

Introduction

What Is Canadian History?

This year, you are going to learn about life in Canada from very early times until 1867, the year that Canada officially became a country. The history of Canada is an endless collection of exciting stories about many different people. These people were hunters, trappers, explorers, fur traders, guides, boatmen, settlers, farmers, soldiers, sailors, storekeepers, boat builders, fishermen, foresters, nuns, priests, doctors, and teachers. They were men, women, girls and boys. They were Aboriginal peoples



Figure I.1

who came here thousands of years ago. They were newcomers who arrived here from faraway lands. Canada's history is also full of intriguing events, including wars, betrayals, and acts of heroism. So, too, it is the story of everyday people – people like you, your friends, and members of your family.

Where to Find History

Perhaps someone in your family has a collection of things that are important to everyone. This collection might include photos and birth certificates. It may have birth announcements, cards and letters, and newspaper clippings about people in your family. It could include report cards and school projects. Someone in your family likely knows lots of stories about relatives and family events from times before you were born. All of these things add up to your family's history. Your family's history is part of a bigger story of your community and country.

Like your family, historians use many different kinds of information to tell them about the past. These include the following:

Oral history. Oral history is the oldest way of recording stories of people and events. Long before writing was invented, people kept track of their history by telling stories. Usually, certain people memorized the “history” of the family or group and passed this information on to the next generation.

Visual history. Visual history includes images – photos, paintings, drawings, movies, and videos. In very early times, some people recorded their history by making paintings in caves or on rocks (called “pictographs”). In later times, artists painted portraits of important people and events. However, until the invention of the camera, very few images of “ordinary” people and everyday events were made.

Once the camera was invented, pictures (and, later, videos) of family events and celebrations such as graduations and weddings became common.

Written history. Historians use written records from governments and businesses to learn about the big events of life in the past, such as wars and elections. Newspapers can also tell historians about those events and what some people thought about them. These records are usually found in archives and museums. Many important people, such as premiers or prime ministers, put all of their papers and letters in archives.

Historians also read diaries, letters, and cards to learn about the lives of ordinary people. Newspaper ads, receipts, and bills provide helpful information about the everyday items that people bought and what those items cost.

Artifacts. Historians study things that people from the past made and used. These things are called “artifacts.” People called “archaeologists” study objects from the past to learn about life in other times.

Places. Historians look for information in places where important events have occurred, including national parks and historic sites. In Manitoba, The Forks and Lower Fort Garry are historic sites.

Provinces and communities also have special sites. Almost every community in Canada has a war memorial listing the people who died in the world wars.

Why Study History

Where did your ancestors come from? Why did certain groups come to Canada? How did people of long ago live? We study Canadian history to find out the answers to these questions and to understand who we are.

Why do we have the laws that we do? Who decided them? Who decided what kind of government we should have? We study Canadian history to find out how and why people of the past decided what laws we would have and how our country would be governed. The more you know about the history of government and law in Canada, the better you will be able to decide what should be changed and what should be kept.

History is not only about the past. By learning history, you will find it easier to understand what is happening today and what might happen in the future. History is *your* story, too.

Questions to ask

Historians try to explain why an event in history happened and what the results of that event were. Historians are like detectives, because they ask questions about each piece of information that they find.

As you read this textbook (and other history books), ask lots of questions about what you are reading. The five most important questions to ask are called the “5Ws”: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? is another important question to ask.

Here are some questions to ask yourself after you have read about an event in history.

Q: How do I know this is what really happened?

A: It is hard to remember all of the details of an event. For example, imagine you and several of your classmates saw two grade 6 students fighting in the playground. The playground monitor might speak to everyone who watched the fight to find out what happened. You would probably all give a different description of what happened. There are several reasons for this.

- You may be a friend of one of the students.
- You might have missed the beginning of the fight.
- You may have missed something because someone taller than you walked in front of you.

Whatever the reason, it is important to remember that everyone has his or her own point of view.

The monitor would also talk to the students who were fighting. Each student would have a different story, since neither would want to be blamed for starting the fight.

Historians need to look at many different descriptions of an event to get all of the information. Historians

also use many different sources to ensure that they have all of the details. Historians then try to find out who is telling the story. They have to decide if the storyteller wants them to think a certain way. From all these different bits of information, the historian can start to put together the pieces of the puzzle.

Q: What evidence or proof do I have that this really happened? Was the historian or storyteller there?

A: Ask for proof that something happened in a certain way or at a certain time. Are there any pictures? Are there any artifacts? Did the information come from someone who was actually present at the event? If the person telling the story was there when it happened, that person has important information. He or she will also know much more about the event than someone who writes about it many years later.

When historians look at sources of information they find out if that information is from a “primary source” or a “secondary source.” A primary source is something, such as a picture or a letter, that was made by someone who was at the event. A secondary source is any account recorded by someone who was not at the event. Textbooks, such as this one, are secondary sources.

Q: When was this story written?

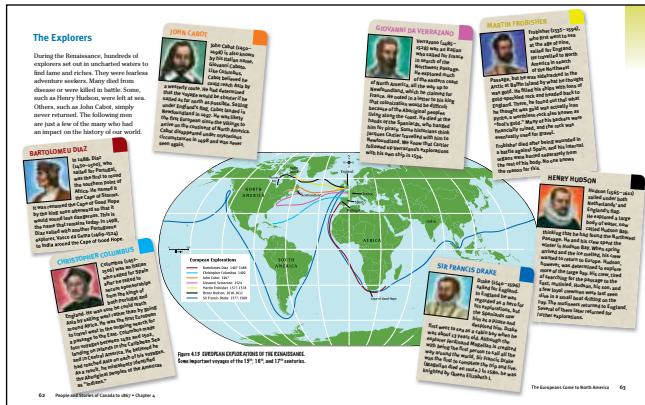
A: Find out if the story was written when the event occurred or a long time after the event happened. If the story was written a long time after the actual event, certain parts of the story may have been forgotten.

Sometimes historians find new information that changes the way people and events in history are explained. Finding new pieces of evidence in your role as a history detective is one reason that studying history is so much fun.

Getting to Know Your Book

A textbook can be a helpful tool for students. You will save a lot of time if you know what information is in this book and where to find it. Spend a few minutes just turning the pages and looking at the names and places, the pictures and maps.

You will find many illustrations in this book. Many pictures were created by someone who was alive when the event happened. Sometimes it was impossible to find pictures from a particular time. When that happened, a modern artist used historical information to create an illustration especially for this book. Always



look at the illustrations, because they can give you useful information and help you to remember what you have learned.

You will also find many maps in this book. They show you where the events you are reading about took place. They also show you how the land we now call Canada was divided at different times. Sometimes, they show routes that explorers travelled.

Start at the front of the book

Turn back to the cover of this textbook. What is its title? The title is *People and Stories of Canada to 1867*. What do you think you are going to read about in this book? Now look at the pictures and design on the book cover. Check both the front and the back covers. Have you ever seen pictures of any of these people or places before?

Turn to the title page. Who wrote the textbook? Turn the page over. When and where was the book written? When and where are important questions to ask in social studies. Since this book is about Canada, you will want to know whether it was written in Canada or somewhere else. The date it was published tells you how recent the information is. You may think that a history book does not have to be recent, because all history is old, anyway.

That might be true, but historians, archaeologists, and other scholars are constantly finding new information about history – and sometimes they find out that old information is wrong!

Now turn to the contents page. This page lists 14 chapters in the book and gives you the page number that each chapter starts on. The names of the chapters and of the four parts let you know what you are going to read about. You can tell from the chapter names in this book that you will be reading about topics such as First Peoples, European explorers and settlers, the fur trade, and Confederation.

Go to the back of the book

On the contents page, you will also see the words, *Glossary* and *Index*.

The glossary (p. 232) is a mini-dictionary that explains the meanings of words that you may not know. Words that are in the glossary are in **bold** type the first time they are used. When a word has more than one meaning, you will learn about the meaning used in this book. For example, if you want to find out what an empire is, you can look it up in the glossary.

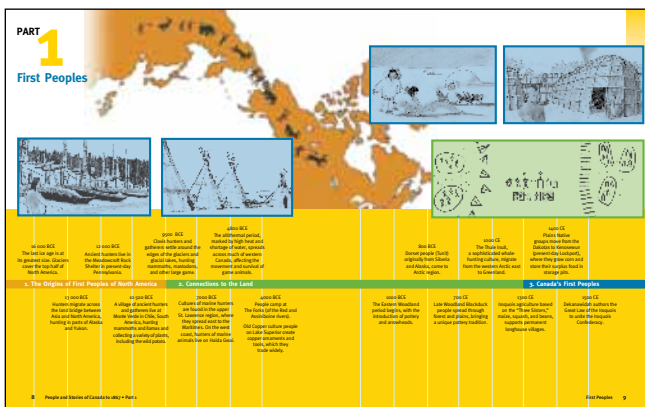
empire territory ruled by a king or queen

A pronunciation guide (p. 237) will help you pronounce difficult words. The index (p. 238) is an alphabetical list of major topics and names that are mentioned in the textbook and the pages where those topics are explained. If you want to read about Tecumseh, for example, go to the index and look up the word *Tecumseh*. The index gives you the page(s) where you can find the information you are looking for.

Reading Your Book

Reading the part introductions

Every book has a special way of organizing the stories. In this book, the chapters are organized into sections, called parts. At the beginning of each part, you will see a number of pictures. They help you to predict the stories you will read. These pictures are called an “advance organizer.” Below the advance organizer is a timeline. A timeline shows you how long ago something took place or when someone was alive. The dates on a timeline are placed in order, from the earliest to most recent.



You will find many dates on the timeline and within this book. Sometimes, you will find the term *BCE* beside a date. That means “Before the Common Era,” and it signifies the number of years before the year 1. The letters *CE* mean “Common Era,” and signify dates from the year 1 onward. Sometimes, no letters appear beside a date. Those dates are from the Common Era (*CE*), or years after 1. The letter *c.* in front of a date, is short for *circa*, the Latin word for “around.”

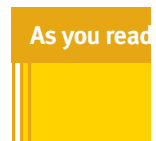
Reading the chapters

Ben and Sara, two young people who are about your age, introduce you to most chapters. Sara and Ben are very interested in exploring history, here in Manitoba and throughout Canada. You can go with Ben and Sara to museums, on car trips, and even on an archaeological dig.

As you read the chapters, you will find lots of maps, pictures, and coloured boxes. Reading will be easier if you know about the information in the coloured boxes and special sections of the book:

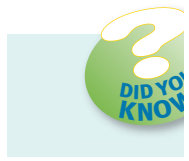
“As you read” information.

This appears in the orange-outlined box at the beginning of each chapter. The information in the box will help you to look for the main ideas in the chapter.



“Did you know?” information.

Light-blue boxes, with the heading “Did you know?” appear in different places in each chapter. They contain interesting and funny facts about people and things in the text.



Gold-coloured information boxes.

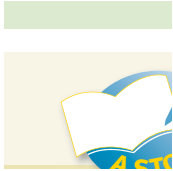
These boxes contain important extra information about the main text you are reading. Blue titles tell you what is inside the box. Always check the gold-coloured boxes when you are answering questions or writing paragraphs.



Quotations. These appear in beige-coloured boxes and contain the words that real people said or wrote. When you read them, you will understand what the speakers or writers really thought about the people they met or the events of the time.

April 25, 1849
Montreal Parliament B
fire to and burnt, by Al
the mob, on account of
sanctioning the Indem
Montreal College, from
at the conference with.

Stories. Light-yellow boxes contain historical fiction about pretend people who might have lived in early times. They are based on real information about the events of that time. You can tell that these are make-believe stories by the story icon that appears beside them.



“Imagine” boxes. Light-green boxes contain imaginary interviews, letters, or statements of people who actually lived. A writer has imagined what famous people from history might have said, thought, or written about the times that they lived in. You can tell these are make-believe by the icon that says “Imagine.”



The pictures, maps, charts, and diagrams are also helpful when you are reading. Most of them will have titles or captions that tell you what they are about. Remember that the pictures, maps, charts, and diagrams often tell you things that are not in words.

Before you begin reading this book, please read the box at right. Aboriginal peoples are important in Canadian history, so it is important that you know about the correct names for them. The box gives you some information to think about as you read this book.

Names and terms

Aboriginal peoples is the term used to describe the original people of Canada and their descendants. There are three groups of Aboriginal peoples: First Nations, the Métis, and the Inuit.

Canada’s Aboriginal peoples are often referred to as *Indians*, but this term is incorrect. Christopher Columbus used it when he mistakenly thought he had landed in India. Today we use other names because First Nations people consider the word *Indian* inaccurate.

In fact, most names used in reports and history texts for various First Nations are not the names that the people used themselves. There are many reasons why this is so. Explorers and early fur traders did not know First Nations’ languages well enough and misunderstood the words. Often, they copied down the translators’ words incorrectly. In some cases, an unfriendly neighbouring group told the Europeans the wrong name on purpose. Sometimes, Europeans made up their own names for groups. For centuries, the European version of their names has appeared in reports and on maps.

Aboriginal peoples have always had their own names for themselves. The term used by many Aboriginal groups means “the people” or some similar term. The word *Eskimo*, for example, is no longer used. It has been replaced by *Inuit* (meaning “several people”) or *Inuk* (meaning “one person”). The members of the five Iroquois nations that made up the famous League of the Iroquois refer to themselves as the *Haudenosaunee* (meaning “the people of the longhouse”). The name *Huron* is from an old French word meaning “boar’s head” and refers to the Huron’s bristly hairstyles. The Huron refer to themselves as *Wendat* (meaning “Islanders” or “Dwellers on a Peninsula”). The Cree call themselves *Nehiyawak*. Since European names have been so widely used but are gradually being replaced by Aboriginal names, you will find a mixture of terms in this book.

Enjoy reading this book, and remember that the stories here are your stories – about your country.