

## Historical Highlights

### Activity Information

**Grade Appropriate Level:** Grade 6-7

**Duration:** 3 classes of 40 minutes

**Materials:** large roll of paper (approximately 12-18 feet), pack of 8 ½ X 11 inch paper, pencil crayons, access to Internet or library research materials, glue sticks, large marker for teacher, teacher copy of *An Historical Look at Canada and BC's Relationship with First Nations* (included)

### Objective

- To examine the history of the First Nations people in BC and Canada
- Enable students to better understand Canadian First Nations Peoples
- To identify the progression and regression of First Nations people over time and predict future negotiations



### Prescribed Learning Outcomes

- Describe how people's basic needs are met in a variety of cultures
- Demonstrate understanding of timelines
- Demonstrate awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal cultures in Canada
- Demonstrate understanding of contributions of Aboriginal people to Canadian society
- Compare the "discovery" and "exploration" of North America from European and Aboriginal peoples' perspectives
- Identify and clarify a problem, issue, or inquiry
- Research information using print, non-print, and electronic sources
- Evaluate the credibility and reliability of various sources
- Organize information from a variety of sources into a structured presentation using more than one form of representation
- Describe and use strategies for generating and shaping ideas
- Review their contributions and communications within the group
- Demonstrate awareness of the history of Aboriginal peoples' rights

### Skills

Researching, analyzing results, drawing, presenting material

## Introductory Activity



- Teacher will engage the students in a discussion about general ideas and thoughts about the history of First Nations people and their relationship with provincial and federal government in Canada.
- Talk to the students about the purpose of a timeline in general. For example, the history of evolution. What are the benefits of creating and studying an historical timeline? What is the value of understanding our past so that we can plot our future? See the famous quote

provided below for further exploration of this idea.

## Suggested Instructional Strategies

1. Assign a historic date to students, and have them research the significant event by use of Internet, library, etc. An example might be: 1763 when the Royal Proclamation by King George III recognized aboriginal title and rights to land. To acquire land for colonization, treaties must be signed between the Crown and First Nations on a nation-to-nation basis.
2. Students will write 1-2 paragraphs about the historic event including list of sources cited. Draft to be handed in for teachers to revise or students can participate in peer editing, if time permits.
3. Final copy will be hand written or typed (using larger font) on an 8.5x11 sheet of paper.
4. On a separate sheet of paper, students will draw and colour an accompanying illustration to supplement their paragraph.
5. Measure and cut a piece of paper that would fit the length of a classroom wall or hallway. Roll it out in a big open space for students to work on.
6. Teacher can draw the timeline and add the dates allowing room for student paragraphs to be placed below the timeline and their illustration above the timeline.
7. Students assemble around the large paper and glue down their work (paragraph & illustration) where appropriate on the timeline.
8. Once the final project is completed, each student will have an opportunity to present his or her contribution to the class.

## Suggested Assessment Strategies

- Teachers can assess each student's contribution as they present their work to the class.
- Teacher should engage the class in a closing discussion to determine their understanding of the timeline and their understanding of First Nations relationship with BC and Canada over time.

Some lead questions may include:

What were the relationships between First Nations people and the Europeans/Canadians in the early days? And now?



Over time, what progress (in terms of equality and freedom) has been made by First Nations people? Has progress been consistent?

What major milestones/achievements/events marked the relationship between First Nations and Europeans from the beginning to the present time? Ensure students have research to back up their findings.

What role has government played in the history of First Nations peoples' relationship with Canada? (For example: helped, hindered, avoided, denied, supported) Have students support their answers by using examples from the timeline.

What kinds of items did First Nations and Europeans trade with each other? What were some of the successes and problems that resulted from this trading relationship?

***"Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."***- George Santayana. Discuss with students what this famous quote means. How might this apply in the context of historical and current relationship between governments, first nations and non-native people?



### Extension Activity Ideas

- Students can create a personal timeline from birth to present age.
- Students can create a cultural timeline, highlighting significant events in their culture.

### Cross-Curricular Interests

Geography, History / Social Studies, Language Arts, Fine Arts, Technology

### Suggested Links:

[http://www.cln.org/themes/fn\\_history.html](http://www.cln.org/themes/fn_history.html)  
<http://www.inac.gc.ca>  
<http://www.bctreaty.net>  
[http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/e/classroom\\_e.asp](http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/e/classroom_e.asp)  
<http://www.collections.ic.gc.ca/treaties/code/>  
<http://www.histori.ca>  
<http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/sn-2F9D087/exhibits/timemach/galler03/frames/index.htm>



## Background sheet:

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### An Historical Look at Canada & B.C.'s Relationship With First Nations

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**10,000 B.C.** Earliest evidence of aboriginal civilizations in British Columbia. Archaeological evidence found at Soda Creek in the summer of 1995 was carbon dated at approximately 4,300 years ago.

**Pre-colonial contact** 30 million Indigenous people in North America.

**1492** Columbus lands in the West Indies.

**1763** Royal Proclamation by King George III recognizes aboriginal title and rights to land. To acquire land for colonization, treaties must be signed between the Crown and First Nations on a nation-to-nation basis.

**1770s-1780s** Captain Cook explores West Coast.

**1774** Juan Perez Hernandez lands on Vancouver Island's west coast.

**1778** Captain Cook explores the B.C. coast and established a British claim to sovereignty.

**1793** Alexander McKenzie reaches the Pacific via an overland route.

**1849** Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) given imperial grant to settle and colonize Vancouver Island.

**1850-54** The Colonial Office directs James Douglas to purchase First Nations lands, first in his capacity as chief factor of the HBC, and later as Governor of the colony. He arranges 14 purchases, now known as The Douglas Treaties, mostly on southern Vancouver Island.

**1858-64** Gold seekers flood the B.C. interior.

**1860s** Reserves are set aside. These first reserve allocations were larger than today's reserves, but these records were destroyed in 1871.

**1862-63** Smallpox almost wipes out the Secwepemc Nation. Six reserves are left with only a few members who relocate to neighboring Bands in order to survive.

**1867** The British North American Act creates Canada, giving the provinces jurisdiction and ownership of land and natural resources. Canada retains responsibility for Indians and lands reserved for Indians.

**1872** B.C. joined Canada, at that time the aboriginal people in the province were the majority and still had the right to vote. The first thing the new Canadian province, B.C., passed was the Qualification and Registration of Voters Act of 1872, which stripped Natives of the vote in provincial elections.

**1881** Indian agency opened in the Cariboo.

**1884** 90% of those involved in the commercial salmon fishery in B.C. were the First Nations. A move was launched to deny Natives commercial access to the fisheries resource.

**1884** An Indian Act amendment prohibits the potlatch and sundance. The law was rescinded in 1951.

**1887** The Nisga'a Nation begins pursuing its land claims 1888 Fisheries regulations restricted what Natives might do with their catch, they could fish for food but not for 'barter, sale or commerce'. The licensing system created a native labor pool for the fish canneries, which were owned by non-natives.

**1890** Treaty 8 (covering Saskatchewan's north, Alberta and part of northeast B.C.) signed with Beaver, Cree and Slavey people. The last treaty signed in B.C.

**1891** St. Joseph's Mission opened south of Williams Lake, three generations of Chilcotin, Carrier and Shuswap were taken there in an attempt to make 'good British subjects' out of them.

**1906** Squamish and Nisga'a delegations travel to England with a petition.

**1910** Interior tribes in B.C. meet in Spences Bridge to present their views to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then Prime Minister of Canada, on wanting to settle the land and aboriginal rights issue. The tribes were the Nl'kapmux, Stl'atl'imx, Okanagan, Tsilqht'in, and Secwepemc. The tribes signed the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Memorial. Laurier promised to take Native issues to Privy Council for resolution, his defeat in the 1911 election ended that initiative.

**1916** The Allied Indian tribes are formed. Member tribes include the Coast Salish, Wuwutsun, Nisga'a, Tsimshian, Haida, Gitxan, Nuxalk, Tsilhqot'in, Dalkelh, Kaska Dena and Ktunaxa Kinbasket.

**1916** The McKenna McBride Commission ruled the size of existing Indian reserves could be unilaterally reduced if Ottawa would obtain consent from the Natives, and that other lands would be added. Land to be cut off happened to be the most desirable for ranchers, farmers, developers and towns who wanted to expand. The Natives withheld consent stating the lands to be added were almost worthless.

**1920** Ottawa enacts Bill 13, which overrode the need for Native consent. Canada passes the B.C. Indian Lands Settlement Act, the McKenna McBride Commission's recommendations go ahead reducing reserve land to less than 36% of the total area of B.C. Next came Bill 14, empowered the enfranchisement or removal of any Natives from 'status', those who went to fight in the wars, worked and lived off reserve were among those who lost their 'Indian status' under Bill 14.

**1927** Aboriginal people are prohibited from raising money or retaining a lawyer for the purpose of pursuing land claims.

**1943** B.C., Canada agreement requires the province gets one half of the mining revenues and the other half goes to Canada for the benefit of Indians in the province subject to the Indian agents veto, administers and disposes of reserve minerals.

**1951** An Indian Act amendment removes major prohibitions against Indians. Canada recognized that Indians desired greater control over their lives. Some provisions allowed for more Indian involvement in decision-making. However, Canada's control over Indian lands and property, money, local government and Indian status remained.

**1960** Indians granted the right to vote in federal and provincial elections.

**1969** Trudeau and Chretien's White Paper advocates the abolition of Indian status.

**Early 1970s** Band offices open in the area, Band administration budgets were set at \$125.00 per month for a salary, office supplies, heat, light and whatever is left is to be used for travel.

**1973** The Calder Case. The Supreme Court of Canada recognizes the existence of aboriginal title in principle. The Court ruled that aboriginal title is rooted in the 'long time occupation, possession and use' of traditional territories. Canada initiates a Comprehensive Claims process for treaty negotiations across Canada.

**1975** The first modern treaty agreement under the new process is the Cree and Inuit of James Bay.

**1975** Closure of Department of Indian Affairs office in Williams Lake.

**1982** The Canada Constitution Act recognizes and affirms existing aboriginal and treaty rights.

**1985** The BC Native Women's and national women's organizations long hard fight has resulted in Bill C 31 which sees women and children who have lost their status, as well as

those who were enfranchised get their status back. Some are going through the lengthy process of regaining status even today.

**1990** B.C. joins ongoing federal treaty negotiation with the Nisga'a Tribal Council.

**1991** Chief Justice Allen McEachern of the B.C. Supreme Court rules that aboriginal rights in B.C. were extinguished by pre Confederation legislation.

**1993** Delgamuukw decision, B.C. Court of Appeals overturns the McEachern decision, stating that undefined aboriginal rights continue to exist.

**1993** B.C. Treaty Commission is established to negotiate land issues.

**1993** Cariboo Tribal Council chiefs file 'letter of intent' to enter in treaty negotiations with the federal and provincial governments.

**1995** Gustafson Lake standoff. A long hot summer.

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<http://www.cariboolinks.com/ctc/history.html>

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Lesson plan provided by: [Fored BC](#)

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