

Grade 8 History

The Development of Western Canada

Aboriginal Teaching Strategy

Treaties 1 to 8

Students research Treaties 1 to 8 and develop an understanding of their impact on the past and present lives of First Nation peoples, and consider what future impact they will have.

Related Curriculum Policy

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

Specific Expectations

Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills

- analyse, synthesize, and evaluate historical information (e.g., trends in immigration, the impact of Treaties 1 to 8)

Aboriginal Context

Between 1871 and 1899, the federal government signed treaties with various First Nations that enabled it to develop the land and resources of areas of western Canada. Under these treaties, the First Nation peoples who occupied these territories gave up large areas of land. In exchange, the treaties gave the First Nations named in them reserve lands, farm equipment and animals, annual payments, ammunition, clothing, and hunting and fishing rights and provided for the maintenance of schools on reserves and teachers for the schools, relief in the event of famine, help for the poor, and medical aid.

Teaching Strategies

- Divide the class into eight groups and assign each group one of Treaties 1 to 8 to research. Have the groups focus on details of the treaty (i.e., what, specifically, each side gained and what it gave up), the impact the treaty had on the growth of western Canada, and the impact the treaty has today on Aboriginal people, the federal government, and other Canadians.
- Have each group present its findings to the class.
- Engage students in a discussion of the treaties to extend their understanding.

Teacher prompts: What were the advantages of Treaties 1 to 8 for the Crown? What were the advantages for Aboriginal people? How did these treaties change life on the plains? Why are they significant today? Have any of them been amended? If so, when? Why? How? Are any still honoured? If so, which ones? How are they honoured and where? Why are Treaties 1 to 8 important to relationships between Aboriginal people and the Crown today? How will they be important in the future?

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.

The Atlas of Canada. The Numbered Treaties.
<http://atlas.gc.ca/sites/english/maps/historical/indiantreaties/historicaltreaties/6>
The history, time lines, and text of the numbered treaties.

Canada's First Nations: Treaty Evolution.
http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/firstnations/reasons.html
Provides background on Treaties 1 to 7, including the reasons both parties had for signing them.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Historic Treaties.
<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/al/hts/mp-eng.asp>
Provides time lines and maps pertaining to the numbered treaties.

Morris, Alexander. *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West*. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1991.
First published in 1880, this book describes the negotiations leading to Treaties 1 to 7 and contains the entire text of each of the treaties.

Making Community Connections

- Extend students' understanding of the treaty process by having them identify agreements made in their school and community and at home. Examples are agreements between their classroom and other classrooms regarding the sharing of resources, between neighbourhood businesses regarding the use of property, and between them and their parents regarding curfews.

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.

