

Provincial Independent Study Option Course

Grade 9 Canada in the Contemporary World (10F)

Adapted by Michelle Lavesque, 2015

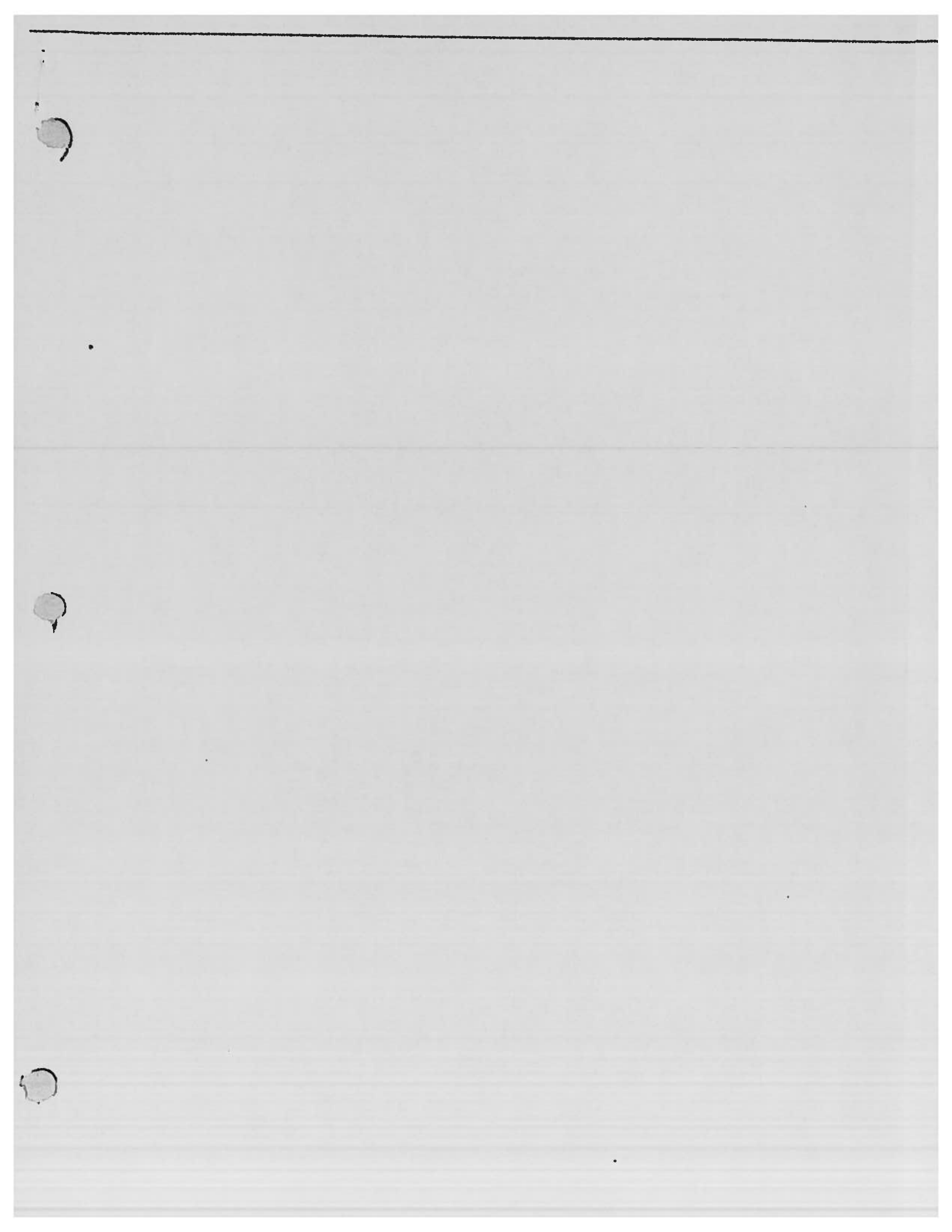


Grade 9 Social Studies

Reading Booklet Module 1

Diversity and Pluralism in Canada

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS BOOKLET



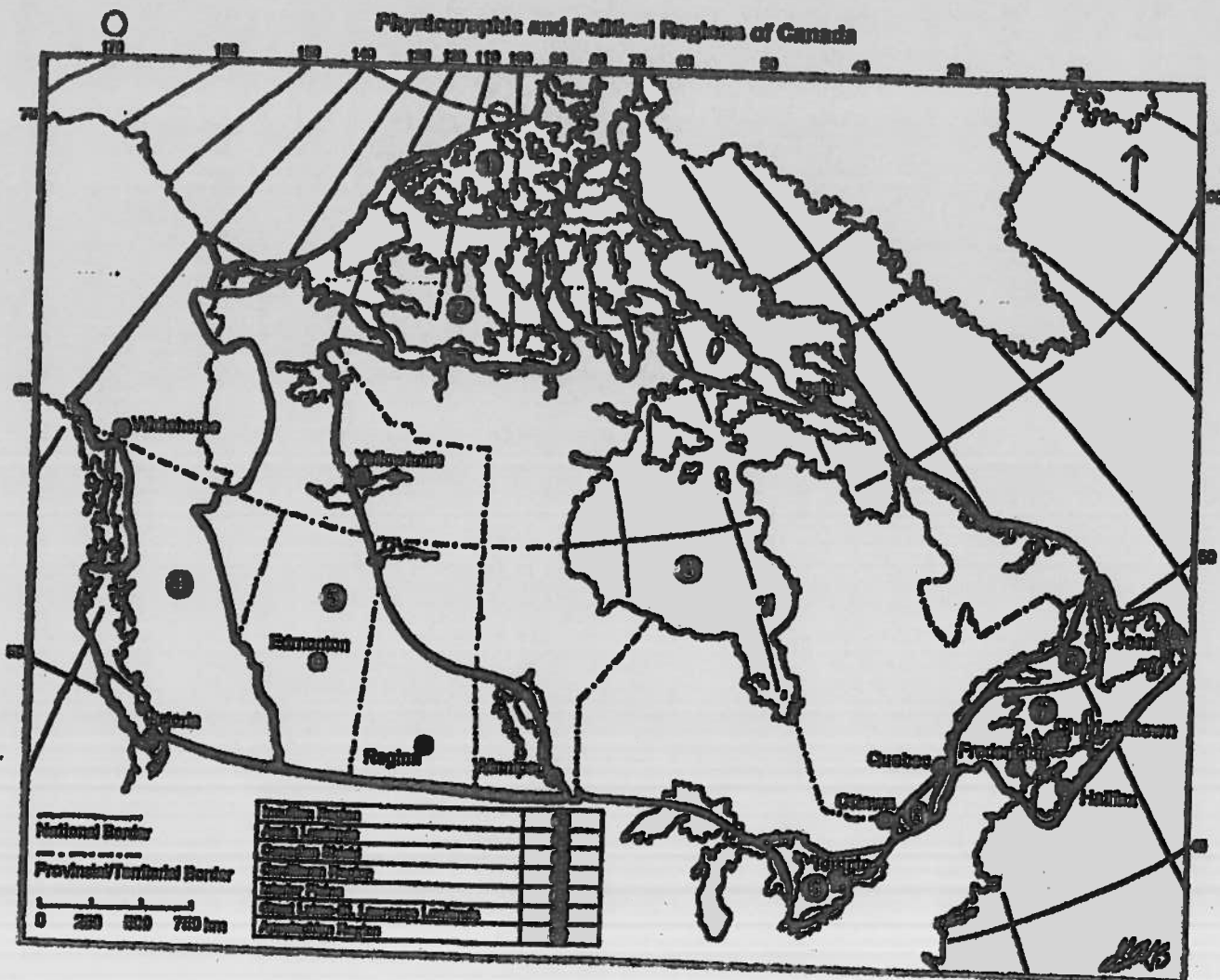
LESSON 1: THE GEOGRAPHY OF CANADA

Geography of Canada

Canada is the second-largest country in the world in land mass. The country is 9,984,670 square kilometres, about 9% of which is water. It is estimated that Canada has one-seventh of the world's fresh water. Canada has coastlines along the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic oceans, giving it the longest coastline of any country in the world. Canada's geography varies significantly from coast to coast. Each of Canada's regions has a distinctly different landscape and climate.

Canada's Seven Physiographic Regions

A physiographic region is an area of land with common landforms and climate. Canada can be divided into seven unique physiographic regions. As you read about the physiographic regions, look at the following map so that you can picture where each region is located. This will help you prepare for the learning activity.



1. Inuitian Region

This region is found in Canada's far north. It is made up of a triangle-shaped area between the Canadian Shield and the Arctic Ocean. It is commonly called the Queen Elizabeth Islands. This area ranges from glacier-covered mountains in the North to lowlands and plateaus in the South. The lowlands are a basin-shaped area of land that is lower than the surrounding area. This means that the land is shaped similar to a bowl, where all higher areas slant to one lower area. A plateau is land that is high and mostly flat.

2. Arctic Lowlands

These are barren lowlands found in the south-western islands. This area is snow-covered for much of the year, and the coastlines of these islands range from broad lowlands to spectacular cliffs. There are also polar deserts, where only moss and lichens grow on the gravel-covered ground. Resources in this region include oil, fishing, forestry, gas, minerals, and fresh water.

3. Canadian Shield

The Canadian Shield is an enormous horseshoe-shaped region that encircles Hudson Bay. It occupies nearly half of Canada's land mass and includes portions of six provinces (Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta) and two territories (Northwest Territories and Nunavut). The region is covered with countless bogs, swamps, ponds, lakes, and rivers. Its southern regions are rich in softwood trees like spruce and jack pine. The resources in this area include diamonds, gold, platinum, nickel, and copper.

4. Cordilleran Region

The Cordillera (a Spanish term for mountains) is the mountainous region of western Canada. This region includes most of British Columbia and the Yukon, as well as part of the Northwest Territories and southwest Alberta. Long chains of high mountains stretch from north to south, including the Rocky Mountains on the east side and the Coast Mountains near the Pacific Ocean. The interior of B.C. is between these mountain ranges and has several valleys. Large parts of the region are covered in forests. Natural resources found here include forestry, copper, coal, fishing, and mining.

5. Interior Plains

The Interior Plains region of Canada is located between the Canadian Shield and the Cordillera. It includes portions of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta (known collectively as the Prairie Provinces), British Columbia, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. This region is marked by a vast area of flat to rolling landscape, as well as grasslands in the southern parts of the three Prairie Provinces. As you move north, you will find parkland and boreal forests, then subarctic and Arctic conditions in the far North. Some natural resources are fossil fuel, forestry, natural gas, oil, and potash.

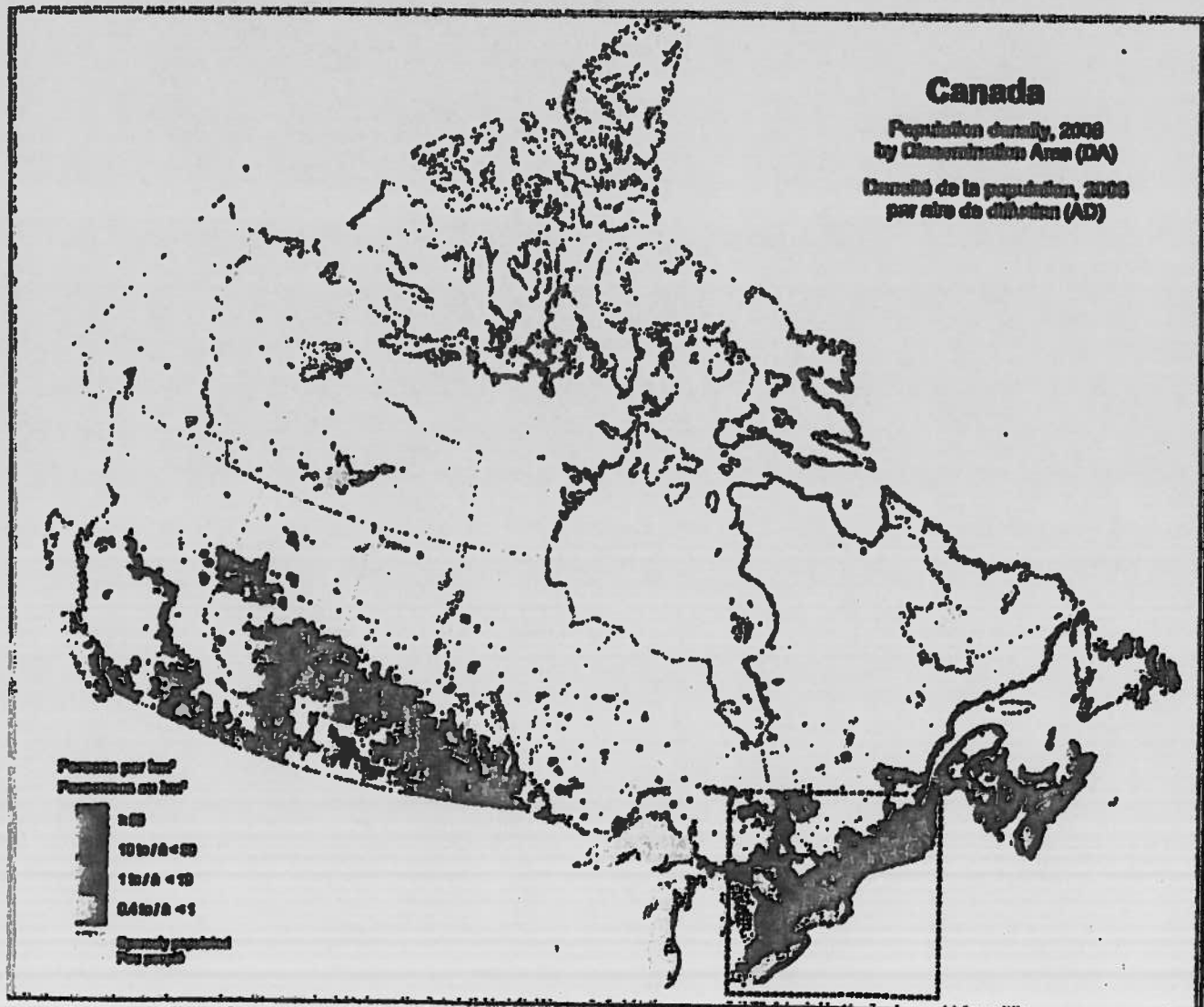
6. Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Lowlands

The Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Lowlands covers a small area of southern Ontario and Quebec. The lowlands are bordered by the Canadian Shield to the north and the Adirondack and Appalachian Mountains to the south. The lakes regulate the weather and the temperature is very mild. This is one reason the Great Lakes region is so heavily populated. In this region, you will find very fertile soil, making it perfect for agriculture, which is the main industry.

7. Appalachian Region

The Appalachian Region is found in eastern Canada. It includes the three Maritime Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, as well as Newfoundland and part of Quebec. This region boasts one of the richest fisheries in the world called the Grand Banks, which is part of the East Coast continental shelf. An old, worn-down chain of mountains called the Appalachian Mountains runs through a large part of this region. This makes much of the land hilly and rugged with valleys in between. The natural resources of this area are agriculture, minerals, forestry, coal, and fishing.

Canada's Population Clusters



Take a look at the Canada population density map, as well as the Physiographic Regions of Canada map on page 6. Then, think about the following questions:

- What areas are the most densely populated?
- What kind of geography exists in the most populated areas?
- What areas are the least populated?
- What kind of geography exists in the least populated areas?
- Connect geography to population. For example, there are very few people living in the northern part of Canada because it is very cold.

More than three-quarters of the people of Canada inhabit a relatively narrow belt (about 160 kilometres wide) along the United States border. As for individual provinces and territories, Canada's population is distributed roughly as follows:

Location	Percent of Population
Ontario & Quebec	61.8%
Prairie Provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba)	17.8%
British Columbia	13.3%
Atlantic Provinces (Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island)	6.8%
Territories (Yukon, Nunavut, Northwest Territories)	0.3%

One-third of Canada's population lives in the cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver.

In the table above, take a look at each population percentage and then look at the two maps. What connections can you draw between the population table and the geography of the land?



Do Learning Activity 1.1

What Is Demography?

Demography is the study of human population. A demographer's primary tasks are to

- determine the number of people living in a given area
- determine what change that number represents since the last census (e.g., births, deaths, people moving)
- estimate the future trends in population changes

Demographers also

- trace the origins of populations and study how people affect a region
- compile and analyze data that are useful for determining future needs in a society, such as data related to housing, education, and unemployment

The Vocabulary of Demography

Demography is the *science* of human population. Like all sciences, it has its own vocabulary. Here are eight terms that will appear later in this lesson. You may want to take out this vocabulary information and have it handy when you are reading. This way, when you come across a word you do not know, you can check this list. Each word has been bolded the first time you come across it in the lesson.

- **Baby Boomers:**
 - Individuals who were born during a population increase or "boom" between the years 1946 and about 1965.
- **Birth Rate:**
 - The number of live births per 1,000 people in a country during a given year.
- **Census:**
 - A survey of a given area that counts the entire population living there.
- **Immigration:**
 - The process of entering one country from another to take up permanent residence.
- **Life Expectancy:**
 - The average number of years a newborn is expected to live.
- **Migration:**
 - The process of moving from one place to another (within Canada, it could mean moving from one province or territory to another).
- **Natural Increase:**
 - The birth rate minus the death rate of a population is the natural increase. This does not take into account other factors, such as migration.

- **Urbanization:**
 - The growth of the population living in an urban area (a town or a city).
- **Visible Minority:**
 - In Canada, a visible minority is a person who is non-Caucasian, non-White, and does not have First Nations, Métis, and Inuit status.

Demographic Patterns in Canada: 1900s and 2000s

Since Canada confederated (became a country) in 1867, the population has grown very quickly. The following chart shows data on Canada's population growth from Statistics Canada.

Year Range	Canadian Population
1871-1881	4,325,000
1931-1941	11,507,000
1966-1971	21,568,000
1996-2001	31,021,000

Statistics Canada estimates that the population in Canada will surpass 38 million by 2025 (see <www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-520-x/2010001/r133-eng.pdf>).

Canada in the Early 1900s

Let's take a look at demographic patterns in early Canada.

Statistics Canada Data for Canada since 1900	
Demographic Pattern	Data
1. Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 1901, the population was 5,371,000. It grew to 8,788,000 by 1921.
2. Main Origin Continents of Immigrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the mid-1960s, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ almost 75% of immigrants came from Europe ■ 9% came from the USA ■ over 6% came from Asia (e.g., to build the Canadian Pacific Railway)
3. Urban/Rural Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 1901, nearly 65% of the population was rural. In 1921, this number decreased to about 50%.
4. Birth Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 1901, about 1,548,000 people were born; in 1921, 2,415,000 people were born.
5. Life Expectancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 1921, men were expected to live 59 years and women were expected to live 61 years.

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Canada's population was around 5.4 million in 1900. The population was predominantly White or Caucasian and English or French. Most people—almost 65%—lived on farms or in small communities. The vast majority of people could trace their roots to the British Isles (the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland) or France. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples made up a very small portion of the Canadian population.

In 1900, the majority of the population of Canada lived in southern Ontario and Quebec. One-third of Canada's population was located in the Maritime provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. Victoria and New Westminster in British Columbia, and Winnipeg, were the only large settlements of non-Indigenous peoples west of Thunder Bay, Ontario. Montreal was Canada's largest city during 1901, with 287,730 inhabitants.

Immigrants to Canada at this time mostly came from western Europe and the United States. Often, immigration from Asia, Africa, and parts of Europe was discouraged by racist policies set by the federal government. Immigration affected different areas of the country in various ways. For example, while Ontario and Western Canada were filling with newcomers, Eastern Canada actually lost people (often to the United States, where jobs were more plentiful).

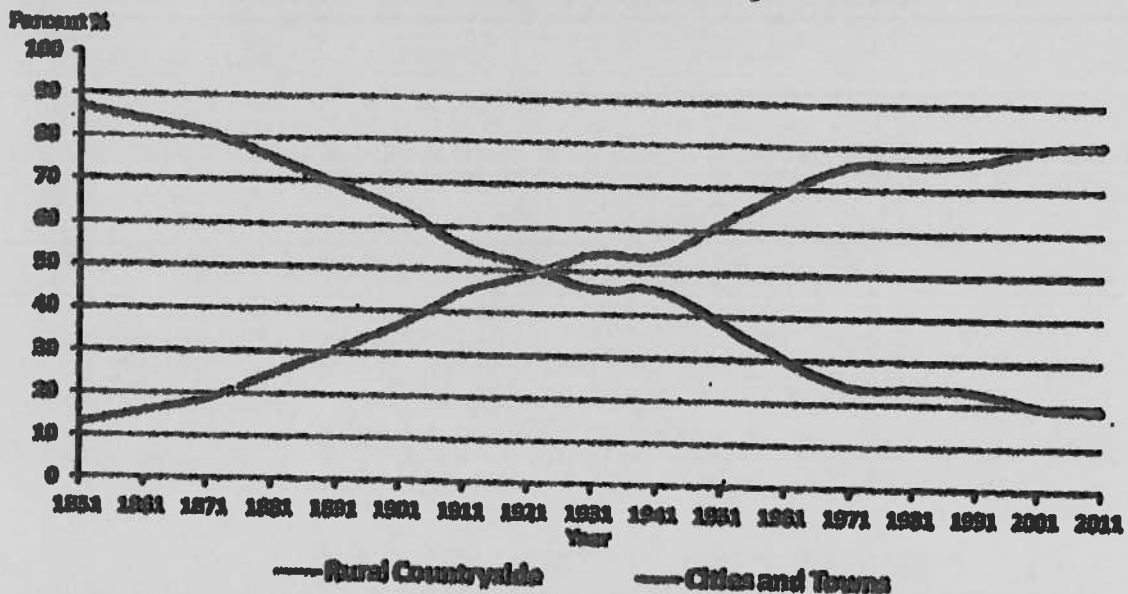
Immigrants coming to Canada around 1900 were taking part in a mass movement of populations across the world. They were part of a great change in world demographics. They came to Canada during this era due to either push factors or pull factors, or a combination of both.

A push factor is an issue that causes people to leave their country of origin. Some examples of push factors are poverty, high taxes, compulsory military service, lack of land, famine, disease, lack of freedom, and fear. A pull factor is a reason an emigrant chooses a particular country in which to relocate. Social mobility (the ability to attain wealth, status, and property), available land, and economic and political freedom are all pull factors.

Many immigrants were drawn to the Prairies because of plentiful and cheap land. It only cost about \$10 to buy 160 acres, and even the poorest immigrants could often afford this. However, not all immigrants who came to Canada settled on farms. Urban centres like Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, and Toronto grew rapidly. Cities grew so quickly that facilities like water and sewage could not keep up with the demand. Many homes had no running water, outdoor toilets lined the streets and drained into open sewers, and diseases swept through the crowded areas. Immigrants and Canadians who were born in the country did not mix well in the city. Visible minorities had lower status and therefore they did not have equal opportunities in life. Racism was a reality.

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Canada: Rural and Urban Populations



In the graph, notice how the rural population line is going down. This means the population in the countryside is decreasing. Look at the population in the cities and towns. In 1851, it was only 13% of the total population. Canada's population has increased significantly since then. As of 2011, 81% of Canadians live in urban areas. Notice how the cities and towns line increases much more slowly from 1971 to 2001. Then, from 2001 to 2011, this line only increases by 1%.

The process of people moving from the countryside to cities or towns is called *urbanization*. As you just learned, most of Canada's population now lives in urban areas.

The major reason Canada became more urbanized is because more jobs became available in urban areas (cities and towns) and fewer jobs were available in rural areas (the country). This was because of technology. Advances in technology meant that machines were taking away people's jobs in areas such as mining and farming. For example, farming technology meant that fewer farmers were needed to work on larger tracts of land. Many manufacturing plants were opened in cities and towns to build machines. For example, the gas-powered tractor used by farmers in the early 1900s needed to be built. Factory workers would assemble the tractors.

Canada's cultural make-up has also changed over the past century. Today, Canada is a country of many cultures and races. The 2006 Statistics Canada survey found that the largest portion of Canada's population was made up of people from English, French, Scottish, and Irish backgrounds. Interestingly enough, a third of the people surveyed identified their cultural background as "Canadian." This suggests that many Canadians no longer associate themselves with the ethnic or cultural heritage of their parents or grandparents.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people represented 3.8% of the population. In 2001, visible minorities made up about 13% of the population, most of whom were Chinese, South Asian, or Black.

Aside from urbanization, another significant demographic change in the past 50 years has been a decline in the natural increase in population.

Remember, the natural increase in a population is the number of births minus the number of deaths. For example:

Canada, 2005
Births = 342,176
Deaths = 230,130
Natural Increase = 112,046

The natural increase in 2005 of 112,046 people represented part of Canada's growth. This number means there were 112,046 more babies born than people who died. This number does not include the increase in population from immigration. In the past, the natural increase was much higher than it is today. For example, in 1959, Canada's highest natural increase was at 339,000.

Pretend you are a demographer. Think about the following table. Ask yourself the question "Why has the number of births decreased if the population has increased?"

Year	Canada's Population	Number of Births
1959	17,000,000	479,000
2005	32,000,000	342,176

Stop here and think of your own answer to this question. Once you are done, read on to discover some possible reasons.

The following are several possible reasons for this decline:

- Women's roles have changed: Many women have attained higher levels of education and have decided to pursue a career before having children. Many women are having their first child after age 30. This reduces the number of children a woman can have during her reproductive years.
- Some couples see children as a hindrance to their lifestyle and prefer to pursue activities without interference from children.
- The nuclear family (family with a father, mother, and children) is only one of many different family types in Canada today. According to the 2006 Census, 16% of families were single-parent families (usually a single mother).

There is one exception to the decline in average birth rates across the country: birth rates among the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit population are markedly higher than they are among other groups in Canada. For example, in 2011/2012, the natural increase for Canada was 0.4%, but in Nunavut the natural increase was at 2%. Even so, Statistics Canada is predicting that there will be a negative natural increase around 2030. This means that the number of deaths will be greater than the number of births. If this happens, Canada will have to rely solely on immigration for population growth.



Do Learning Activity 1.2

LESSON 3: HUMAN RIGHTS

What are Human Rights?

Human rights are fundamental rights that people are entitled to because they are human. It is the idea that all humans have rights, not just the rich and powerful. Laws have been written to protect the rights of all people. Interestingly enough, the greatest number of advances in human rights have probably come as a result of wars, rebellions, and violence of one kind or another.

Some of the most important historical foundation charters (written guarantees of rights for citizens in a society) were:

- The Magna Carta, which was imposed on King John of England in 1215 by his barons. This document limited the power of the English king to imprison people without warrant. It declared that the king was subject to the laws of his country, not above them.
- The French Rights of Man and the Citizen of 1789, which was created as a result of the French Revolution when French people overthrew their king and established a new government based on the idea that "men are born and remain free and equal in rights."
- The American Bill of Rights of 1791, which guaranteed individual rights to all American citizens and limited the power of the government to interfere in personal liberties.
- The Treaty of Versailles, which was signed at the end of the First World War in 1918. One of the provisions of the treaty was the creation of an international peacekeeping body called the League of Nations. Some aspects of human rights were incorporated in the declarations of the League of Nations, particularly in areas of child labour, slavery, and health.

After the Second World War ended in 1945, the League of Nations, in a significantly altered form, became the United Nations. The UN was established to promote all aspects of human rights, including political, economic, and cultural rights. Today, the United Nations has produced three major documents that govern human rights:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

This lesson will focus on the first of these documents.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was created by United Nations members from 48 different countries, who gathered in Paris to create the Declaration. Why were so many people interested in creating one human rights document for the whole world? The document was finished and signed on December 10, 1948. A good question to ask is what was happening at this time.

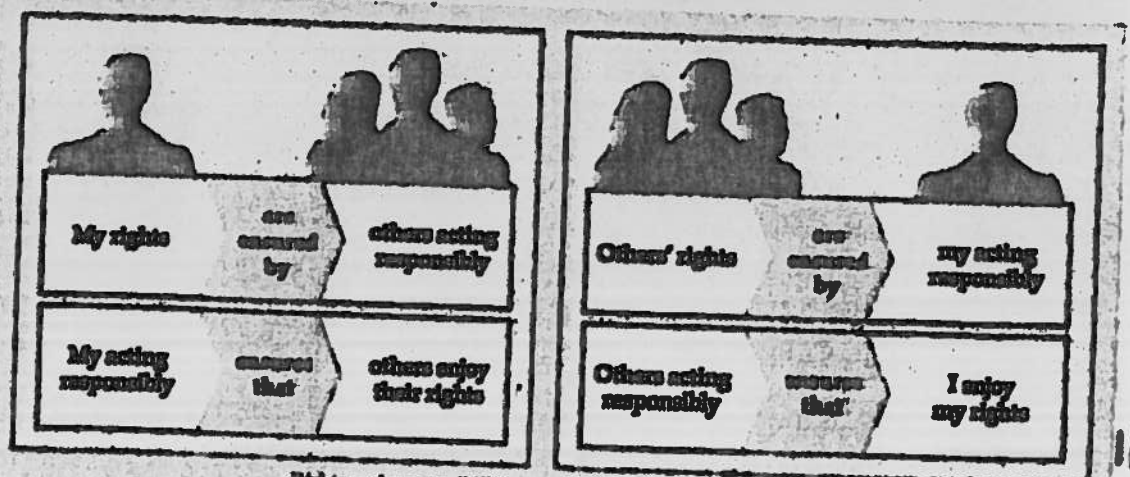
The Second World War lasted from 1939-1945. During this war, Adolf Hitler was in power in Germany. His Nazi government was determined to exterminate certain groups of people, targeting mostly the Jewish population. Over 13 million people were murdered, including six million Jews. This act of genocide (deliberate destruction of a whole people) was so horrendous that the world was unified in a desire to prevent something like this from ever happening again. It was because of the Holocaust that the United Nations was moved to create a global human rights document.

The Commission on Human Rights was also created at that time. Their job was to make a list of the basic rights that all humans deserve. Because this was a list for all people on Earth, it was difficult to make. Everyone had their own idea of which rights are inherent (meaning they are always present and can never be denied). Each representative brought his or her own culture and understanding of the world, and they all had to put aside their differences to agree upon one set of rights for all.

John Humphrey, a professor from McGill University in Canada, was a member of the international commission. He was an expert on international law. Dr. Humphrey was the writer of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as other rights that were written later. Think about how the work of Dr. Humphrey has affected your life.

Take a moment and look at the graphic below. Think about your rights, such as the right to equal treatment and freedom from discrimination. Think about your responsibilities, such as the responsibility to treat others equally. How are rights and responsibilities mirror images of each other? Use the graphic to help you form an answer. Take a minute and jot down your thoughts.

RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES



Rights and responsibilities are mirror images of each other. To enjoy our freedoms, we must control our actions by respecting the freedoms of others.

This document is organized into the following sections:

- 1. The Preamble:** This tells why the document was made.
- 2. The 30 Articles:** These list the basic human rights.

The Preamble

This document was written with two goals in mind:

- **Everyone in the world deserves "freedom, justice, and peace"**
- **To achieve this, there must be a set of universal laws that is recognized by everyone on Earth.**

30 Articles:

There are 30 articles in the UDHR covering various categories of human rights. These include the following:

- **Basic Rights:**
 - **All people are worthy of life, liberty, personal security, and personal freedom.**
- **Political Rights:**
 - **All people should have the right to vote for their government.**
- **Civil Rights and Liberties:**
 - **All people should enjoy freedom of opinion and expression.**
- **Equality Rights:**
 - **All people should be free from discrimination.**
- **Economic Rights:**
 - **All workers should have the right to fair wages and safe working conditions.**
- **Social Rights:**
 - **All people deserve access to education and adequate health care.**
- **Cultural Rights:**
 - **All people have the right to speak their native language.**



Notes:

For a full version of the plain language version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, please go to <www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plain.asp>.



Do Learning Activity 1.3 and Assignment 1.1

The British North America Act

It is important to remember that Canada was originally a colony of the British Empire. The land was owned and controlled by the British government, and all colonists had to obey the laws made by their "mother country" (England). After the *British North America Act* was passed on July 1st, 1867, Canada became a dominion. A dominion is a country that only controls government dealings within its borders (things such as taxes and local laws). The mother country controls all government dealings with other countries (things such as trade negotiations or choosing to go to war).

The British North America Act of 1867 did several things:

- It created the country of Canada, which included four provinces: Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick.
- It defined the rules of government.
- It defined the powers of the federal Parliament, the House of Commons, the Senate, and the Governor General (the monarch's representative).
- It gave Parliament the power to make laws for "peace, order, and good government."
- It divided the powers between the federal and provincial governments.

The Patriation of Canada's Constitution

When the British government passed the Statute of Westminster in 1931, Canada was officially allowed to have control over all of its affairs. However, the Canadian government could still not make changes to its Constitution (the *BNA Act*) without the approval of the British. In effect, the rules and principles by which Canada was governed—the values in which the country believed—were still those that had been chosen by the British.

On April 17, 1982, the Constitution was patriated—that is, Canada gained complete control over its Constitution. Canadians could at last decide for themselves what values their government would uphold and what beliefs were most important for the good of the country.

In a ceremony watched by millions of Canadians, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Queen Elizabeth II signed the historic documents that put Canada in charge of its own Constitution. Our new Constitution included a section on rights for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples in Canada, and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.



Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Queen Elizabeth II sign the Constitution of Canada. Reproduced from <www.ccn.st.ca/cyber/elem/learningcommunity/socialsciences/history30/curr_content/history-30/module3/activity1a_3.html>.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is an extremely important milestone in the protection of human rights in Canada. The values and principles embodied in the charter are essential to the promotion of a free and democratic society.

The charter protects the rights and freedoms of Canadians by limiting the ability of governments to pass laws that discriminate or infringe on human rights. Because the charter is entrenched in Canada's Constitution (made a part of it), these rights cannot be easily eliminated. The federal government would have to pass a law to remove a right, and seven of the 10 provinces (one of which would have to be Ontario, Quebec, or BC) would have to agree to the change.

The rights and freedoms found in the charter are divided into a number of categories:

1. Fundamental Freedoms
2. Democratic Rights
3. Legal Rights
4. Equality Rights
5. Official Languages
6. Minority Language Education Rights

The following are some of your rights and freedoms as a Canadian citizen:

Fundamental Freedoms:

You have the freedom to

- follow a religion of your choice
- form and express your own thoughts, beliefs, and opinions
- assemble peacefully with other people
- associate with a worker's union

Democratic Rights:

- Once you reach the age of consent (18 in Manitoba), you have the right to vote to determine the person who will govern your country and community.

Mobility Rights:

- You have the right to move to and live in any province or territory.
- You have the right to pursue a livelihood in any province or territory.

- You have the right to life, liberty, and personal security.
- Your property cannot be searched or seized at random.
- You cannot be detained or imprisoned without a valid reason.
- If you are arrested or detained, you must be promptly informed of the reason.
- If arrested, you have the right to see a lawyer or legal counsel.
- If charged with a crime, you have the right to a trial. Your trial must be delivered within a reasonable time and it must be unbiased.
- If sent to trial, you will be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
- You should not be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment.
- If sent to trial, you will have the right to a court-appointed interpreter (in case of language barriers).

Equality Rights:

- All people should be given equal treatment before and under the law.
- All people should have equal protection under the law. The law should not discriminate based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Language Rights:

- English and French are the official languages of Canada.
- In certain circumstances, education should be provided in a minority language.

When passing new laws, Canadian politicians refer to the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. If a law violates one of the rights or freedoms, it can be removed or adjusted on the grounds of being "unconstitutional," or of opposing what Canadians believe. One example is the *Indian Act* and Bill C-31.

Bill C-31 and the Indian Act

In 1876, the Canadian government created the *Indian Act*. This act described which First Nations peoples could be known as Status Indians. Each Status Indian was given a treaty number. They were also registered with the Department of Indian Affairs. Only registered Indians had access to the benefits of the treaties. These benefits include health, education, and other social services. In addition, only Status Indians could live on a reserve.



Note:

It is important to understand the use of the word *Indian*. In Canada today, the term *First Nations* is always used except when referring to government rights. For this reason, you will see the word *Indian* being used in this course.

In the past, Status Indian women who married non-Indian men lost their status. If they were living on a reserve, they would have to move. This was described in Section 12 of the *Indian Act*. In contrast, Status Indian men would not lose their status if they married a non-Indian woman. In fact, the non-Indian wife would gain status as an Indian. 15

In 1970, Jeannette Corbiere Lavell of the Wikwemikong band on Manitoulin Island married a non-Indian man, thus losing her status. She appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada. The court ruled against her, indicating that she had been treated equally under the law. However, once the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* was passed in 1982, it changed the rules about equality.

Jeannette Corbiere Lavell, a First Nations woman, was not treated the same as a First Nations man in the same situation. The *Indian Act* was changed in 1985. This change was called Bill C-31. First Nations women would no longer lose their Indian status if they married a non-status person. Women and children who had lost their status under the old act were reinstated if they applied.

With Bill C-31, there were two sub-sections.

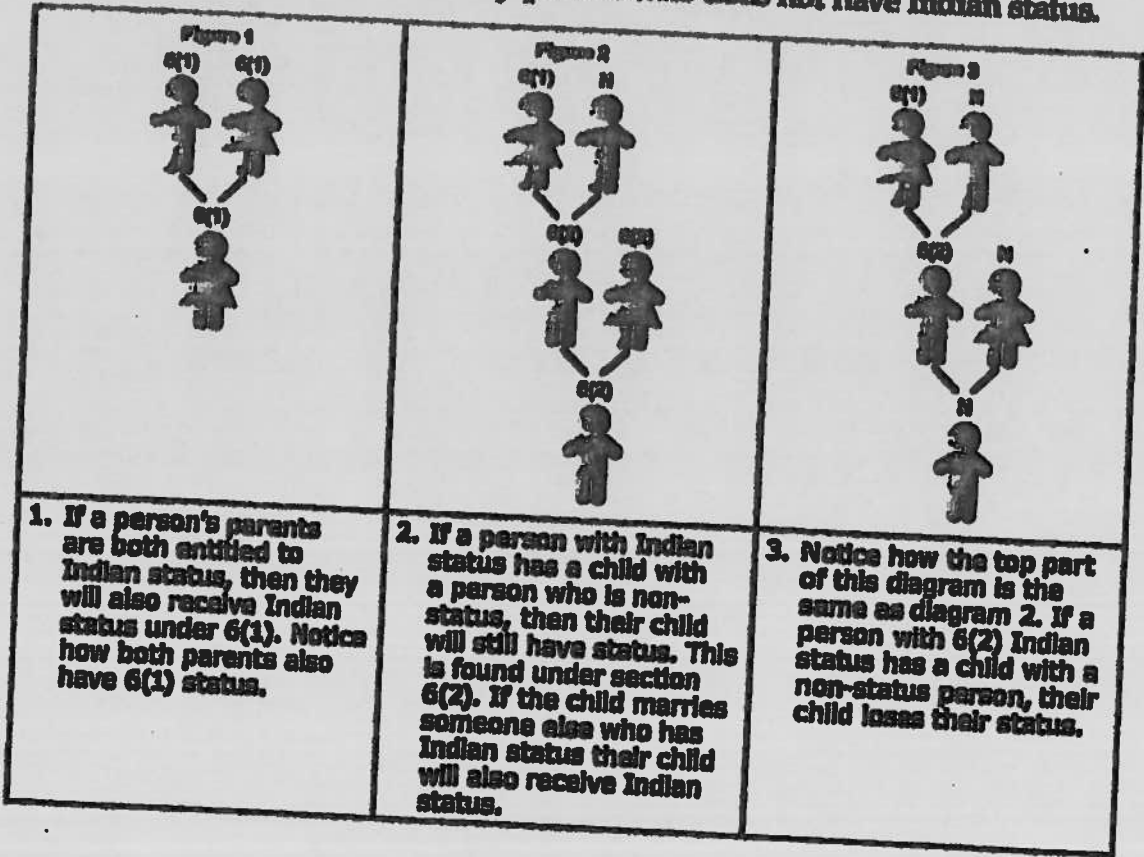
Section 6 (1):

If a person can prove that both their parents are entitled to Indian status, then the child will also receive Indian status under section 6(1).

Section 6 (2):

If only one parent has Indian status, then a person is still granted status under section 6(2). For their children to also have status, this person will have to marry another person with status.

What does this mean? Let's take a look at three hypothetical (made up) cases. In the diagrams, N stands for any person who does not have Indian status.



Bill C-3

Bill C-3 came into law in 2011. This Bill is only about women who lost their status by marrying non-status men. With Bill C-31, these women regained their Indian status. Bill C-3 also gave Indian status to the children and grandchildren of these women.

Non-Violent Conflict Resolution

It is important to note that Jeannette Corbiere Lavell used non-violent methods when working to regain her Indian status. Lavell went to court, and when she lost her case she went to a higher court. In the next assignment, you will research more about Lavell and other First Nations women. Notice the methods they used to reach their goals.

In order for non-violent conflict resolution to take place, two criteria need to be met:

1. The conflict has to be addressed. If the conflict is ignored, then a fair solution is not found. Two examples of solutions that are not good for all parties are when one person withdraws from the situation or opts out of the activity.
2. There must be no violence involved.

This may sound easy, but non-violent conflict resolution can be very challenging. At times, it may take years for a conflict to be resolved. In the case of Lavell, here is a timeline of her journey:

1970	• Lavell was married. That year, she received a letter from the government telling her that she was no longer an Indian. Lavell did not agree with this. (conflict)
June 1971	• Lavell took her case to County Court (non-violent method). She lost.
October 1971	• Lavell took the case to the Federal Court. She won.
1973	• The case was taken to the Supreme Court. Lavell won.
1985	• The Indian Act was changed so that Indian women would not lose their status through marriage.

When you face the challenge of a conflict and you do not want to ignore the problem, how do you resolve it? Think of a time when you were in a conflict. How did you solve the problem? How could you have solved it differently? Take a minute to brainstorm some ideas. Then read the list below of 12 possible ways to solve a conflict.

- Communicate (talk and listen)
- Use a mediator or referee
- Solve the problem in court
- Use chance (e.g., roll a dice to decide)
- Lobby for new legislation (change the laws)
- Use problem-solving techniques
- Compromise
- Empathize (understand feelings)
- Share
- Take turns
- Vote
- Collaborate (work together)



What is Citizenship?

The concept of citizenship goes all the way back to ancient Greece. In the Greek city states, "citizens" were people who had special rights in society. In return for these rights they agreed to help in running the city state. Modern citizenship reflects this idea, and citizenship today refers to a range of civic, political, social, and cultural rights, as well as the corresponding responsibilities.

The meaning of the term *citizen* evolved over the years, and first became widely used during the French and American revolutions. These revolutions were violent times in history when citizens rejected the idea that monarchs were appointed by God and, therefore, must be obeyed. The revolutionaries in France and America sought to establish a system in which the people decided who should be their leader. The term *citizen* came to refer to people who could participate freely and equally in government matters.

Traditionally, where a person was born and the status of his or her parents were the factors that determined whether that person was a citizen. It was difficult and sometimes impossible to become a citizen of a different country. Over the centuries, people began to move between countries more easily and new methods of determining citizenship had to be developed. Different countries developed different laws governing who could and could not be granted citizenship. Some factors that determined citizenship included the length of time someone lived in a country, as well as his or her character, education, and, in some cases, race and religion.

Canadian Citizenship

Prior to 1947, Canadian citizenship did not exist. Canada had close imperial ties with Britain, and therefore people living in this country were officially classified as British subjects—that is, subject to British rule. As a result, it was relatively easy for immigrants from other Commonwealth countries to come to Canada and gain full rights. In many cases, only one year of residency was required before an immigrant from within the Commonwealth could be called a "Canadian."

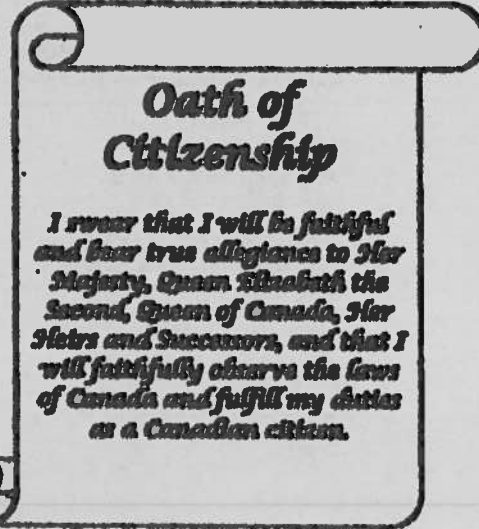
Many have called Canada a "nation forged in fire" because of how important the two world wars were in shaping Canada into a country. Canada emerged from these conflicts as a respected member of the international community. We made a considerable contribution to the war efforts and to allied causes. As a result, many people believed that it was time Canadians had their own citizenship, separate from Britain and British influence.

The 1947 *Citizenship Act* was an important milestone in Canadian history, helping to form a unique Canadian identity and advance a vision of Canada as a multicultural society. However, it tended to be prejudiced in nature because people were admitted into Canada only from certain countries of origin. *The Citizenship Act* became a model for similar laws elsewhere in the Commonwealth, and was the basis for how the concept of citizenship would unfold in the next few decades as Canada grew and prospered.

Citizenship in Canada Today

Today, in order to become a Canadian citizen, an immigrant must

- be 18 years of age or older (children under 18 may apply if their parent[s] are Canadian citizens)
- be a permanent resident who was lawfully admitted to Canada
- have lived here for at least three out of the previous four years
- speak and understand either English or French
- know information about Canada, such as the rights and responsibilities that Canadians have (e.g., the right to vote), and some things about Canada's history, geography, and political system



- write a citizenship test
- take the *Oath of Citizenship*

A person may not become a Canadian citizen if he or she

- is under a deportation order and is not legally allowed to be in Canada at the time of application
- has been charged with a crime or an indictable offence
- was convicted for an indictable crime in the past three years
- is or was in prison, on parole, or on probation in the last four years

Becoming a Canadian Citizen

Immigrants or refugees applying for Canadian citizenship apply in one of the following three categories:

Family Class

A relative in Canada who is a Canadian citizen or permanent resident may act as a sponsor and assist the applicant in immigrating to Canada. The relative is required to guarantee the applicant's finances during the first few years of his or her residency in Canada. A sponsor can be a parent, spouse, fiancé, child, and, in some cases, another relative who can show that he or she has the means to provide assistance to the applicant upon arrival in Canada.

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The immigrant applies on his or her own merit. This involves demonstrating that he or she is able to support him or herself financially in Canada. The applications in this class are assessed under the "points system," which gives a certain number of points in several categories related to the person's abilities and experiences, including employment skills, work experience, language ability, and education. There are also several sub-categories that earn the applicant points. The sub-categories include investors, entrepreneurs, and self-employed applicants. In most cases, the applicant must achieve at least 70 out of 100 points to be successful in becoming a Canadian citizen.

Refugee Class

People who are in danger if they remain in their own countries and seek protection in Canada (or elsewhere) are called *refugees*.

People in all three categories must meet certain requirements before they are allowed to immigrate to Canada (for example, people who are facing criminal charges cannot be processed until the charges are dealt with).



Do Learning Activity 1.5 and Assignment 1.3

What is Personal Identity?

Your personal identity is the unique combination of characteristics that distinguishes you from other people. People's individuality and personality are moulded by many factors, including the characteristics that their parents passed on to them, the environment in which they grew up, and their life experiences.

Personal identity is shaped within the following contexts:

- Your history
 - Cultural background
 - Events in your past
- Your physical environment
 - Where you live
 - Your physical geography
- Your social environment
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Peers
 - Media
 - School
- Your needs and wants

Your personal identity is expressed through your lifestyle and may include the following:

- Your language
- Your leisure activities
- Your job
- Your interests
- Your involvement in organizations
 - Sports
 - Volunteer
 - Religious
- Your economic status
- Your standard of living
 - Clothes
 - Vehicles
 - House
 - Things you own

It is important to know that your *personal* identity changes as you grow older. As an individual's life history changes, her or his identity evolves. You will always carry the genetic characteristics that your parents passed on to you, as well as your early childhood history, but as your personal history grows, you can add to your story and redefine it.

What is National Identity?

Just like people, countries have their own identities that shape and set them apart from other countries. This holds true for Canada. Our national identity reflects our early history. First Nations Peoples, the French, and the British are regarded to be the three *founding nations* of our country. Canada's geography and our relationship with our closest neighbour, the United States, have also influenced who we are as Canadians. As time passes, our national identity evolves as well.

A national identity evolves over time within the following contexts:

- Our historical experiences
- Our economics
- Our physical geography
 - Location
 - Climate
 - Vegetation
 - Resources
- Our social environment, neighbouring countries, and allies (countries with whom we are friends)

Our country's national identity is reflected in the following:

- Our language(s)
- Our currency
- Our sports and sporting events
- Religion(s)
- Our holidays
- Our standard of living
- Our monuments and physical structures
- Our national symbols
 - Flags
- Our aesthetics
 - Dance
 - Music
 - Drama
 - Literature
 - Art
 - Coat of Arms
- Anthems

Canadian identity has not always been the way we know it today. Next, you will look at the evolution of Canadian identity.

Confederation to 1900

Canada's early identity was linked closely with Great Britain. Many Canadians wanted to keep British culture and traditions. In the country's early years, English-speaking Canadians often stressed their British roots. They also denied the idea that they were anything less than British or that they owed allegiance to any country other than Britain.

Meanwhile, French Canadians worked hard to protect their own distinct culture. The French were becoming an ever-smaller minority among an English majority and feared assimilation.

Assimilation is the forcing of one cultural group to adopt the customs and traditions of another cultural group. The French wanted to ensure that they could practise their Roman Catholic religion, and speak the French language in their schools and communities. They also wanted to be equally represented in elected governments.

First Nations groups were also concerned. They were isolated on reserves and therefore removed from society. They were not allowed to participate in government without giving up their Indian Status. This meant moving off the reserve away from family and friends. All policies regarding First Nations people were about assimilation. This meant that the government wanted First Nations people to give up their culture and way of life for a "better" life. First Nations people wanted to find a way for all groups to coexist peacefully and equally while respecting Mother Earth.

As you can see, all of Canada's founding nations had very different ideas about what it means to be "Canadian." How are these views the same today?

The 20th Century

After the two world wars, Britain was no longer a world power. Originally, Britain had dominions under its rule, including Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Also, in December of 1931, the Statute of Westminster was an act that brought independence to the dominions of the British Empire.

Canada began creating its own national identity. Canada could no longer see itself as the *child* of Britain. Britain could no longer afford to continue playing the *mother* role to Canada. Canada was now a sovereign (independent) nation.

Since the second world war, Canadians have been struggling to decide exactly what makes them Canadian. In the past several decades, we have adopted several symbols that we now consider to be part of our Canadian identity. Take a look at the following five symbols and ask yourself the following questions:

- Does this mean anything to me?
- Does this make me proud?
- Do memories come up when I look at this?

1.



The Maple Leaf flag (1965)

2.



The beaver as a national symbol (1975)

3. "O Canada" as the national anthem (1980)

*O Canada
Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide,
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.*

4. Changing the name of July 1st from "Dominion Day" to "Canada Day" (1982)

5. The Canadian Coat of Arms (1994)



Today

British, French, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures have all shaped Canadian culture. The United States also acts as a strong influence. Sometimes we even attempt to describe who we are by contrasting ourselves with U.S. culture. How are we different from Americans?

People point out that the following aspects of Canada are different from the U.S.:

- There has been a greater integration of First Nations cultures into the Canadian mainstream.
- There is the existence of a large French minority in Quebec and other provinces (notably Manitoba).
- We are an officially bilingual country.
- Our government has embraced and legislated the protection of pluralism and multiculturalism.

Pluralism in Canada

In Canada, pluralism means that different cultures have been able to maintain their cultural identity while still being Canadian. For pluralism to exist in a country, the government must formally recognize and support the differences within their society. Differences can be based on such things as culture, religion, language, social groups, and secular (non-religious) groups. In Canada, different cultures have been able to maintain their culture while still being *Canadian*.

Pluralism has worked in Canada because we have laws that protect our rights to be ourselves. In this way, Canada respects cultural diversity and tries to promote peaceful coexistence between different groups. Canada has a long tradition of giving special guarantees to certain groups so that they have the right to maintain their culture and heritage. These laws include the following:

- ***The Quebec Act, 1774:***
The first of many enactments seeking to protect the language and culture of a particular group—in this case, the French Canadians living in the British-controlled colony of Quebec.
- ***The British North America Act, 1867***
This carried forward special rights to protect the French minority outside of Quebec and the English minority inside Quebec.
- ***The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982***
It includes the protection of group rights such as freedom of association, language rights, and Indigenous rights.
- ***The Canadian Multicultural Act, 1985***
Designed for preserving and promoting multiculturalism in Canada.



Expressing Our Canadian Identity

A nation's cultural industries (such as publishing, film, music, and broadcasting) express and help to protect its identity. Canadian cultural industries portray attitudes, beliefs, values, and facts about who we are as a people and as a nation. If our cultural industries are strong, our identity will be strong and easy to recognize. If these industries are unable to compete with (or protect themselves from) the powerful cultural industries of other nations, our culture and identity may well become fragile.

Canada has always been wary of the influence of the United States, our neighbour and one of the largest and most powerful nations in the world. The USA has the strongest cultural industries in the world. The widespread development of the radio in the 1920s made the United States one of the cornerstones of the mass media. Cheap newspapers and magazines, radio networks, movies with sound, advertising, and instant communication by telephone were new cultural realities.

During the early decades of the 20th century, the Atlantic Ocean delayed the distribution of information, products, technology, and fads from Britain. The USA rapidly replaced Britain as the main source of Canadian entertainment. Today, more often than not, Canadians choose American cultural industries over Canadian (especially television and films).

Many attempts were made over the years to lessen the impact of American cultural influences and to nurture a Canadian cultural industry. In the 1930s, government-owned national broadcasting networks and the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission were created. In the 1950s, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (the CBC) began television broadcasting. In the 1970s, the Canadian film industry was given special tax benefits.

Protecting Canadian Identity

American cultural influences in Canada are nothing new. In the 19th century, American music, "dime novels" about the Wild West, and books by American author Mark Twain were popular in this country.

In the early 1900s, American radio programs and films were welcomed in Canada. By the 1920s, some Canadians were becoming alarmed at the cultural impact that the USA was having on Canada. The 1930s were the "Golden Age of Hollywood" and the influx of American cultural industries continued. As a result, the Canadian government began to play a greater role in controlling the media.

The *Broadcasting Act* of 1932 created the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission. The government would regulate the Canadian media to protect it. The CRBC was also provided money to promote Canadian culture. The CBC was created in 1936 and the National Film Board in 1939. The government continues to help pay for both.

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In the 1950s, the television revolution hit North America. The first Canadian television station opened in Montreal in 1952. In 1958, coast-to-coast broadcasts began. In 1960, the Canadian government agency that set rules for television began to take action. They decided that by the end of 1962, 55% of TV programs shown in Canada should be of Canadian origin. Privately owned stations (ones that were owned by citizens and not the CBC, which is owned by the Canadian government) protested. They argued that it cost more to make programs in Canada than to buy American ones, and Canadian programs were not as popular as American shows. As a result of this protest, the rules were relaxed.

In 1968, the CRTC—the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission—was established to set rules for the entire industry. That same year, Parliament passed the *Broadcasting Act*. This act said that the Canadian broadcasting system should be owned and controlled by Canadians. Broadcasting should add to the cultural, political, and social life in Canada. Programming should be of high quality and should use mostly Canadian talent.

Under CRTC regulations, both radio and TV stations must broadcast a certain amount of Canadian content as defined by the CRTC. Generally speaking, Canadian radio stations must play 35% “Canadian content,” while television stations must broadcast between 60 and 100% Canadian content during prime time (8:00–11:00 pm, Monday to Friday).

In order for radio broadcasts to qualify as “Canadian content,” the MAPL system is used. For a song to be considered Canadian, it must fulfill at least two of the following conditions:

- M** (music): The music was composed entirely by a Canadian.
- A** (artist): The music was, or the lyrics were, performed mostly by a Canadian.
- P** (production): The musical selection was
 - recorded entirely in Canada
 - or
 - performed entirely in Canada and broadcast live in Canada
- L** (lyrics): The lyrics were written entirely by a Canadian.

The CRTC sparks debate in Canada. Some believe it has been successful in maintaining Canadian culture and identity, and others believe its rules are too restrictive. By 1998, there were questions whether the CRTC would expand its Canadian content rules to the Internet. In 1999, it was decided that the CRTC would not regulate the Internet.



Do Learning Activity 1.7

Canada's Past Injustices

In 1867, the right to vote was granted to a small portion of the Canadian population. It was given only to men and was based on property ownership or other assets of a specified value. The following two groups of people were notably left out and not given a chance to participate in Confederation:

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples

The First Nations and Inuit people had lived in North America for thousands of years. The Métis people reflected European and First Nations cultures. By the time of Confederation, European settlers had taken control of much of the land. Treaties were made with many First Nations groups, and they were moved to smaller parcels of land that were "reserved" for them. These are commonly referred to as *Indian reserves*. The government tried to make First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people adopt European ways.

Women

At the time of Confederation, women were not allowed to be elected as politicians. They were also not allowed to vote. Women did not have the power to express themselves in public; in fact, under the law, they were not even considered "persons."

In recent times, the Canadian government and other national governments have had to reconcile past injustices. In 2001, the Canadian Secretary of State gave a speech to the United Nations, affirming Canada's commitment to righting the wrongs of its past, especially with regard to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples:

"We must acknowledge that human history has not been one of inclusion and respect, but rather has been and somewhat remains one often characterized by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Canada believes that acknowledging injustices in history—be it about the effects of colonialism and past treatment of Indigenous peoples, of slavery, religious discrimination or other past injustices is essential to reconciliation. Canada further believes that for a reconciliation process to endure, it is imperative that once we have acknowledged past actions, we act together as a global community to ensure these injustices are not repeated."

— Hedy Fry (Canadian Secretary of State)
World Conference against Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, 2001



Note:

The word *xenophobia* means an intense fear or dislike of foreign people, their customs and culture, or foreign things.

Women and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples are not the only groups to face racial discrimination in Canada. Professor Gerald Gall created the following list of groups that have experienced racial discrimination by past Canadian governments.

- 1847-1985: Forced assimilation and abuse of First Nations children in residential schools
- 1885-1946: Chinese head tax and exclusion acts
- 1891-1956: Imprisonment of lepers, mostly Chinese, on two Victoria-area islands
- 1900-1982: Unjust treatment of Blacks from the Caribbean
- 1914-1920: Internment of Ukrainian Canadians during WWI
- 1938-1948: Denial of entry to persons of Jewish descent in Canada
- 1940-1943: Internment of Italian Canadians during WWII
- 1940-1943: Internment of German Canadians during WWII
- 1942-1949: Internment of Japanese Canadians during and after WWII
- Post-1949: Denial of benefits to First Nations war veterans

Traditional First Nations Education

In traditional First Nations communities, children did not attend school. Instead they learned in a natural way from their family and the community. The family consisted of more than parents and siblings. It included cousins, grandparents, and even the whole village or community. Children learned by listening, watching, playing games, dreaming, and helping others. The other people in their community were their teachers, but children did not have classrooms or scheduled lessons. When there was an opportunity for learning, a child would be taught. Learning was considered ongoing and lifelong.

First Nations communities worked together for the mutual benefit of all. In this way, survival was ensured. Every person contributed to the family and the community. Within this world view, it was important to put others before one's own desires.

Children were given responsibilities at a young age. When there was a need for an extra set of hands or a child was simply curious to learn something new, there was an opportunity to learn. This meant that learning was a part of daily life and the teachers were family or community members. An example of this is children learning through stories from their elders. These stories held information vital to the survival of the community.

For example, the Haudenosaunee people (Iroquois) had a story. There are many versions of this tale. Here is the beginning of one such story.

A very long time ago, Sky Woman's daughter died giving birth to twins. She was buried in the ground and out of the ground sprung three sisters. These three sisters were very different from one another. The first sister was the youngest. She wore green and could not stand without the help of the eldest sister. The second sister wore bright yellow and would run across the fields. The eldest sister always stood tall, guarding the others. These three sisters were never apart for they loved each other very much...

This story taught children about beans, squash, and corn. If planted together, they will grow well. The beans create nitrogen, which the corn needs, and the squash prevents weeds from growing in the area. When planted together, these three grow stronger than they would alone. The story goes on to tell about a young boy who takes each girl away at different times of the year. Children who learn the story of the three sisters grow to understand how to plant and when to harvest these foods.

Unlike European systems of education, First Nations education was accomplished through gentle guidance and the use of games, stories, and ceremonies as children grew to adulthood. These methods taught the children the customs and values of the community. For those youth chosen to become community leaders, more structured and specialized knowledge was taught. All teaching was done by example, as the adults would model the behaviour that was expected of the children. Discipline was subtle and was carried out through the use of teasing, ridicule, and gentle warnings. The physical corporal punishment of the European education system was unheard of in First Nations communities.

The Residential Schools

Then, the residential schools were opened. The purpose of residential schools was to assimilate First Nations people into mainstream society. First Nations culture was believed to be inferior and European ways were perceived to be better, so First Nations culture was not considered to be worth preserving. To achieve this goal of assimilation, many children were separated from their families in the belief that they would learn to identify with mainstream culture and forget their own traditions and beliefs.

Children ages seven to fifteen were taken from their homes and forced to attend these schools. These children were only allowed to speak English and were punished when caught speaking their own language. As time went on, many children lost their original language and had difficulties communicating with their family members who did not speak English.

Take a moment and imagine what that means. Pretend you are a child as young as 6 years old and you are forcibly taken from your parents to attend school. You do not see them again for 10 months. After a couple of years, you forget your language and cannot talk with your parents.

In addition, First Nations children were not allowed to practice their religion or wear their traditional clothing. These children were treated poorly and many were abused. The students were educated for only part of the day. The rest of the day was devoted to work, religious instruction, and cooking and cleaning.

Residential school education did not meet the standards of other Canadian schools. This meant that graduates of residential schools were not qualified to attend university and were not equipped to take on specialized jobs. The purpose of these schools was to assimilate First Nations people into European culture and place them at the bottom of the system. However, the result was a generation of people who did not fit into First Nations or Canadian culture. They became a people apart.

Treatment of Students at Residential Schools

The treatment received by residential school survivors has been described as cruel and demeaning, yet others have stated that their treatment was fair. However, there is enough evidence that the treatment received at residential schools has had a negative impact on the lives of First Nations people, their families, and their communities. The treatment described by survivors included the following:

- **Strict Rules**
 - Often enforced through corporal punishment (strapping) or public humiliation.
- **Hunger**
 - Not enough food was provided for the children. Children often stole food from the pantry/kitchen to satisfy their hunger.
- **Sex Segregation**
 - Boys and girls were not allowed contact with each other—not even brothers and sisters.
- **Indoctrination of Religious Beliefs**
 - Survivors were subjected to repetitive religious ceremonies for conversion purposes, and were not allowed to practice their own ceremonies. Children were made to believe they were heathens.
- **Punishment**
 - Usually quite severe and involved physical pain. Oftentimes, physical, mental, verbal, and sexual abuse occurred at the schools. Survivors were abused by supervisors, as well as other students.

The conditions at residential schools are taken from testimonies offered by survivors. There are recollections of substandard, overcrowded housing. Cleaning and maintenance was carried out by students as part of their daily chores. Children were often forced to go outside and do chores in unbearable conditions. Poor heating in the dorms caused illnesses. Living in a residential school was compared to living in a prison: the students were told what and when to do things—even when to go to the bathroom.

Many years later, the federal government realized that residential schools were not producing the desired results, as First Nations Peoples were not becoming a part of mainstream society. The federal government changed their policy and allowed students to stay at home with their families while attending schools with other Canadian children. This was called inclusion.

Unfortunately, there were a lot of hurtful things done to children in residential schools. Both physical and sexual abuse happened to these children. In addition, many of the students at residential schools were away from their family for months and sometimes years at a time. Because of these experiences, many residential school survivors have problems with social skills, such as

- self-esteem
- identity
- communication

In addition, there are intergenerational impacts being felt as the children and grandchildren of residential school survivors have inherited these problems. For example, high school graduation rates are of great concern today. Here are some statistics about that.

How many First Nations people, aged 20-24, living on reserves, have not finished high school?

- In 1996, the Census determined that 60% had not finished high school.
- In 2001, the Census determined that 60% had not finished high school.
- In 2006, the Census determined that 60% had not finished high school.

There are two things that are immediately alarming about these statistics:

1. The percentage of all Canadians, aged 20-24, who have not finished high school is only 10.5%.
2. With recent efforts to improve the education system on reserves, there are still no positive results being seen in these statistics.

The children and grandchildren of residential school survivors are still experiencing negative effects of these schools. These people are called secondary survivors. Secondary survivors have been affected by the residential school system because often they suffer from a lack of effective communication skills, poor bonding with parents, and a loss of parenting skills, and have experienced a loss of cultural and spiritual values.

Although this lesson has a lot of dark stories to tell, it is also one of resilience in the face of adversity. Regardless of all the efforts made to destroy First Nations culture and religion, First Nations Peoples still retain much of their heritage.



LESSON 9: REDISCOVERING FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CULTURES

Moving Forward: Amending the Past

What does it mean to amend the past? How does a government and/or a society make up for cultural and social injustices in history? What does *amend* mean? Let's look at some synonyms (words that mean roughly the same thing as *amend*):

- **Reconcile:** To restore to friendship or harmony
- **Settle:** To fix
- **Resolve:** To find an answer
- **Adjust:** To change, to make better
- **Improve:** To advance or make progress
- **Atone:** To make up
- **Redress:** To set right; to compensate

The Canadian government feels that we should reconcile the injustices in history for three reasons:

- Because acknowledging mistakes of the past is essential for reconciliation
- Because the process will only work if we acknowledge that injustices did happen in the past
- Because we must act together as a global community to make sure these injustices do not happen again in the future

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

First Nations Peoples took the Government of Canada and the responsible church organizations to court over the residential school system. This resulted in the creation of the Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. So far, more than \$5 billion has been paid out. Also, survivors could apply for additional payments based on their particular experiences of abuse within the schools.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is the board that oversees the collection of stories from former residential school survivors. The Commission is tasked with documenting the history and experiences of the system and of supporting survivors through their healing process. The commission is also reviewing all the records from the schools to ensure that the entire history is recorded and brought forward to the public.

Ultimately, the commission hopes that the process of story gathering and healing will create reconciliation between all the people of Canada and lead to a new relationship of mutual respect and understanding. As part of this mandate, the commission will establish a centre for research into the history and legacy of the residential school system. It will also prepare a complete history of the system and provide recommendations to the government and other parties of the settlement agreement.

As part of the settlement agreement, on June 11, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to the survivors for the abuses they suffered and the negative impacts that still exist from the residential school system.

The apology was an historic event for two special reasons. First, it was the first time that the Government of Canada acknowledged that the residential school system was a significant contributing factor to the current issues faced by Indigenous people in Canada. Second, it was the first time in history that non-members of the Legislative Assembly were allowed to sit in Parliament.

In order for this to happen, a Committee of the Whole (the legislative body is considered a committee rather than a governing body) was used to allow First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leaders to speak in response to the apology as part of the process, rather than being restricted to responding outside of the House of Commons.

After Harper's apology, the other party leaders responded and made apologies of their own. This included Stéphane Dion of the Liberal Party, Jack Layton of the New Democratic Party, and Gilles Duceppe for the Bloc Québécois.

After all the government leaders spoke, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leaders were able to respond. Phil Fontaine (National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations) addressed the room first, followed by Patrick Brazeau (National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal People), Mary Simon (President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami), Clem Chartier (President of the Métis National Council), and Beverley Jacobs (President of the Native Women's Association of Canada).

Phil Fontaine expressed hope for the future with the caution that the apology was just the first step in the right direction, and that there was still a great deal to be done to recover from the devastating effects of the residential school system. He said, however, that now the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples and the country could work together to heal and move forward in mutual respect.

If you are interested in this topic, you can find the original apology on the Internet. Use a search engine like Google and search with the key words *Harper apology Aboriginal*. You can also access this by searching the same key words on the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website at <www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca>. Think of the following to guide your thinking.

- Consider what each of the speakers said and why it was important for them all to have an opportunity to speak.
- Were all the Indigenous speakers positive in their response to the apology?
- Do you agree with Phil Fontaine's belief that the process of healing and reconciliation can move forward?

You can also learn more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at <www.trc.ca>.

As Phil Fontaine stated, now it is time to move forward to a new relationship between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples and the rest of Canada. Much of the future interaction between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples and others will rely on education—both for Indigenous people and for non-Indigenous people in this country.

In order for relationships to be productive, it is essential that all Canadians be aware of the unique cultures and histories of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in Canada. For that to happen, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories need to be included in mainstream education programs much more than is currently the case.

In Manitoba, the Department of Education has mandated the inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives in curricula for all subject areas. Additionally, courses are being created and older courses are being revamped to include additional information about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. This inclusion will certainly improve understanding of the issues that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples face, and will help to ensure that these issues are addressed and resolved in an inclusive and appropriate manner for all Canadians.

Rediscovering First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Cultures

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures in Canada are multilingual and multicultural. As you have learned, after Europeans began to colonize this land, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures suffered the ill effects of assimilation. This occurred indirectly as a result of European and other people immigrating to Canada in large numbers, and directly through laws passed that forbade First Nations ceremonies, styles of governance, languages and religions, forms of education, and even free movement across the land.

There has been a rebirth of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures since the 1960s. Artists such as Bill Reid, singer-songwriters such as Buffy Sainte-Marie, actor-political activists such as Chief Dan George, and playwrights such as Thomson Highway have led a reawakening of the beauty and depth of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures.

The revitalization in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures has also been evident in the popular and electronic media; there are now First Nations, Métis, and Inuit magazines, television channels, and radio stations. The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) began broadcasting in 1999. This is a place where First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples tell their stories. Native Communications Inc. (NCI) began broadcasting in northern Manitoba in the early 1970s and ventured into television productions as well as FM radio in the late 1980s.

SAY magazine is an example of media written for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth.

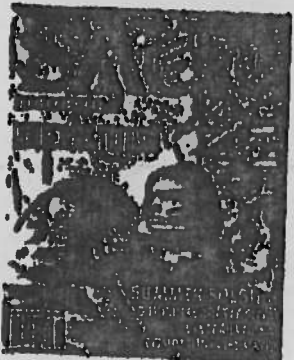
SAY Magazine

SAY is a lifestyle magazine for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth that comes out three times each year. There are over 1 million subscribers. Topics include careers, sports, entertainment, and culture. The company that publishes the magazine is owned and operated by First Nations people. For more information, visit <www.saymag.com> or find its Facebook page. You can also find SAY Magazine at Chapters, McNally Robinson, and International News stores.

Here are excerpts of two sample articles found in SAY Magazine.

2013 SUMMER SOLSTICE

Aboriginal Arts Festival and International Competition Powwow



First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities across Canada traditionally kick start the summer season with the celebration of National Aboriginal Day. The one event not to be missed is the 2013 Summer Solstice with FREE EVENTS including the 16th Annual Aboriginal Arts Festival and 3rd Annual International Competition Powwow. The 2013 events all transpire in the green and accessible location of Vincent Massey Park in Ottawa from Friday June 21 to Sunday June 23.

Drums and dancers will want to follow the powwow trail all the way to our nation's capital this June to the impressive 3rd Annual International Competition Powwow with over \$65,000 in prizes. This year, we are offering an exciting new contest to "Powwow like a Rockstar" with a fancy hotel suite, limo to the event and personal host (to run for those Indian Tacos!) and other interesting perks. Host drum, Young Bear, recent champions at the 2012 Gathering of Nations, will lead the way to a great weekend of friendly competition in a spectacular setting. Last year, over 30,000 people enjoyed the FREE event...

ELIJAH HARPER

While gathered at Red Sucker Lake First Nation in Northern Manitoba to honour and celebrate the life of Elijah Harper, Chief Garrison Sattie of Fimolukmak First Nation, spoke these words.

In this world we've had many people who have impacted lives and altered nations. The East had Mahatma Gandhi; the South Africans, Nelson Mandela; the African Americans, Martin Luther King Jr.; the First Nations has Elijah Harper.

At a time when we needed a warrior, a hero, when our aboriginal and treaty rights were under heavy assault, there came Elijah Harper.

With one single word and an eagle feather in his hand, he emancipated us. He freed us from the schemes the government had devised to undermine our treaty rights.

For that we are thankful.

SAY Magazine articles reproduced from <www.saymag.com/issue30.php> and <www.saymag.com>.

