

SUGGESTED TEACHING STRATEGIES

OPTIONAL / ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY



☛ The following excerpt is taken from the historical novel, *Alone in an Untamed Land: The Filles du Roi Diary of Hélène St. Onge*, by Maxine Trottier. It is the exciting story of a young woman who journeys to New France as a *fille du roi* and the unusual adventures that she experiences in her new home.



Alone in an Untamed Land

A horrible thing has happened. To me it is horrible, although Tante Barbe says that any other girl would have leapt at the opportunity. With more than a little pride in her voice, she did add that I am not just any other girl.

Here is the horrible thing. Monsieur Deschamps has made a proposal of marriage to me.

He came to the house and asked if he might speak with me in private, so into the kitchen we went. This did not please him. Tante Barbe sent out Séraphin and Bernadette, and then she sat near the fire, her knitting in her hands, listening to every word. She did not need to listen very hard since Monsieur Deschamps spoke very loudly. He could have whispered, and the words still would have burned into my memory the same way that they did.

“I too am not above the law, and so I must wed. I am a wealthy man, mademoiselle,” he said quickly. And then he asked for my hand in marriage. Perhaps his haste in speaking was because I sat there with my mouth hanging open. “My prospects are excellent, I have a fine house, two servants, a slave, and the services of the engagé who works for me in my shop. And I have a small library. I recall from the ship how you admire books. My income from my business as a merchant is more than good.”

“All I require to make my life complete is a wife whose breeding will complement my own. I do not want just any wife, however. The girls who came across on our ship are decent enough, I suppose, but there is no unwed girl in Montréal at the moment who has your lineage”.

(*Alone in an Untamed Land: The Filles du Roi Diary of Helene St. Onge*. By Maxine Trottier, Scholastic Canada Ltd. p. 110-112)



☛ **Predict** what Hélène will say in response to Monsieur Deschamps' proposal. Will she accept? Will she refuse? Write an additional paragraph to this journal entry predicting her response, and give her reasons for her acceptance or rejection.

