

# The Events of Confederation

Every year, people celebrate Canada Day on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

## Before READING

### Making Connections

Brainstorm some concerns you have about your neighbourhood, or think about how you could celebrate your neighbourhood.

- How would you get people together? What might get in the way of bringing them together? How might you solve your concerns?
- Create a poster to convince people to help you. Include a symbol that represents your neighbourhood and the issue being resolved.

**W**hy do you think Canada celebrates its birthday on July 1? On that day in 1867, the country of Canada was created. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Québec, and Ontario merged when the leaders signed the British North America Act.

Considering what you have learned in chapters 1 and 2, why might this day never have happened? People in each colony could not always agree and had different ideas about issues, such as taxes and transportation. Another challenge was that people spoke different languages and had different beliefs and values. In order for the colonies to unite, political leaders had to convince the people that forming one country would be beneficial to everyone. Would you predict that the union came about with agreement and cooperation, or with disagreement and conflict? Why?



In 1867, crowds gathered in Market Square, Kingston, to hear the proclamation announcing Confederation.

## Questions to Consider as You Read this Chapter

You will explore these aspects of the Unit 1 Big Idea: **Why did some of the colonies put aside differences and create a new country—Canada?**

- How were the politicians able to join the colonies together?
- How did the map of Canada change?
- How were the responsibilities of government divided between the federal and provincial governments? How is this organization reflected in our present-day government?

### Thinking About Literacy

#### Reading Visuals

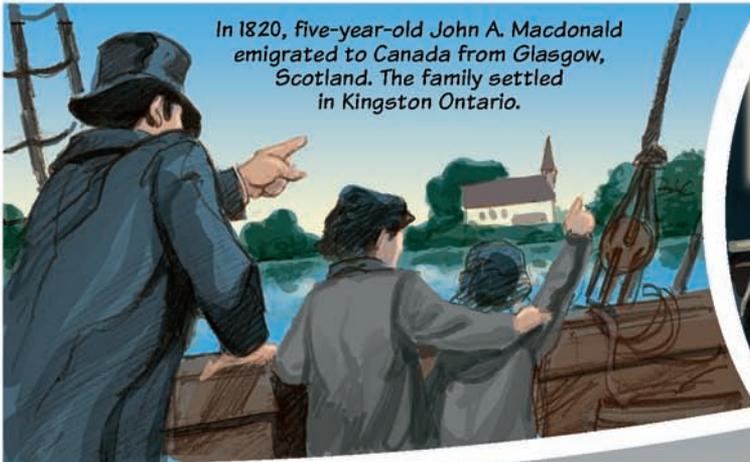
Visuals can include maps, art, cartoons, photographs, charts, and graphs.

Visuals serve three purposes: to help you understand what you read (important); to add information that is not in the main text (important); to make the page look better (interesting).

Use an organizer like this one to help you decide which visuals will help you understand the information and which might be good to revisit out of interest.

Title/Number	Page Number	Who/What?	How?	Where/When?	Important? Explain.	Interesting?

# REAL PEOPLE MAKING HISTORY ▶ The Life of Sir John A. Macdonald



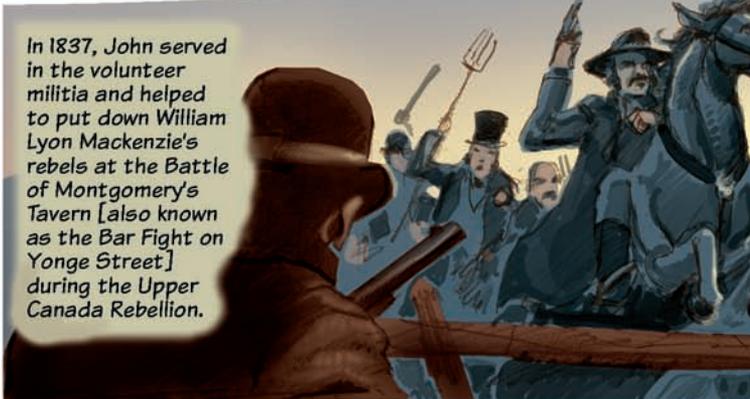
In 1820, five-year-old John A. Macdonald emigrated to Canada from Glasgow, Scotland. The family settled in Kingston Ontario.

## TRAGEDY STRIKES

John experienced many personal tragedies in his life. When he was seven, he witnessed the traumatic killing of his younger brother.



By the age of 15, John was apprenticing with a Kingston lawyer. Intelligent and driven, by age 21, he had his own law practice. As a teenager, John drank heavily. This was the beginning of a lifelong abuse of alcohol.



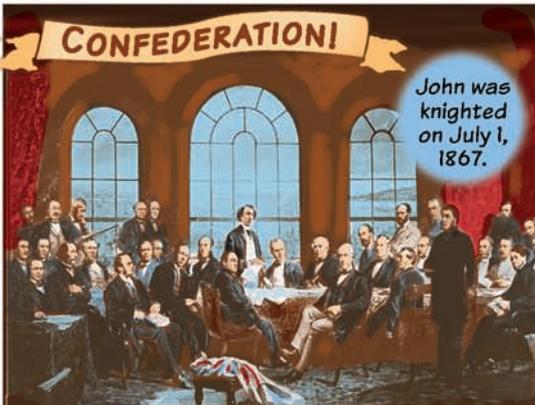
In 1837, John served in the volunteer militia and helped to put down William Lyon Mackenzie's rebels at the Battle of Montgomery's Tavern [also known as the Bar Fight on Yonge Street] during the Upper Canada Rebellion.

In 1843, the year John entered politics, he married Isabella Clark. They had two sons, but their first born, Alexander, died at 13 months. Sick most of their married life, Isabella became addicted to opium and died in 1857.



## TRAGEDY STRIKES AGAIN

John worked hard to build support for the idea of Confederation. In 1867, his dream came true.



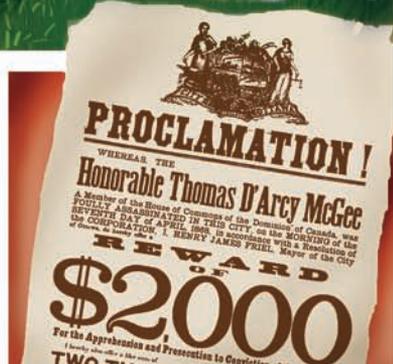
## CONFEDERATION!

John was knighted on July 1, 1867.

In the year of Confederation, John married Susan Agnes Bernard. Their daughter Mary was born with physical and mental disabilities. John doted on his daughter, reading to her every night before dinner, and even taking her to Parliament to listen to his speeches.



Baboo, shall we read this one again?



On April 7, 1868, John came home with blood on his clothes from carrying the body of his good friend D'Arcy McGee, murdered for his support of Confederation.

Macdonald championed a national policy of industrialization, railway building, and western settlement. He was accused of accepting bribes from contractors.

– and the fate of Canada will then, as a Dominion, be sealed.

### CANADIAN PACIFIC SCANDAL

John sent this telegram to Hugh Allan, which revealed his part in the bribery scandal. The telegram read...

*I must have another \$10,000. Will be the last time of calling. Do not fail me. Answer today.*  
John A. Macdonald

Ottawa, July 14th 1872

**Sir John A. Macdonald served as prime minister from 1867–1873 and 1878–1891.**

When fortune empties her chamber pot on your head, smile and say 'we are going to have a summer shower.'

### THE LAST SPIKE

Once the railroad was completed, the Macdonald cabinet imposed a head tax to limit Chinese immigration. In 2006, the Canadian government apologised for this policy.

James died Monday, 22 April at 20 minutes 6 o'clock p.m.

John's father had always refused to record John's little brother's death in the family book. Years later, John finally wrote these simple words about the brother whose death affected his life so greatly.

When John and his cabinet made the final decision to hang Louis Riel, John is known to have said...

"He shall hang though every dog in Québec bark in his favour."

John once told his private secretary, Joseph Pope...

I never had a childhood.

A man of great vision and many sorrows, Sir John A. Macdonald's accomplishments had a huge impact on Canada.

# Creating a Nation

During

## READING

### Checkpoint

Skimming means you are reading quickly across the lines, looking for main ideas and details. Scanning means that you are zigzagging up and down the page—most useful when you are looking for something specific, like a date, or a boldfaced word or name. Scan for visuals and subheadings to add information to your organizer.

## WORDS MATTER

**conference** a meeting for discussion of information or ideas

In the early 1860s, the colonies of British North America were weak and isolated. Most colonists were keen to retain ties with Britain. They saw the United States as a threat, and were not sure how they could defend themselves without Britain. Then, in 1864, events relating to British North America's future began to move quickly toward unification. During the next three years, the structure of modern Canada began to emerge.

## The Charlottetown Conference

In September 1864, the Maritime colonies held a **conference** in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, to discuss the idea of a Maritime union. British Columbia and Newfoundland were not invited. The Canadas were not Maritime colonies, but the leading politicians from the Canadas managed to get an invitation. Representatives from P.E.I., New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia met with representatives from the Canadas. The Canadians soon persuaded the Maritimers to give up their original plans. Instead, John A. Macdonald and his colleagues got them to consider a union with the Canadas.

The delegates at the conference agreed to support the idea of joining the Canadas and the Maritime colonies together. They also decided to meet again to discuss the plan further.

## The Québec Conference

In October 1864, representatives of the colonies held a second conference in Québec City. This time Newfoundland attended as well, but British Columbia was too far away to be included. At Charlottetown, they had agreed to the principle of joining the colonies, but they had not discussed the details of how this would be done. In Québec City, they met for three weeks and worked out the rules for sharing power in the new country.

At the end of the conference, the delegates voted mostly in favour of the Québec Resolutions. These contained the details of how the new country would work. The following is a list of some of the features of Canada's government:



Women were not directly involved in the Confederation conferences. In the evenings, the wives and daughters of the delegates joined the men for dinners and dances, such as the one shown in this painting called *Ball at Legislature* by Dusan Kadlec. How might this kind of socializing help the men agree on important issues?

- A **federal** constitution. This meant there would be a government for the whole country, as well as for each province.
- Each level of government would be responsible for specific areas. For instance, **Indian** affairs were federal, whereas education was provincial, etc.
- In parliament, there would be a balance of representation by population and equal representation.
- There would be a balance between elected and appointed representatives.

John A. Macdonald was the main influence in the writing of these resolutions. In the parliament of the Canadas, he won support for the plan, with 91 votes in favour and 33 opposed.

## Missing Voices

As had been the case in the Canadas in the 1850s, politicians paid no attention to First Nations' or black people's concerns. The politicians were men from Britain, Ireland, or France. They envisioned a Canada that would look very much like those countries. Parliament, the courts, the education system, and virtually everything else would be modelled after British and European examples.

Women were also ignored in the discussions, although they made up about half the population. Remember from Chapter 2 that women did not have any political representation. Although unfair, these groups were largely ignored in the discussions.



The resolutions that the Fathers of Confederation adopted laid the foundations for the way Canadian government is run to this day.

## WORDS MATTER

**federal** relating to a system that has a central government as well as provincial or state governments

**Indian** the historic term for First Nations people. Though we now use the term First Nations, historic documents use “Indian;” the federal government still has a Department of Indian Affairs, a name assigned at Confederation

## CANADA MINUTE

### The Great Coalition

A coalition is a group of people, often political opponents, who agree to work together for a common goal. George Brown and John A. Macdonald, both Fathers of Confederation, disliked one another, but, in 1864, Brown put aside his personal feelings and offered to work together with Macdonald to find a solution to the colonies' problems. Later politicians have done the same thing. During times of war, political opponents have put aside their differences to work toward peace.

## WORDS MATTER

**Confederation** the union of provinces and territories forming Canada



Antoine-Aimé Dorion

## Opposition to the Québec Resolutions

Opinion was divided as to whether the Québec Resolutions were a good idea. Antoine-Aimé Dorion was the leader of Canada East's *Rouge* party. He believed that the proposals would lead to the destruction of the French culture in what would become Québec. Dorion wanted a referendum—vote by the people—on the plan for union, something Macdonald opposed. Dorion said:

*If confederation should be adopted without the people of this province's sanction, the entire country will sorely learn to regret it.*

A young lawyer named Wilfrid Laurier wrote:

*Twenty-five years ago the French nation... was more vigorous, more united, strongly French... Today it is... without strength, [and] divided... We must use all the influence we have left to obtain a free and separate government.*

In the Maritimes, there was even more opposition. Joseph Howe was a journalist and politician from Halifax. He helped Nova Scotia to win responsible government in 1848 and was premier of that province from 1860 to 1863. While the **Confederation** conferences were being held, he was leader of the opposition to Nova Scotia's joining Confederation. He argued that the population was not being fully consulted, and that Nova Scotia would be overwhelmed by the larger provinces of Ontario and Québec. Howe also felt that the Canadas were too far away from Halifax for the union to be successful. He wrote in the *Halifax Chronicle*:

*Did anybody ever propose to unite Scotland with Poland or Hungary? [They are] [i]nland countries [1300 km] off in the very heart of Europe.*



Joseph Howe

Attitudes toward Confederation depended on the local concerns of each colony. Governments and people were often in conflict about the wisdom of the proposal. The following organizer summarizes the main issues in each of the colonies.

Colony	Government Leader	Attitude Toward Confederation
The Canadas	John A. Macdonald and George-Étienne Cartier	Strongly in favour. Saw it as a way to expand the domestic economy and provide better defence against the U.S.
Nova Scotia	Charles Tupper	In favour, but in the Nova Scotia assembly his opponents defeated his request for support of the Resolutions.
New Brunswick	Leonard Tilley	In favour. His party was defeated in the assembly in 1865 when it asked for a vote for Confederation. Tilley became premier again in 1866 and led New Brunswick into Confederation even though there was widespread opposition among voters.
Prince Edward Island	James Pope	In favour, if the new government would pay \$800 000 to buy out the absentee landlords. The Liberal opposition called this bribery, and defeated Pope in 1867. The new government refused to join Confederation.
Newfoundland	Frederick Carter	In favour, but did not press the issue when civil disorder broke out over other issues in 1865. In 1869, he was defeated in an election by the Anti-Confederation party. Newfoundlanders feared that their traditional way of life would be undermined in Confederation.

## The London Conference

In December 1866, representatives of Canada West, Canada East, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia travelled to London, England. Newfoundland had dropped out of the discussions. The delegates took part in a conference with British officials about the future of the colonies. The colonial secretary, Lord Carnarvon, said of the conference's work

*We are laying the foundation of a great State... perhaps one which at a future day may even overshadow [Britain]. But, come what may, we shall rejoice that we have shown neither indifference to their wishes nor jealousy of their aspirations.*

Agreement was reached easily and Canada became Britain's first "self-governing Dominion." Canada retained the monarchy, and its membership in the British Empire. Since the king or queen had no real power in government, the monarchy remained a symbol and nothing more.

Canada had control over its internal affairs, but Britain would have control over foreign policy, meaning that Britain would negotiate with other countries on Canada's behalf. This situation continued until 1923. The conference delegates decided that Britain would continue to be responsible for any changes to the constitution of Canada, but only at the request of the Canadian parliament. It was not until 1982 that this power was officially handed over to Canada. As you can see, Canada was not entirely independent in 1867; however, it made some important steps in that direction.



Lord Carnarvon. Predict reasons why you think he said the Canadas "may even overshadow [Britain]." How did you reach your conclusion?

## Confederation

On July 1, 1867, a new country was born. The Dominion of Canada contained four provinces: Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. Queen Victoria had already chosen Ottawa as the capital of the Canadas, and a new parliament building had opened there in 1866. These now became the capital and parliament of the new nation.

### Canada, 1867



On that first “Canada Day,” there were celebrations in many locations. Canons were fired, bands played, and fireworks exploded. The future looked bright. It would take much effort, however, to make Canada a prosperous and united nation. The rest of Sir John A. Macdonald’s life, until he died in 1891, was dedicated to that goal.

### THINKING It Over

1. Create and complete an organizer to show the dates, representatives attending, and key features of the Charlottetown Conference, the Québec Conference, and the London Conference. How does knowing this information help you better understand Canada’s political landscape today?
2. Look at the quotations from Antoine-Aimé Dorion, Wilfrid Laurier, Joseph Howe, and Lord Carnarvon. Rewrite what each said in your own words. Whose opinion comes closest to your own opinion about the Confederation of Canada? Why?

**k a c**

# The British North America Act, 1867

The **act** that made Canada independent was originally called the British North America Act (BNA Act). In 1982, it was renamed the Constitution Act, 1867. Historians still use the old name to describe the events of Confederation.

## Features of Canada's New Government

The BNA Act set the government up in the following manner:

Item	Details
A federal system	There would be a parliament for the whole country, plus a legislature for each province.
Bilingual features	French and English would be the languages of parliament, plus the legislature of Québec.
A balance of representation by population and equal representation	Parliament would have two houses. There would be representation by population in the <b>House of Commons</b> . In the <b>Senate</b> , each region (Ontario, Québec, and the Maritimes) would have the same number of seats.
A balance between elected and appointed representatives	The House of Commons would be elected by voters; the Senate would be appointed by the prime minister.

Having two levels of government could be difficult unless each level understood which areas it was responsible for. Look at the chart on page H 62. Sections 91, 92, and 93 of the BNA Act clearly laid out what the various responsibilities were.

The provinces were given powers that were considered less important in 1867. However, two of these—health care and education—have become very significant. Why do you think Macdonald did not want to give the provinces too much power?

### THINKING It Over

1. Study the chart on page H 62. Which was the most powerful level of government in 1867? Today? Explain. **k t**
2. Some provincial governments today say that they should have more power. They say that they are

closer to the people than the federal government is, and could therefore do a better job of dealing with matters such as telecommunications or protecting the environment. With a classmate, discuss which level of government you think can best deal with such areas of responsibility, and why. **t a c**

During

### READING

#### Checkpoint

Review the questions on page H 53. Look for answers as you skim and scan this chapter. Add the information to your organizer. Continue adding new sections to the organizer, using headings in addition to pictures.

### WORDS MATTER

**act** a piece of legislation passed by parliament

**House of Commons** the house of parliament that is elected by voters and is based on representation by population

**Senate** the house of parliament that is appointed by the prime minister and is based on equal representation for various regions



John A. Macdonald looked at the government of the United States and decided Canada's government should be different. In the U.S., the states have many important powers. The federal government has only the leftover powers, and matters of foreign policy and national defence. This is why, for instance, criminal law is different in every state in the United States. Some states practise capital punishment for first-degree murder, while others have abolished executions altogether.

Macdonald believed that the Americans had not arranged things well. He thought that giving individual states too much power makes a nation less united. He believed that this had, in part, caused the American Civil War (1861–1865). Some

states believed that they should have the right to practise slavery and refused to give up this right. This crisis nearly tore the country apart.

If the federal government had all the important powers, Macdonald believed, Canada could avoid having provinces leave the nation.

Not everything has gone to plan. Some powers that were considered unimportant and given to the provinces—such as health care and education—have since become important. Nova Scotia elected a separatist government in 1867. Québec held referendums on separation in 1980 and 1995. By and large, however, the division of powers has helped to keep Canada together.

Section	Clause	Item	Example
Section 91 (federal)	3	taxation	income tax, taxes on corporations, import duties
	7	national defence	the military
	24	Aboriginal affairs	Indian reserves and support (like health care and education)
	27	criminal law	making murder, smuggling, and theft illegal
	29	any item not specifically made a provincial power. (These are called residual powers.)	items that had not been invented in 1867, such as licensing of television stations or telecommunications networks
Section 92 (provincial)	2	limited powers of taxation	income tax, taxes on corporations, provincial sales tax
	7	health care	hospitals and licensing of doctors
	8	local government	the City of Toronto, Essex County (Windsor area)
	10	roads and bridges	maintaining highways that connect communities (whereas roads within communities are the responsibility of municipal governments)
Section 93 (provincial)	1	education	school boards, colleges, and universities

### THINKING It Over

- For one week, look through local and national newspapers and magazines. Listen to television and radio broadcasts. Find issues connected to government, such as health care, Aboriginal issues, revenues from oil and natural gas. Keep a list of the topics, note which government is responsible, and whether or not there is a conflict between the two levels of government. Share your findings in a small group.
- Do some research to find out about a recent dispute between the federal government and the provinces about one of the following areas: Aboriginal people, health care, the environment, trade, or telecommunications. Explain (a) the federal position in the disagreement, (b) the provincial position, and (c) which position you feel makes more sense, and why.

# HISTORICAL THINKING SKILL

## Analyzing Cause and Consequence

In this chapter, you have been reading about Canada becoming a nation in 1867. When historians look at an “event” like Confederation they often ask why? and so what? questions. They want to know the causes of the event as well as the consequences of it.

### Step 1 Analyze cause and consequence

The first stage in analyzing cause and consequence involves asking good questions about the event. Some of these questions for Confederation might be:

- Why did the colonies choose to come together at that particular time?
- Why did Confederation take the shape it did?
- What have been the long term results of the decisions made in the 1860s?

### Step 2 Remember that answers can be complex

It is important to remember that answers to these kinds of questions are usually not simple, but quite complex. For example, causes usually include circumstances of the time as well as the actions of particular people. Most important events also have many consequences and some of these might be positive and others negative.

## APPLY It

Using the material in this chapter and information from elsewhere, complete the following charts. Remember when thinking

about the people that both supporters and opponents of Confederation helped to shape it.

### Causes of Confederation

Cause	Impact on Confederation
<i>Circumstances of The Time</i> The United States was strong and united	Canadian colonies worried about invasion and so began to consider unifying.
<i>People</i> Antoine-Aimé Dorion	He and others were worried about the loss of provincial rights. He pushed the politicians to include strong provincial governments in the BNA Act.

### Consequences of Confederation

Positive	Negative
Canada became a country that balances national and provincial concerns.	Aboriginal voices were left out. Aboriginal Peoples have had to fight for recognition and rights since 1867.

# How Did the Map of Canada Change?

During

## READING

### Checkpoint

Look again at the maps. What purposes do these visuals have? How do the maps help you to understand how Canada developed over time?

In 1867, Canada consisted of only four provinces (see map on page H 60). However, the new constitution allowed for the possibility that other provinces might join. On these maps, orange identifies Canadian provinces. The map of Canada underwent many changes between 1870 and 1871.

Canada, 1870–1871



## WORDS MATTER

**hypothesis** an educated guess or theory that has not been proven

If you look at a modern atlas, you will see that the map of Canada has changed again. In fact, the map has changed several times between 1871 and now. In later chapters, you will see how these changes occurred.

## THINKING It Over

1. Compare this map to the map of Canada in 1867 on page H 60. Identify the changes you see between the two maps. **k a**
2. Why do you think these changes occurred? Make a **hypothesis** about each change. Record your hypotheses. You will return to them in later chapters. **t**

# PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

You have seen how the leaders of the colonies met and created a plan to join the colonies into an independent nation, Canada. You have examined the details of the plan that was developed by the politicians (the BNA Act). You have also studied the way in which the map of Canada changed in the years up to 1871.

After

## READING

### Reading Visuals

Review your organizers.

How did the visuals and words in each section support each other? Were there any visuals you could have ignored and come back to later?

With a partner, discuss what would help you know when to focus on visuals and when to come back to them later.

Title/Number	Page Number	Who/What?	How?	Where/When?	Important? Explain.	Interesting?

## THINKING It Through

- You have seen how the map of Canada changed between 1867 and 1871. Now you are going to work with the changes that took place in 1873, 1898, and 1905. Using maps that your teacher will give you, examine how Canada grew during those years.
  - Create your own copies of these maps. Be sure to show the boundaries of each of the provinces as they appear at each date. On each map, be sure to include all the map conventions you learned about in Grade 7 geography (title, legend, compass rose, and scale). In addition, on each map, indicate the date that each province entered Confederation. **k a**
  - In a paragraph for each map, (i) identify the changes that have taken place in Canada since the previous map (between 1871 and 1873, 1873 and 1898, and 1898 and 1905), and (ii) predict how each set of changes would have helped to make Canada a stronger nation. **t c**
- As an alternative, you could work in a group to organize a mock Confederation conference. Assign members of the group to represent the various leaders, each preparing a persuasive speech presenting that leader's point of view. Draft a set of six resolutions about how the proposed new country should be run. At the end of the conference, take a vote. **k t c**
- Create a Word Power game. Choose five of the key terms from this chapter and write a multiple choice definition for each one. Include the correct definition using your own words and two incorrect ones. Trade games with a classmate and see how well you do at identifying the correct definitions. **k t c**

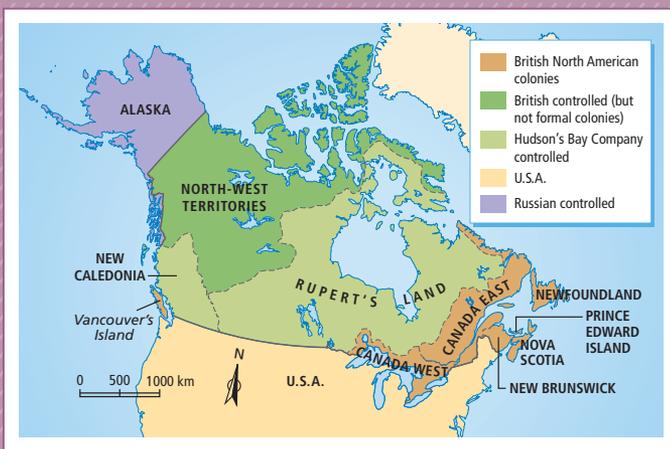
# Back to the Big Idea

## Why did some of the colonies put aside differences and create a new country—Canada?

Throughout this unit, you have

- looked at the main features of the colonies of British North America in the early 1860s
- examined the various factors that caused them to work together to solve their common problems
- followed the main events that took place as the political leaders worked to unite the colonies
- identified the various reasons the colonies thought they would be better off as an independent nation

Use the graphic organizers you completed while reading the chapter to review what you have learned. Create a graphic organizer to answer the question, **Why did some of the colonies put aside differences and create a new country—Canada?**



## Show That You Know

Review the graphic organizer you created to answer the Big Idea question on the previous page. What do you think was the most important reason that the colonies decided to unite into a single nation? This will be the subject of your unit culminating activity.

### Step 1 Ask questions

Create two questions for each inquiry word (who? what? when? where? why? how?) about your topic.

**Tip:** Review the material about asking questions. See page S 8.

### Step 2 Identify primary and secondary sources

Make a short list of primary sources and secondary sources that could help you find information about your topic. Primary sources could include journals, letters, statistics, period documents, and maps. Secondary sources could include modern maps, illustrations, print materials, videos, CD-ROMS, and Internet sites. Create a bibliography containing at least two primary sources and two secondary sources that you will use.

**Tip:** Find sources in a library catalogue or on the Internet. See page S 2.

### Step 3 Summarize the information about your topic

Study your sources, making notes as you do so. Create short written summaries about different aspects of your topic.

**Tip:**

- Include quotations from primary materials.
- Create any of the following visual items that apply: timeline, graph, map, model. See pages S 12–S 13.

### Step 4 Arrange your material in an interesting and creative manner

Create your final copy, making sure that it contains all the elements listed in the various steps.

**Tip:**

- Create a written introduction and conclusion.
- Include your bibliography.

### Step 5 Present your findings

Present your findings to a small group of students or to the whole class. Make sure that you have all of the following

**Tip:** Practise presenting your material to make sure it fits together properly.

- oral material
- visual material
- written material