

Grade 7 History

New France

Aboriginal Teaching Strategy

Exploring Cultural Differences

Students learn about cultural similarities and differences among Aboriginal groups and between the French and Aboriginal people in New France. They also learn about the impact the similarities and differences had on relations among Aboriginal groups and between Aboriginal groups and the French.

Related Curriculum Policy

- *The Ontario Curriculum: Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8, 2004*

Specific Expectations

Knowledge and Understanding

- identify and explain examples of conflict and cooperation between the French and the First Nation peoples (e.g., with respect to the fur trade, religion and culture, military alliances/conflicts), and between the French and English fur traders (e.g., competition between the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company)

Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills

- construct and interpret a wide variety of graphs, charts, diagrams, maps, and models to organize and interpret information (e.g., create a diagram illustrating the structure of the government in New France)

Aboriginal Context

Aboriginal people have never been one homogeneous entity, nor have individual Aboriginal groups ever been homogeneous within themselves. This diversity was a factor when the groups were deciding who to align with in the early settlement period. Variables affecting these decisions included the proximity of Aboriginal settlements to one another, the languages of Aboriginal groups, the distances between and ways of life in Aboriginal and colonial settlements, the degree to which Aboriginal peoples chose to convert to Christianity, and whether an Aboriginal group saw itself as having things in common with colonial settlers and/or as benefiting from an alliance with them.

While European immigration into the areas in which Aboriginal communities lived led to conflict, there was also cooperation. Knowing about the cultural similarities and differences of the participants in this historical period can help students understand why relations between them were marked by both harmony and disharmony. This knowledge can also give students a greater understanding of the political actions Aboriginal people have been taking recently (for example, at Oka, Ipperwash, and Caledonia) and help balance the stereotype of the “Indian Warrior”, which paints Aboriginal people as violent and unlawful, with today’s protesters who seek to gain political power through peaceful protest and education.

Teaching Strategies

- Have students find and examine online images of artefacts and other objects that illustrate the lives and cultures of French and Aboriginal people in New France.
- Have students create a Venn diagram to compare the lives and cultures of the two groups.
- Ask students what they found that was of the greatest importance to each group, listing their responses on a chart.

Teacher prompts: What values did Aboriginal people and French settlers share? Which values did they not share? Which differences were potential sources of conflict? Which differences actually led to conflict? In which cases were compromises reached?

- With student input, map the locations of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Ouendat, Tionontati, and Neutrals settlements that existed in New France in 1660.
- Have students investigate the culture, traditions, lifestyle, and spirituality of these groups.
- Have students create idea webs or mind maps to organize information about the differences and similarities among the First Nations in New France they have researched.
- Ask students about the differences and similarities they found and discuss these as a class.
Teacher prompts: What similarities and differences did you find among the First Nations you researched? How would the differences among them complicate their relationships with the French?

- Have students reflect on and write a summary of the discussion.

Resources

The following recommended resources and web links were accurate at the time of publication. Teachers are encouraged to check that these reference listings remain current.

Anishinaabemdaa: Anishinaabe. Culture. <http://www.anishinaabemdaa.com/culture.htm>
Contains information about the medicine wheel and the seven grandfathers’ teachings.

Canadian Museum of Civilization: Gateway to Aboriginal Heritage.
http://www.civilization.ca/cmc/exhibitions/tresors/ethno/index_e.shtml
An online exhibit of historical and contemporary objects, images, and documents of the Aboriginal people of Canada.

The Great Peace: The Gathering of Good Minds. CD-ROM. Brantford, ON: GoodMinds.com, 1999.

Historica Minutes: Peacemaker. <http://www.histori.ca/minutes/minute.do?id=10120>
Video and text that tell the story of Peacemaker and the caretakers of the Great Peace, who sat under the Tree of Peace and forged the Great Peace, an agreement among the five Iroquois nations.

New France: New Horizons. On French Soil in America.
http://www.archivescanadafrance.org/english/accueil_en.html
An online exhibit about life in New France.

Thomas, Jacob E. *Teachings from the Longhouse*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1997.
Contains the traditional teachings of the Haudenosaunee and practical advice for life today.

Making Community Connections

- Take students on a field trip to a reconstructed Aboriginal village, such as the Huron/Ouendat Village at the Huronia Museum, Ska-Nah-Doht, the Woodland Cultural Centre, or the Lawson Prehistoric Iroquoian Village at the Museum of Ontario Archeology.

ABOUT THE TEACHER'S TOOLKIT

This teaching strategy is one component of *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit*, a collection of resources designed to help Ontario educators bring Aboriginal perspectives into the classroom. Based on the revised Ontario curriculum, the collection includes resources for educators at both the elementary and secondary levels. Other resources in this series can be found on the ministry website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca.

