government.



1873

### Confederation

Confederation was the process of the British colonies in North America joining together to form a single country. The process was completed in 1871 with the entry of Manitoba into the Confederation. The Confederation was a significant step towards the creation of a federal system of government.



1905

### Creation of the Dominion of the West

The Dominion of the West was created in 1905 as a result of the entry of the four western provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario) into the Confederation. This was a significant step towards the creation of a federal system of government.



2000

### Canada at the beginning of the 21st century

Canada at the beginning of the 21st century is a diverse and multicultural country. It is a federal system of government with a strong central government and a strong provincial government. The country is a member of the G7 and the G20, and it is a leading nation in the world.



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# MAPS: THE CHANGING FACE OF CANADA

A Senior Level Lesson Plan to be Used in Conjunction with  
the Changing Faces of Canada Poster

by Alan Skeoch, 1999 winner of the Governor General's Award

## PREPARATION

Divide students into eight groups. Each group must research one map in the poster. Students will have two days to prepare and then each group will be expected to explain the map to the class including the background history that led to the map's creation. Each presentation will take 15 to 30 minutes depending on the class level. Responsibilities of students within the group must be divided so all have a role: i.e., chairperson, record-keeper, speakers, researchers, etc. Each group will provide a one-page overview of the map and its history. The teacher will determine marks either to the whole group to on an individual basis.

## DISCUSSION

Choose some or all of the questions below for class discussion and future speculation. Some will require further reading while others are open for immediate thought. The nature of most of these questions is to be open-ended and to encourage original thought.

Even the most objective, dispassionate historian cannot fail to be impressed, even startled, that a disparate collection of Colonial fragments left over by the American Revolution of 1776 could expand and coalesce into the largest geographical nation in the world. A good deal of this growth occurred in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in that period John A. Macdonald and George Etienne Cartier were major players in the construction of our country.

## ACTIVITIES

- 1) Using the poster maps, assess the truth of this statement:  
*Why was the Canadian Pacific Railway critically important in this period of nation-building?*
- 2) Canada was not an empty land when white and black settlers arrived. There had been thousands of Native people living in North America for thousands of years. Native Canadians had their own maps. They knew where the lands of one tribe ended and another began. The tribe's territories were part of larger units of aboriginal nations that had larger demarcation lines (such as Cree, Ojibwa and Inuit).
  - a) Find the native peoples boundaries in books such as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b) Do the map boundaries of Canadian expansion run roughshod over the native boundaries?
  - c) How has Canada tried to accommodate native boundaries with the creation of Nunavut?

- 3) The American poet Robert Frost reiterated the old expression that “Good fences make good neighbours.” This old saying is value-laden in that it supports the idea of private property, of ownership of land. It was a critical part of early settlement in Canada where surveyors were sent in before the settlers. The surveyors cut the land into blocks of 100, 200 and in the Western Prairies, 640 acres. On the other hand the Aboriginal value system believed that land was meant to be shared. In short they found fences saying “Private Property: Keep Out” difficult to understand and they often climbed these fences and trespassed on land they believed they were sharing with the new settlers. This caused much friction.
- Whose value system would you support?
  - Are fences necessary?
  - Are boundaries necessary?
- 4) The boundaries of Canada are unnatural—they were made by human beings and fly in the face of North America’s natural geography.
- To what extent is this true?
  - Examine a topographical map of Canada and suggest boundaries that are natural in that they follow the contours of the land and recognize physical realities such as the Rocky Mountains and the St. Lawrence River.
  - Is it likely or unlikely that the modern provincial boundaries will ever be changed?
- 5) A free trade treaty was signed with the United States in \_\_\_\_\_. Some people have suggested that the logical outcome of free trade will be the disappearance of the border boundary with United States.
- Do you think that boundaries inhibit trade?
  - Do you think that free trade will lead to the disappearance of the Canadian border?
- 6) Because we live in the present, there is a tendency to see the present as permanent. Of course a casual reading of history shows this perception to be false. Change is the only permanent thing in life. Could this also be true with regard to Canadian borders? The Canadian future thinker, Marshall McLuhan, coined the term “global village” when described community life on earth. If the world is becoming a global village how will that affect boundaries?
- Suggest differences that could occur in the contemporary map of Canada as if you were living fifty years from now.
  - Do you regard these hypothetical changes as positive or negative?