

#3681

# THE WESTERN CANADIAN PROVINCES

Grade Levels: 6-10  
23 minutes

FILM IDEAS, INC. 1998  
2 Student Activity Sheets

## DESCRIPTION

Four provinces and two territories form Western Canada: Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon Territory, and the Northwest Territories. Maps, photographs, live photography, and graphics help present an overview of the region. Describes each province and territory, its size, population, commerce, capital, climate, points of interest, resources, history, and geographic areas.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### Subject Area: Geography of Places and Regions

- ◆ Standard: Understands the concept of regions
  - Benchmark: Knows areas that can be classified as regions according to physical criteria (e.g., landform regions, soil regions, vegetation regions, climate regions, water basins) and human criteria (e.g., political regions, population regions, economic regions, language regions)
  - Benchmark: Understands how regions change over time and the consequences of these changes (e.g., changes in population size or ethnic composition; construction of a new shopping center, a regional hospital, or a new manufacturing plant; changes in transportation; changes in environmental conditions)



### Subject Area: History

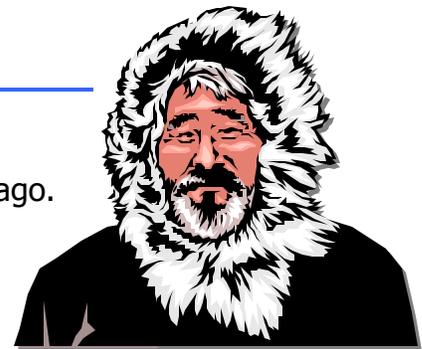
- ◆ Standard: Understands family life now and in the past, and family life in various places long ago
  - Benchmark: Understands family life in a community of the past and life in a community of the present (e.g., roles, jobs, communication, technology, style of homes, transportation, schools, religious observances, cultural traditions)

- Benchmark: Knows ways in which people share family beliefs and values (e.g., oral traditions, literature, songs, art, religion, community celebrations, mementos, food, language)
- ◆ Standard: Understands and knows how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns
  - Benchmark: Knows how to impose temporal structure on their historical narratives (e.g., working backward from some issue, problem, or event to explain its causes that arose from some beginning and developed through subsequent transformations over time)
  - Benchmark: Knows how to diagram the temporal structure of events in autobiographies, biographies, literary narratives, and historical narratives, and understands the differences between them

## VOCABULARY

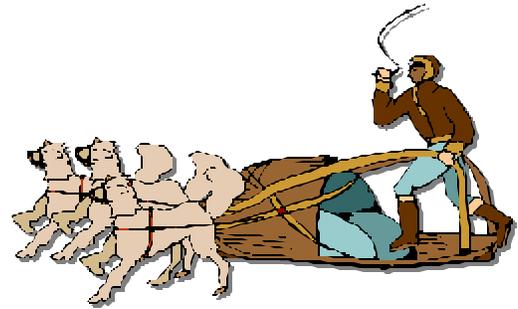
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1. **Canadian Shield:** Is a vast horseshoe-shaped region composed of rocks that were created 2 to 4 billion years ago. These rocks contain some of the earliest forms of life on earth. This shield covers about 1.7 million square miles, occupying almost half of Canada's total land area.
2. **Dominion of Canada:** In 1791, the country was divided into lower and upper Canada. It wasn't until the British North American Act of 1867 that the two Canadas were made into one country known as the Dominion of Canada.
3. **Henry Kelsey:** First known European to visit Saskatchewan in 1690 for the Hudson Bay Company.
4. **Hudson Bay Company:** Arriving in Manitoba in the late 1600s, these British fur trappers became the first European settlers of the region. Eventually, this British-owned company generated a fierce rivalry with the French-owned Northwest Company. This rivalry became one of the key causes of the French and Indian War in 1754-63. Later, in 1821, these two rival companies merged.
5. **Ice Age:** A period approximately 2 million years ago, during which time glacier ice--due to global cooling--moved from the polar icecaps into the Western Canadian provinces, creating many lake basins and riverbeds.
6. **James Cook:** First European to claim Vancouver Island in 1774.
7. **Jacques Cartier:** Regarded as the "Founder of Canada." Cartier became the first French explorer to sail to the New World and to discover the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 1534.
8. **John Cabot:** An English explorer, Cabot was the first to discover Newfoundland in 1497.
9. **Metis:** People of American Indian and European ancestry, who when the Dominion of Canada was established in 1867, feared losing their freedom, began an uprising



known as the Red River Rebellion. This conflict was finally resolved with the passage of the Manitoba Act in 1870 which guaranteed their basic rights.

10. **North America:** The third largest continent in the world consisting of Canada, the United States, Mexico and Central America.
11. **Paleo-Indians:** Nomadic hunters and gatherers, who between 30,000-40,000 years ago, used a land bridge between Russia and North America to become the first-known inhabitants to live in the area known today as the Western Canadian provinces.
12. **Western Canadian Provinces:** Term used to describe the area located on the upper northwest part of the North American continent. The provinces include: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Yukon Territory.
13. **Wolwers:** Lawless Montana whiskey traders, who traveled north into Saskatchewan to exchange whiskey with local Indians for fur-trapping products. However, viewed as a hindrance to the fur-trapping industry, the Northwest Mounted Police--otherwise known as the famous Royal Canadian Mounted Police--were eventually called upon to put a halt on these exchanges.



## AFTER SHOWING

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### Discussion Items and Questions

1. Today such conveniences as computers, telephones, automobiles, electricity, and other technological advances are used to enhance our modern-day lives. Explain how these enhancements differ to those used during the time the Western Canadian provinces were being discovered. Use this information for the following points/activities.
2. Imagine what it would be like to be an early explorer. Discuss issues, which may have concerned these early settlers: weather conditions, commerce, regional terrain, food/vegetation, dealing with homeland authorities in Britain, France, or Spain, and others.
3. Both geographical and historical information has been documented throughout the world. Explain why this type of information is important when studying the Western Canadian provinces, and how it relates to our everyday lives? Furthermore, how do the disciplines of geography and history interact or relate with other areas of study in your school's curriculum?

### Applications and Activities

1. Draw a map of the Western Canadian provinces, indicating significant points of interest. For example, the capital cities, site of the Red River Rebellion in 1763, and birthplaces of early explorers.

2. Many battles during the French and Indian War were fought on the soil of the Western Canadian provinces. Discuss the issues involved with this conflict and the profiles of the two groups that represented France and Britain. Then assemble the students into two groups to have a political debate on the issues. Perhaps have each group nominate leaders to represent each country.
3. If possible, arrange a trip near your community to visit museums, cultural centers, state parks, and other historical sites to simulate your imagination to explore the beautiful history and geography of the Western Canadian provinces.

## SUMMARY

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Descendents of the Paleo-Indians, a nomadic group, were the first known inhabitants to occupy this land. Later, the first European settlers, mostly from France and England, began to explore this region during the early 1600s.

Aboard ships and on horseback, these early settlers arrived in the Western Canadian provinces seeking new opportunities. Eventually, tensions grew between the trading companies owned and operated by both the French and British governments. As trading competition grew, each country tried to gain control over the landholdings in North America. Those tensions led to the French and Indian War in 1754-63. The war ended in 1763, when the British defeated the French in the Battle for Quebec. After the war, in 1791, the country was divided into upper and lower Canada. However, in 1867, the British North American Act merged upper and lower Canada into one country known today as the Dominion of Canada.

Along with its rich history, the Western Canadian provinces also have geographical significance. From the grandiose wilderness of the wooded uplands, to the scenic coastal routes along the Pacific Ocean, each year millions of travelers visit the Western Canadian provinces to capture both its natural and historic elegance.

As we study the Western Canadian provinces, we begin to understand where Canada as a nation has been, and how far it has gone--as this region offers us a place of origin, a place of beauty and a place to learn.

## RELATED RESOURCES

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### Captioned Media Program

- Canada: Economy and Government #3444
- Canada: Its Land and Its People #2360
- Canada: Land of Diversity #3445
- The Eastern Canadian Provinces #3600
- The Northlands #2417
- Sheena Azak of Canada #3515



## World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid-safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **GOVERNMENT OF CANADA**

[http://infoservice.gc.ca/howgoc/howind\\_e.html](http://infoservice.gc.ca/howgoc/howind_e.html)

Many clickable choices to learn about the Parliament, the Prime Minister, the Supreme Court, Orders in Council and more.

- **NATIVE PEOPLES' CLOTHING**

<http://www.civilization.ca/membrs/fph/stones/clothing/clmenu.htm>

Cool site that pictures a wide variety of wearable items such as moccasins, hats, cloaks, and other garments. Scroll down right side and search for Canadian cultures or influences.

- **CANADA CULTURE AND TRAVEL LINKS**

<http://www.kmike.com/country/ca.htm>

Canada's culture, demographics, and other links. Nice map on opening page. Scroll down to select from a long list of links.

- **ENCOUNTER CANADA**

<http://www.encounters-rencontres.ca/en/semaines.html>

Engaging lessons and contributions. "The program is aimed at students aged 15 to 17. It allows young Canadians from different backgrounds and regions to meet, get to know one another, discover their country and gain a better understanding of Canada's major institutions."

- **DIGITAL CANADA**

[http://collections.ic.gc.ca/E/index\\_e.asp](http://collections.ic.gc.ca/E/index_e.asp)

Quick access to Canadian arts and entertainment, historical, and native Canadians' sites.

## STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET

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- Chronology of Western Canadian Provinces
- Western Canadian Provinces and Their Capitals



## **Chronology of Western Canadian Provinces**

**2-4 billion years ago:** During the Precambrian Era rock formations begin to originate into what is today known as the Canadian Shield.

**2 million years ago:** During an earlier Ice Age, glaciers reform the land by stripping away most of the soil and creating lake basins and riverbeds.

**30,000-40,000 years ago:** Paleo-Indians migrate from Asia into North America by using a land bridge which at one time connected Asia with Alaska.

**10,000 years ago:** Last Ice Age begins moving from the Arctic into Western Canadian provinces.

**1534:** Regarded as the "Founder of Canada," French explorer Jacques Cartier discovers the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

**1608:** Jacques Cartier claims Quebec City for the French.

**1612:** The exploration of the Hudson Bay area begins.

**1690:** Henry Kelsey, first known European to explore the Saskatchewan area for the Hudson Bay Company.

**Late 1600s:** More Europeans arrive in the Western Canadian provinces--descendants of the Paleo-Indians--the Algonquin and Iroquois Indians occupy the region during their arrival.

**Early 1700s:** The French-owned Northwest Company enters the region to establish themselves in the fur trading industry. This causes a bitter rivalry between the French and the British-owned Hudson Bay Company.

**1754-63:** French and Indian War begins and ends as Britain defeats France to gain control over North America.

**1763:** French troops, led by General Louis de Montcalm are defeated by the British, led by General James Wolfe in what was known as "The Battle of Quebec." This battle marked the end of New France and gave control of most of Canada over to the British.

**1774:** James Cook claims Vancouver Island for the British.

**1791:** Canada is divided into Upper and Lower regions.

**1815:** The Loyalists joined by nearly 9,000 Highland Scots settle on Cape Breton Island.

**1821:** The British-owned Hudson Bay Company and the French-owned Northwest Company merge.

**1867:** The British North American Act unites Canada into one country known as the Dominion of Canada. The Dominion of Canada is established.

**1870:** The Metis cause an uprising known as the Red River Rebellion. Northwest Territories join the Canadian Confederation.

**Late 1800s:** The railroad industry is established in Manitoba. Gold rush begins in British Columbia and the Yukon Territory.

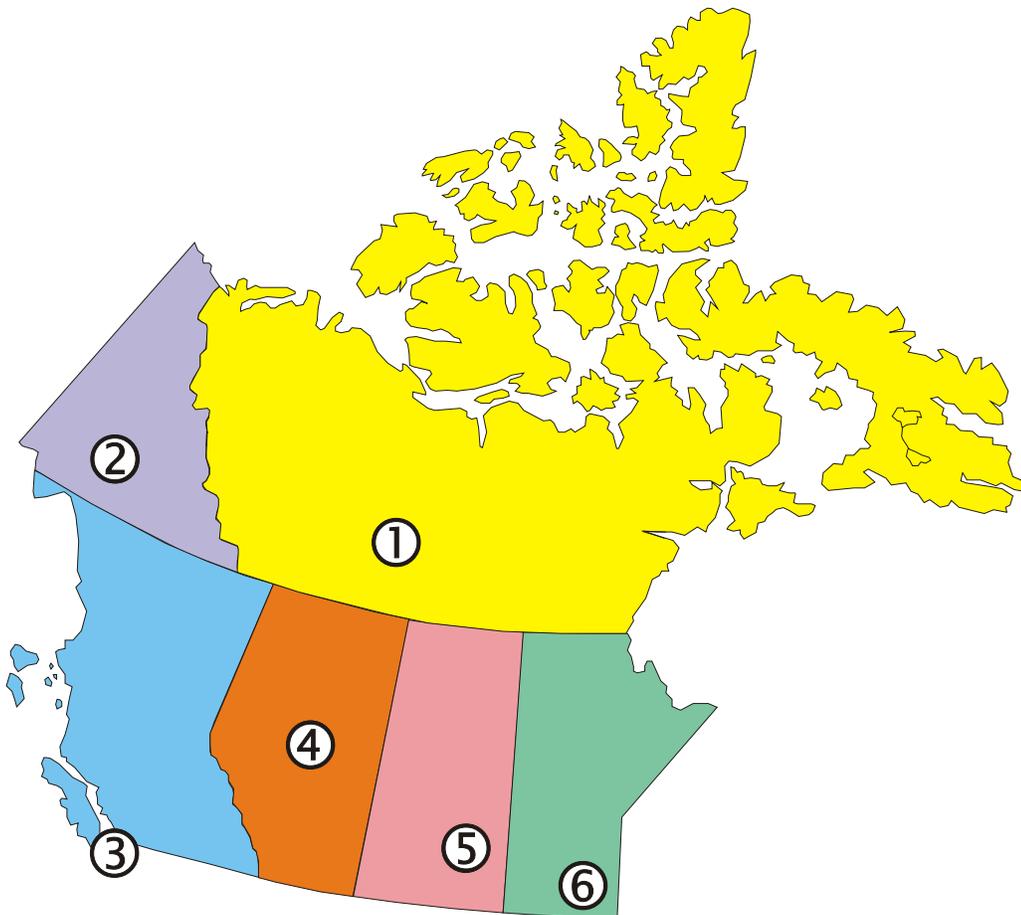
**1898:** Yukon Territory joins the Canadian Confederation.

**1905:** Saskatchewan and Alberta join the Canadian Confederation to become the 8th and 9th provinces.

**1947:** Oil is discovered in Alberta.

### PROVINCES AND CAPITAL CITIES

Directions: List the name of the province and its capital city.



- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
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