

# CONFEDERATION

## Unit Overview

The Confederation of Canada was a series of events which brought our great country into being. The process officially began on July 1, 1867, when the first of four colonies joined together to create the *Dominion of Canada*, and the process continues to this day. This unit traces the development of Canada, province by province, from its birth pangs in the mid 1800's to its present form. Ten lessons are included - lessons which examine the additions of each province and territory, as well as a variety of supplementary topics important to the creation of Canada.

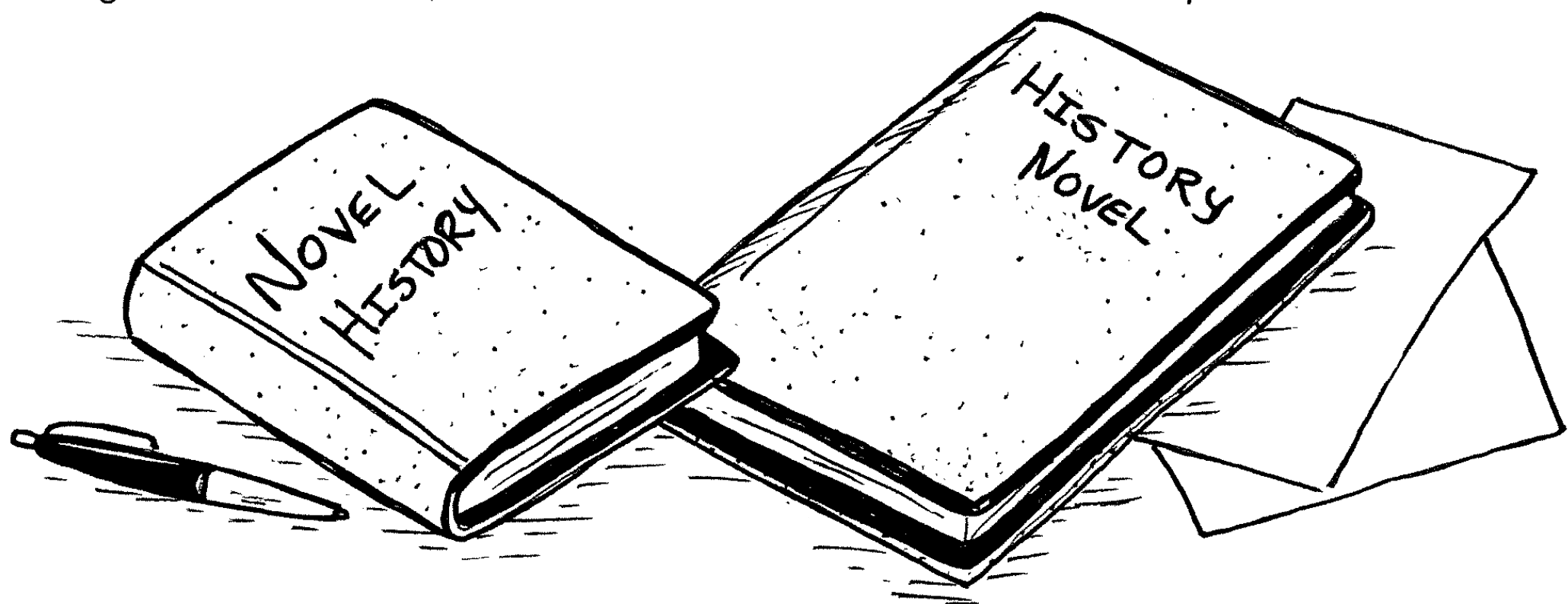
## **Lesson topics are:**

- 1) Life in British North America
- 2) Reasons for Confederation
- 3) Steps to Confederation
- 4) The Fathers of Confederation
- 5) The Iron Road
- 6) Differing Opinions About Confederation
- 7) And Manitoba Makes Five
- 8) From Sea to Sea
- 9) Better Late than Never (Newfoundland Joins Confederation)
- 10) Modern Issues

## **Lessons include:**

- ⇒ Student Objectives, Expectations and Activities
- ⇒ Suggested Teaching Strategies
- ⇒ Informational Worksheets and Follow-Up Activities
- ⇒ Research Activities
- ⇒ Art / Creative Writing Activities
- ⇒ Enrichment / Optional Activities.

A number of resources relevant to the topic of Confederation, such as historical novels and writings from the 1800's, have been included in the *Enrichment / Optional* section.



## Life in British North America

The Canada of the mid-1800's hardly resembled the nation we know today. There were no cars or aeroplanes; no radios, televisions, telephones or computers.

The Canada we know, has a population of more than 25 million - in 1867, only about a tenth that number lived here and very few had settled west of the Great Lakes.

For more than three hundred years, Europeans had been streaming across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas. A number of independent colonies had been formed, and in 1776, thirteen of them joined together to form the United States of America. By the mid-1800's, the British-ruled colonies to the north of the U.S.A. sensed an urgency to unite and form a strong independent country. There was a growing fear that the great new nation to the south would soon swallow them.

This dream would be realized in a way that even Canada's *Fathers of Confederation* probably didn't dream possible - a strong, united nation stretching from Atlantic to Pacific - a breadth of over three thousand miles. It would encompass several time zones and countless peoples from a hundred native lands. It would span countless miles of mountains, woodlands, prairies, and muskeg.

The challenges that faced the founders of the new Dominion were many - how could they possibly unite such a diverse nation of people spread over five million square kilometers? They soon realized that a large part of the solution lay in the building of a railroad! An "iron road" running from sea to sea - from the Maritimes to British Columbia, from Atlantic to Pacific. This massive undertaking was the vision of the Fathers of Confederation, and it was *the impossible dream* that made their country possible.

It was an exciting time to be living in what we now call *Canada*, a country populated by courageous and resourceful pioneers. People who left their homes, friends, and families forever to carve out a new life in a wild, forbidding land. There was also an abundance of unusual, intriguing characters including the most colourful Prime Minister we've ever had - Sir John A. Macdonald.

It was a country far different than today. Hockey, baseball, basketball and football had not yet caught the imaginations of sports enthusiasts. The United States was still reeling from the aftermath of the great Civil War. General Custer had not even heard of Sitting Bull.



## Comprehension Questions

- Describe the typical pioneer dwelling built by such settlers as the Traill family. Include a description of the actual structure, how it was heated, lit, etc. What would be some of the disadvantages to living in such a dwelling?

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- Investigate:** the pioneer's dwelling. Research pictures or descriptions of the homes of early Canadians. How do they compare to Catharine Parr Traill's description. Investigate specific features such as size, construction, materials, and number of rooms. What did they use for a floor? Furniture? Dividing rooms?

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- Mrs. Traill mentions that many of the men had to "hire out" to make ends meet. Where do you think they would be able to get jobs in Canada at this time?

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- Why do you think that pioneer women often found their new life harder to adjust to than the men? What do you think the women missed?

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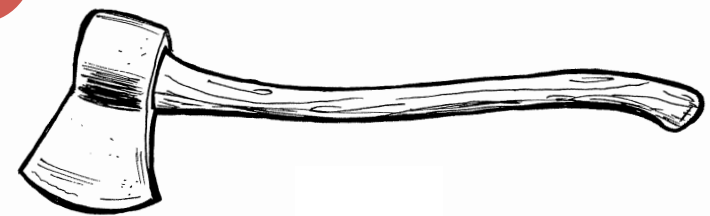
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## Enrichment / Optional Activity

"Am I Remembered in Erin" is a poem written in the mid-1800's by one of Canada's Fathers of Confederation - **Thomas D'Arcy McGee**. McGee left Ireland (Erin) as a young man to seek his fame and fortune in the *New World*. He quickly became one of the leading spokespersons advocating the creation of Canada. As you can see from this wonderful poem, he was also a talented writer who never forgot the country of his birth. Thomas D'Arcy McGee was only one of two Canadian politicians to be assassinated. The second victim was to be murdered over a hundred years later. *Who was he?*

### Am I Remembered in Erin

Thomas D'Arcy Magee

Am I remembered in Erin?  
I charge you, speak me true!  
Has my name a sound - a meaning,  
In the scenes my boyhood knew?  
Does the heart of the Mother ever  
Recall her exile's name?  
For to be forgot in Erin,  
And on earth, were all the same.

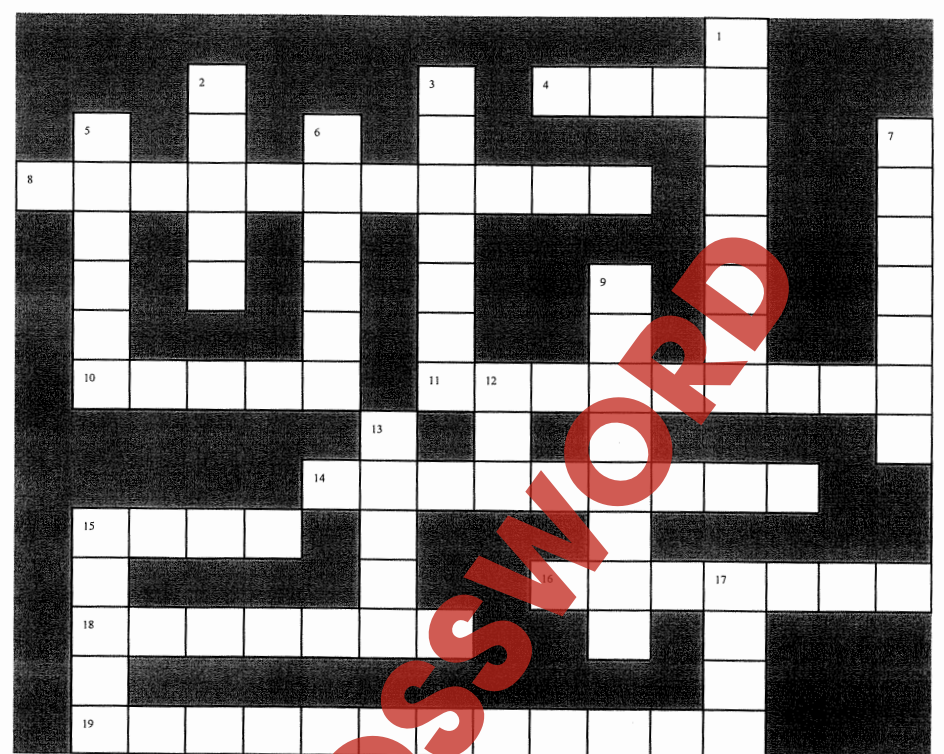
Oh, Mother! Mother Erin!  
Many sons your age hath seen -  
Many gifted constant lovers  
Since your mantle first was green;  
Then how may I hope to cherish  
The dream that I could be  
In your crowded memory number'd  
With that palm-crowned company?

Yet faint and far, my Mother!  
As the hope shines on my sight,  
I cannot choose but watch it  
Till my eyes have lost their light;  
For never among your brightest  
And never among your best,  
Was heart more true to Erin  
Than beats within my breast.



- What is the theme of this poem?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think the poet refers to himself as an "exile" in the first stanza?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What are the poet's feelings for Erin (Ireland)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Reasons for Confederation



### ACROSS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Scotia was an original province
- Free trade was known as \_\_\_\_\_
- Canada is about 3000 \_\_\_\_\_ wide
- The Great \_\_\_\_\_ made Confederation possible
- \_\_\_\_\_ was Canada's first Prime Minister
- Cartier was leader of le Parti \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ -Etienne Cartier was an important Father of Confederation
- Canada West is now called \_\_\_\_\_
- Another original province was \_\_\_\_\_

### DOWN

- The United States policy of \_\_\_\_\_ Destiny was viewed with suspicion in Canada
- George Brown's Reform Party was called True \_\_\_\_\_
- Canada extends from Atlantic to \_\_\_\_\_
- George Brown led the \_\_\_\_\_ Party
- Army \_\_\_\_\_ quelled the Fenian uprising
- The Irish invaders were known as \_\_\_\_\_
- Four original \_\_\_\_\_ formed Canada
- In 2003, Canada was 136 years \_\_\_\_\_
- Dorion was leader of le \_\_\_\_\_ rouge (reformers)
- Leaving the protection of Britain was a \_\_\_\_\_

From the Informational Worksheets, complete the following chart:

Father of Confederation	Contribution to Confederation
John A. Macdonald	
Georges-Etienne Cartier	
George Brown	
Charles Tupper	
Samuel Leonard Tilley	

CHART ACTIVITY



**Investigation**

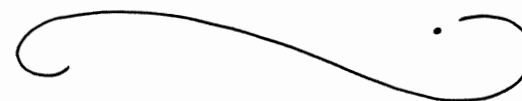
These are only a few of the fascinating men who joined together in the 1860's to see the creation of the nation of Canada. Choose one of the following men from the list and outline his life. Your research should make mention of vital statistics such as his birthdate, birthplace, where he grew up and entered politics, his political beliefs as pertaining to Confederation, and his contributions to the Confederation process.

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Adams Archibald - Nova Scotia      | Alexander Campbell - Canada        |
| F.B.T. Carter - Newfoundland       | E.B. Chandler - New Brunswick      |
| J.C. Chapais - Canada              | James Cockburn - Canada            |
| George Coles - PEI                 | Robert Dickey - Nova Scotia        |
| Charles Fisher - New Brunswick     | Alexander Galt - Canada            |
| John Hamilton Gray - New Brunswick | John Hamilton Gray - PEI           |
| T.H. Haviland - PEI                | William Henry - Nova Scotia        |
| W.P. Howland - Canada              | John Johnson - New Brunswick       |
| Hector Langevin - Canada           | Jonathan McCully - Nova Scotia     |
| A.A. Macdonald - Canada            | William McDougall - Canada         |
| Thomas D'Arcy McGee - Canada       | Peter Mitchell - New Brunswick     |
| Oliver Mowat - Canada              | Edward Palmer - PEI                |
| W.H. Pope - PEI                    | I.W. Ritchie - Nova Scotia         |
| Ambrose Shea - Newfoundland        | William H. Steeves - New Brunswick |
| Sir Etienne-Paschal Tache - Canada | Samuel Tilley - New Brunswick      |
| Charles Tupper - Nova Scotia       | Edward Whelan - PEI                |
| R.D. Wilmot - New Brunswick        |                                    |

**Fathers of Confederation Trivial Pursuit**

Match each of the following Fathers of Confederation with the correct "trivia":

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. A.A. Macdonald (Canada)          | ___ Premier of Nfld                              |
| 2. W.P. Howland (Canada)            | ___ Ontario Premier for 24 years                 |
| 3. Thomas D'Arcy McGee (Canada)     | ___ American-born <i>Father</i>                  |
| 4. Oliver Mowat (Canada)            | ___ Assassinated by Fenians                      |
| 5. Alexander Galt (Canada)          | ___ Doctor - Canadian Prime Minister             |
| 6. John Hamilton Gray (PEI)         | ___ "Awkward and uncouth in speech"              |
| 7. Charles Tupper (Nova Scotia)     | ___ Oldest <i>Father</i> - fought in War of 1812 |
| 8. Sir Etienne-Paschal Tache (Can.) | ___ Son of a famous novelist                     |
| 9. F.B.T. Carter (Nfld)             | ___ Youngest <i>Father</i> (Born 1829)           |
| 10. Charles Fisher (New Bruns.)     | ___ Cavalry officer in India and South Africa    |



**Comprehension Questions**

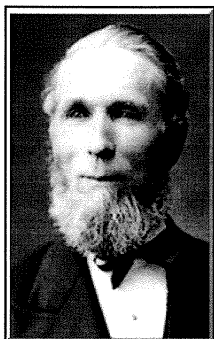
State one important fact about each of the following:

Hugh Allan	
Pacific Scandal	
Alexander Mackenzie	
Andrew Onderdonk	
nitro-glycerin	
Eagle Pass	
Cornelius Van Horne	
Father Albert Lacombe	
The Blackfoot People	
Louis Riel	

INVESTIGATION

**Investigation**

**Alexander Mackenzie** was Canada's second Prime Minister. Research the key facts about Mackenzie - his life and political achievements. Your research should be at least a half page in length.



**Bonus Activity:** Create your own political cartoon. Choose an issue regarding the question of Canadian Confederation (i.e. Expansion of the west, government corruption - The Pacific Scandal, mistreatment of Canada's native people or Chinese labourers who worked on the railroad, the poor roads of early Canada, etc.). Make sure you choose a point of view and try to convince your readers of this perspective.

**Creative Writing:** Choose one of the four original Canadian provinces (you may also choose Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland) and write a letter to the editor expressing your opinion on your province's entry into Confederation. Give reasons to support your opinion as to whether your province should join Confederation or stay out.



### Confederation Wordsearch

Find the following twenty words connected with the five provinces / territories covered in this lesson. The words are all in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally - they can be forward or even backward!

MANITOBA  
ALBERTA  
SASKATCHEWAN  
EDMONTON  
WINNIPEG

VANCOUVER  
BUFFALO  
METIS  
RIEL  
CALGARY

DUMONT  
WHITEHORSE  
HELMCKEN  
BIG BEAR  
POUNDMAKER

VICTORIA  
RAILROAD  
NAVVIERS  
PACIFIC  
KLONDIKE

H	S	A	S	K	A	T	C	H	E	W	A	N	V
E	B	A	L	B	E	R	T	A	Z	P	N	M	A
L	M	O	W	D	U	M	O	N	T	K	K	M	N
M	E	T	I	S	E	F	Y	R	A	G	L	A	C
C	B	L	N	R	P	P	F	P	L	D	O	N	O
K	R	W	N	O	I	L	U	A	B	F	N	I	U
E	A	B	I	G	B	E	A	R	L	L	D	T	V
N	I	P	P	I	S	W	L	C	L	O	I	O	E
J	L	T	E	D	M	O	N	T	O	N	K	B	R
Q	R	A	G	P	A	C	I	F	I	C	E	A	G
P	O	U	N	D	M	A	K	E	R	N	L	P	H
R	A	O	E	S	R	O	H	E	T	I	H	W	L
P	D	P	H	O	P	A	I	R	O	T	C	I	V
X	K	Z	U	N	A	V	V	I	E	S	G	T	X

### Answers

#### Sea to Sea

s will vary

#### search Puzzle Answers

S	A	S	K	A	T	C	H	E	W	A	N	V				
	A	L	B	E	R	T	A						A			
		W	D	U	M	O	N	T		K	M	N				
E	T	I	S		F	Y	R	A	G	L	A	C				
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A	B	I	G	B	E	A	R	L		D	T	V				
I		P				L				O	I	O	E			
L		E	D	M	O	N	T	O	N	K	B	R				
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ANSWER KEY