

SIMPLIFIED SOCIAL STUDIES UNIT

SUPPORTING THE TOPIC :

The Government of Canada



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Grade / Topic Level : Grade 5

**GOVERNMENT OF CANADA
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STUDENT NOTES FOR HOW IT ALL BEGAN.

KEY WORDS			
WORDS	MEANINGS	WORDS	MEANINGS
elect	to choose someone by voting	council	a group of people who help decide what is best
democracy	a system of government where the people vote for their leaders	colony	a group of settlers living in the same region or community
a right	something that the law says you are allowed to do	Confederation	a group of provinces and territories that joined together to help make things better for everyone
governor	the head of a province, state or country.	Constitution	the rules and laws agreed to for governing Canada
appointed	not elected by the people	monarch	the king or queen of a country

The first people to live in North America were the First Nations people. They had lived in Canada for thousands of years. When people in Europe started building ships, their kings and queens started sending sea captains and their crews to explore new lands. Then, when some new lands had been mapped and explored a bit, ordinary people wanted to go and live in the new lands. Canada was one of the new lands.

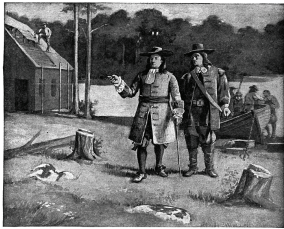


People started coming from Europe to settle in Canada in the 1600s and 1700s. They became known as settlers. They lived together in groups called colonies. In Canada there were two main groups of settlers - the ones who came from Britain and the ones who came from France. The

British settlers lived in what was then called Upper Canada (now Ontario). The French settlers lived in what was known as Lower Canada (now Québec). They were later known as colonists.

Both England and France used governors and councils to rule the early colonies. These governors and councils were not elected by the people.

They were appointed (chosen) by whoever was the King or Queen. But as time passed and more people came to this new country, the colonists wanted to choose their own people to govern. They pointed out that the monarchs of France and England lived very far away and had no idea what the colonists wanted or needed. They demanded the right to elect their own people to represent them.



Britain agreed to allow the colonists to have a democratic government in 1758. The French colonists were given the same right to vote when they later came under British rule.

On July 1, 1867, the British North America Act was signed. This was the beginning of the new country called Canada. Four provinces joined on that date : Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. They became a Confederation, sharing resources and skills for the benefit of everyone. They chose Ottawa as the capital city. The men who signed to join this uniting of provinces were called The Fathers of Confederation.

Although these few provinces united to make the beginnings of the new country of Canada, they were also allowed to form local governments in their own provinces. Over time, more settlements grew and became provinces and territories. They began to see the benefits of joining the Confederation. For example, British Columbia was promised a railway if it joined the Confederation; Prince Edward Island joined when it was promised a year-round ferry system. The Red River settlement had grown to become Manitoba and joined in 1870. What had been Hudson's Bay Land became the Northwest Territories and also joined in 1870.

However, some areas did not sign on until much later. The Yukon did not join until 1898; Alberta and Saskatchewan waited until 1905; and Newfoundland held out the longest, only signing on in 1949.

Canada was now a huge country. Dividing it up into provinces and territories made it easier to manage because each area had its own government. But there still had to be a main government for the whole country. This is called the Federal Government.

The governments that make Canada work as a democracy (government for the people, by the people) are :

- Municipal (Local) government. In this kind of government people in towns and cities can elect their own mayors and councillors.
- Provincial and Territorial government. In this kind of government people vote for a Premier to govern their province or territory.
- First Nations government. In this kind of government First Nations people vote for their own Chiefs to govern their band or nation.
- Federal Government. This government covers the whole of Canada, but is still elected by the people.

This is a picture of the Fathers of Confederation who were there at the beginning.



QUIZ 1: HOW IT BEGAN

1. Circle T for TRUE, or F for FALSE :

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|
| a. | The first people to live in Canada were French. | T | F |
| b. | Explorers started coming when planes were invented. | T | F |
| c. | The early European explorers were sent by their kings and queens. | T | F |
| d. | Settlers from Europe started coming in the 1600s. | T | F |
| e. | They lived in groups called colonies. | T | F |
| f. | The two main groups were from France and Italy. | T | F |
| g. | Ontario was once called Upper Canada. | T | F |
| h. | Lower Canada is now known as Quebec. | T | F |
| i. | The first governors were chosen by the people. | T | F |
| j. | The settlers were happy to be governed by people who had been appointed by a monarch. | T | F |

2. Finish the sentences.

- a. In 1758 Britain allowed the colonists to have their own _____ .
- b. In July of 1867, the _____ Act was signed.
- c. The four provinces that first became a Confederation were :



- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____