

## The Migration of Canada's Native Peoples: Aboriginal Rights and 30 000 years of history?

### Lesson Overview:

The culmination of this two-day inquiry project will be a research paper in which each student will examine the connections between Aboriginal rights in Canada and claims that Canada's native peoples have been here since time-immemorial.<sup>1</sup> To what extent is such a claim justified, given geological and archaeological evidence? The essential inquiry question of this lesson is, "Why do special rights attach to Aboriginal peoples in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (s. 25) that are not also granted to other immigrant peoples?" Class time should be used for station-based student research. The actual writing of the paper should be assigned as homework for Social 10 classes. However, for students with special writing challenges, research can be completed on the first day; writing, editing, and re-writing can be completed on the second day.

Prior to the first period of inquiry, the teacher will have organized the classroom into four workstations entitled, "Treaties", "Glaciation", "Three Waves of Aboriginal Migration" and "Reasons for Native Population Movements". Each workstation should be supplied with copies of any pertinent resources (See notes on "Setting Up the Stations"). The teacher will divide the class into four work groups within which students may work independently or in pairs. If research for the paper is to be confined to one day, the teacher will rotate the groups through the stations every 20 minutes. If research spans two days of inquiry, the teacher rotates the groups every 40 minutes. In any case, allow 10 minutes for re-organization and rotation lag.

Modify this lesson for Social 13 by presenting each of the four categories of research through teacher-led presentations and classroom discussions directly related to the theme of rights and responsibilities. Diversify classroom activities by using music, art, and stories about Canada's aboriginal peoples as an introduction to the essay topic. Follow this introductory activity with mapping tasks concerning native languages, treaty boundaries, and migration patterns. Also include brief synopses of the most important research and perspectives on native history and aboriginal rights. Teachers may provide students with

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<sup>1</sup> For some examples, see Phil Fontaine. "No Lessons Needed in Democracy." *Globe and Mail*, 11 December 1997. Also J.R. Miller. *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989) 4. A. J. Ray. *I Have Lived Here Since the World Began*. (Toronto: Key Porter & Lester, 1996). For archaeological and historical criticism of this view, see Wilson and Urion, "First Nations Prehistory and Canadian History," in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*. 2nd ed. Morrison and Wilson eds. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995) 34; and Clive Gamble, *Timewalkers: The Prehistory of Global Colonization* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995) 204.

worksheets, or "Effective Writing Templates", that will help them focus and organize their research on the paper topic.

**Grade Level:**

Social 10 (Can be modified for Social 13 by taking a more teacher-focused approach to the materials)

**Time Required:**

Two classes

**Curriculum Connection for Alberta Social Studies 10:**

Canada in the Modern World

Topic B: Citizenship in Canada

Theme I: Rights and Responsibilities

**Links to Canadian National Geography Standards and Statistics Canada:****Essential Element #1: The World in Spatial Terms**

- Students will learn about the treaty boundaries, movements of glaciers during the Ice Age, and linguistic native diversity using maps.

**Essential Element #2: Places and Regions**

- Students will learn about the migratory settlement patterns of Canada's Aboriginal peoples in various places and regions throughout Canada.

**Essential Element #3: Physical Systems**

- Students will be research how glaciation affected the geography and early Aboriginal populations of Canada.

**Essential Element #4: Human Systems**

- Students will learn how the influx of Aboriginal peoples affected mega-fauna across North America, and how European colonization affected the settlement patterns of earlier Aboriginal migrant waves (ex., depopulation due to disease, new technologies, competition, and warfare).

**Essential Element #5: Environment and Society**

- Students will explore how environmental changes (such as the decimation of buffalo herds) affected native populations across Canada.

**Essential Element #6: The Uses of Geography**

- Students will use their knowledge of geography to build a deeper understanding of the Charter of Rights, and Aboriginal rights in particular.

**Geographic Skill #1: Asking Geographic Questions**

Students ask whether early native migration (i.e., "We were here first") justifiably forms the basis for special Aboriginal rights in Canada.

**Geographic Skill #2: Acquiring Geographic Information**

Students examine a variety of teacher-selected resources such as Statistics Canada website:

- a) Teaching materials – under Lessons for geography at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/kits/courses/geography.htm>.
- b) E-STAT database that contains detailed immigration data in the following locations:
  - Under Census there are data by community, county, province/territory and census tract that can be mapped, graphed and tabulated.
  - In the CANSIM database on E-STAT in 12 Tables under Migration

**Geographic Skill #3: Organizing Geographic Information**

Students must organize their geographic research effectively in order to address the research question.

**Geographic Skill #4: Analyzing Geographic Information**

Students analyze migration information in order to develop a better understanding of Aboriginal rights theory.

**Geographic Skill #5: Answering Geographic Questions**

Students will have completed a research paper about native migration and its connection to the theoretical underpinnings of Aboriginal rights.

**Additional Resources, Materials, and Equipment Required:**

**NOTE:** Many of the attached resources transcend average student abilities. Teachers are advised to peruse these sources carefully, to paraphrase, to gather short excerpts, to summarize, and to simplify materials for student inquiry.

Applied History Research Group. *Canada's First Nations*. University of Calgary, 2000. Dec. 1, 2005. [http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied\\_history/tutor/firstnations/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/firstnations/)

Canada Heirloom Series. "Canada's Native Peoples." *Canada's Digital Collections*. Volume II. Dec. 1, 2005.

[http://collections.ic.gc.ca/heirloom\\_series/volume2/volume2.htm](http://collections.ic.gc.ca/heirloom_series/volume2/volume2.htm)

Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions. "Aboriginal Treaties and Relations." *Canada in the Making*. Dec. 1, 2005.

[http://www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/aboriginals\\_e.html](http://www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/aboriginals_e.html)

Crosby, Alfred W. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986.

Dacks, Barbara. "Lubicon Land." *The Making of Treaty 8 In Canada's Northwest*. Heritage Community Foundation, 2002. Dec. 1, 2005.

[http://www.albertasource.ca/treaty8/eng/1899\\_and\\_After/Implications\\_and\\_Contentions/lubicon\\_land.html](http://www.albertasource.ca/treaty8/eng/1899_and_After/Implications_and_Contentions/lubicon_land.html)

- Dawson, Alastair G. *Ice Age Earth: Late Quaternary Geology and Climate*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. New York: W.W. North, 1997.
- Flanagan, Tom. *First Nations? Second Thoughts*. Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 2000.
- Gamble, Clive. *Timewalkers: The Prehistory of Global Colonization*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995.
- Huck, Barbara, and Doug Whiteway. *In Search of Ancient Alberta*. Winnipeg: Heartland, 1998.
- "Ice-Free Corridor Route." *A Journey to A New Land*. SFU Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, 2005. Dec. 1, 2005.  
<http://www.sfu.museum/journey/03middle/icefree.php>
- "Iroquois Wars." *The Canadian Encyclopaedia*. Historica Foundation of Canada, 2005. Dec. 1, 2005.  
<http://www.canadianencyclopedia.ca/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0004062>
- Jackson, Lionel, et al. "Cosmogenic  $^{36}\text{Cl}$  Dating of the Foothills Erratics Train, Alberta, Canada." *Geology* 25. March 1997: 195-9.
- , and Michael C. Wilson. "The Ice Free Corridor Revisited." *Geotimes*. Feb. 2004. American Geological Institute, 2005. Dec. 1, 2005.  
[http://www.geotimes.org/feb04/feature\\_Revisited.html](http://www.geotimes.org/feb04/feature_Revisited.html)
- Milloy, John S. *The Plains Cree: Trade, Diplomacy and War, 1790-1870*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988.
- Morris, Alexander. *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians*. Toronto: Coles Publishing Co., 1971.
- "Native Americans of North America." *MSN Encarta*. Microsoft, 2005. Dec. 1, 2005.  
[http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia\\_761570777/Native\\_Americans\\_of\\_North\\_America.html](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761570777/Native_Americans_of_North_America.html)
- "Native People, Languages." *The Canadian Encyclopaedia*. Historica Foundation of Canada, 2005. Dec. 1, 2005.  
<http://tceplus.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0005650>
- "Natives, North American." *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*. Columbia UP, 2005. Dec. 1, 2005.  
<http://columbia.thefreedictionary.com/Natives,+North+American>
- "Population History of American Indigenous Peoples." *Wikipedia*. Dec. 1, 2005.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Population\\_history\\_of\\_American\\_indigenous\\_peoples#Population\\_overview](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Population_history_of_American_indigenous_peoples#Population_overview)
- Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council. *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1996.
- Trigger, Bruce G. *Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered*. Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1985.
- Wisconsin Historical Society. "David Thompson's Narrative of His Expeditions in Western America, 1784-1812." *American Journeys*. Dec. 1, 2005.

<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cgi-bin/docviewer.exe?CISOROOT=/aj&CISOPTR=12131>

### Main Objective:

To encourage students to think about a migration-related topic, and to consider the ramifications that a scientific understanding of human migration might have for Aboriginal rights in partial fulfillment of the prescribed Alberta Social 10/13 Curriculum.

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- **Generalize** about the extent to which property rights ought to be based on "being here first". Inquiry into native migration and native rights is meant to develop a **conceptual** understanding of discrimination, prejudice, and respect for First Nations peoples, as well as an appreciation for the complexities of aboriginal identity (**Knowledge Objectives**).
- Develop "**Process Skills**". Students acquire information from various sources, record and organize information in note form, analyze and evaluate research materials for bias, as well as interpret and summarize materials. Students hone their "**Communication Skills**", developing their ideas in written form. Finally, students develop their "**Participation Skills**" by working at individual tasks in a group situation (**Skill Objectives**).
- Through independent and cooperative work, students are encouraged to appreciate various dimensions of this inquiry. It is hoped that all students will develop a critical, respectful attitude towards issues affecting Canada's indigenous peoples (**Attitude Objectives**).

### The Lesson:

	Teacher Activity	Student Activity
<b>Introduction</b>	Teacher can introduce topic using newspaper clippings on current or recent native land disputes.	Students read clippings and engage in classroom discussion of Aboriginal rights.

<b>Lesson Development</b>	Teacher organizes classroom into workstations. Teacher circulates among groups asking questions, offering guidance, and time-keeping.	Students work at stations independently or in pairs. When proceeding beyond research phase into writing phase, they may engage in peer editing or seek direct teacher assistance.
<b>Conclusion</b>	Teacher will offer direction and editing assistance as students develop writing and argumentative skills.	Students will have written an effective argument paper.

**Lesson Extension:** Could be linked to native rights as they conflict with those of non-native populations.

**Assessment of Student Learning:** Student essays may be evaluated on a rubric.

## Setting up the Four Learning Stations on Native Migration

### The Over-Arching Question:

"Why do special rights attach to Aboriginal peoples in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (s. 25) that are not also granted to other immigrant peoples?"

### The "Treaties" Station:

See selected resource list for books and sites containing maps of treaties.

(Especially see:

<http://atlas.gc.ca/site/english/maps/historical/indiantreaties/historicaltreaties.>)

This station ought to contain excerpts from each of the three categories of treaties in Canada: namely, the Eastern Canada peace treaties (pre-1763 treaties and the *Royal Proclamation*), the Ontario treaties (such as the Robinson Treaties), and the eleven numbered western treaties. Student inquiry in this station ought to be directed by questions such as:

1. What is the central difference between the Eastern Canadian peace treaties on the one hand and both the Ontario treaties and the numbered treaties on the other hand? (Answer: Eastern treaties were peace agreements to stop fighting, whereas the Ontario and numbered treaties were land surrenders to promote European migration and settlement.)
2. How did the *Royal Proclamation* restrict European migration, on the one hand, and acknowledge native ownership of land, on the other hand? (Answer: It prevented all European settlers from migrating east of the Appalachians, and therefore made them dependent on the British mercantile system; although it created a huge land reserve in the heart of North America for native peoples, it forbade the sale of their land to anyone except the governors.)
3. The development of the numbered treaties in order to secure further European migration and settlement of the Canadian Northwest involved gathering all the affected tribes together to strike a deal. Why would Treaties 1 and 2 be easier to negotiate than the later Treaties 7 and 8, which have proved most unfair to bands such as the Lubicon in Northern Alberta? (Answer: Treaties 1 and 2 involved smaller land deals, so that all the affected tribes could be present for negotiations; however, it was much more difficult for all the tribes to gather during the development of the later treaties that covered a much larger land mass. The Lubicon Cree were not by the Canadian government about negotiations for Treaty 8 in 1899. Hence, they never signed away their rights to the rich petroleum and forest reserves in Northern Alberta.)

### The "Glaciation" Station:

This station ought to contain maps and the most recent studies on whether or not there was an ice-free corridor east of the Rockies through Canada, or whether

Canada was, indeed, an uninhabitable wasteland until only 12 000 years ago. Student inquiry in this station ought to be directed by questions such as:

1. How might the extinction of numerous species of "megafauna" (mammoths, mastodons, giant ground sloths) around 12 000 years ago be explained by an influx of human beings into the North American continent?

(Answer: Early human beings entered the Americas at this point in some numbers and had a field day hunting large animals that, having evolved apart from human beings for hundreds of thousands of years, did not have a healthy wariness of human hunters.)

2. Even if early human beings were present in the New World long before 12 000 years ago, why does the latest geological evidence rule out native migration and settlement throughout Canada during such an early time?

(Answer: The Ice-Free Corridor hypothesis -- accepted for so long by geologists -- has now been disproved. Human habitation in all but the Pacific coast of Canada could not have been possible much before 12 000 years ago.)

3. How might Aboriginal rights, when based upon the claim to have been here since "time immemorial," be affected by the latest geological evidence concerning the ice sheets in Canada?

(Answer: The standard definition of Aboriginal property rights on the basis of their occupation of certain lands from "time immemorial" is a legal fiction. Aboriginal rights need to be considered on some other basis in order to be coherent.)

### **The "Three Waves of Aboriginal Migration" Station:**

This station ought to include information on the migrations of the Amerind (12 000 BP), the Athabaskan (5000-10 000 BP), and the Inuit/Paleo-Eskimo/Dorset people (4000 BP). Maps of linguistic families among Canada's native peoples would also help students understand how the Pacific Coast tribes are much older than those in the rest of Canada.<sup>2</sup> This station should also include information on the continuous nature of pre-contact native migrations due to tribal warfare (see Trigger and "Iroquois Wars"), pointing to the fact that "[t]he ancestors of today's Southern Ontario population of natives and non-natives all arrived in this part of Canada about the same time."<sup>3</sup> Student inquiry in this station ought to be directed by questions such as:

1. How many waves of native migration came to settle in Canada? When did these various migrations occur?

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<sup>2</sup> It is a general principle of historical linguistics that diversity in language is strong evidence of ancient and continuous habitation. Whereas along the Pacific Coast, dozens of mutually unintelligible, even unrelated, native languages existed, in the rest of Canada, only five linguistic families exist (Inuit, Athapaskan, Algonquian, Sioux, and Iroquoian).

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter Two of Tom Flanagan's book, *First Nations? Second Thoughts*, for a more detailed examination of early Ontario settlement and migration patterns.

(Answer: There were likely three waves of settlement, the details of which are mentioned above.)

2. Why is it unlikely that bands, tribes, or pre-contact peoples occupied land within Canada continuously until the arrival of the French and English?

(Answer: From the 16th century onward, European explorers observed that Aboriginal peoples fought with one another for the control of territory, often conquering, displacing, and even exterminating one another.)

3. Due to the Iroquois Wars, what happened to the native populations in Southern Ontario during the 1600's? How does this affect the Aboriginal claim to have settled Canadian territory first?

(Answer: The Iroquois exterminated or carried away most of the Huron, Neutral, and Petun tribes that lived north of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, depopulating southern Ontario for a century and leaving it open for new waves of settlement. This means that today's ancestral Southern Ontario population of natives and non-natives all arrived in this part of Canada about the same time. Aboriginal rights based on being "here first" are therefore tenuous, and require some other reasoning in order to have full legitimacy.)

### **The "Reasons for Native Population Movements" Station:**

This station concerning "Reasons for Native Population Movements" ought to contain information for students concerning depopulation due to Old World diseases, migrations resulting from the adoption of new technologies such as firearms, metal implements, and horseback riding, as well as movements arising from competition for economic resources (beaver pelts and buffalo robe) and food sources, as well as flight from warfare. Student inquiry in this station ought to be directed by questions such as:

1. Name four major reasons why many of the current locations of Aboriginal peoples in Canada are more recent than the arrival of European colonists.

(Answer: First, native peoples fled from the devastation of Old World diseases. Second, native peoples began to use metal implements, firearms, and horses gained from Europeans. This changed their hunting and trapping patterns. Third, native peoples began to compete to exploit newly profitable resources in the fur trade. They would need to travel not only to hunt, but also to trap for profit. Fourth, the migration of native peoples was also spurred by continuous warfare between tribes over territory and resources.)

2. Examine evidence on how native populations were decimated and forced to migrate by European diseases.

3. Cite some examples of how native migrations in many locations throughout Canada post-date European settlement. How do these instances challenge a doctrine of Aboriginal rights based on being "here first"?

(Answer: Students can cite the extermination of the native population in Southern Ontario by the Iroquois, as well as the case of the signing of the Selkirk Treaty at Red River in 1817 by Peguis, the Ojibwa chief, who only started to settle along the lower Red River in the 1790's after acquiring guns from French and English fur traders (see Wisconsin Historical Society online

archive journal of explorer David Thompson). Another interesting example would be the Cree, who moved onto the prairies armed with guns from the Hudson's Bay Company. In the mid-1800's, the Cree began to attack the Blackfoot because they stood between them and the failing population of buffalo (See Milloy). In each of these cases, Aboriginal population movements were not caused by white settlers taking native land, but by the "advantages" of new technology secured through trading with European settlers. Moreover, in each case, European settlement entered contemporaneously with the incursions of native people on one another's territories.)