



SUGGESTED TEACHING STRATEGIES

OPTIONAL / ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

The following is a letter written by Samuel de Champlain to the King of France in 1618:

April 12, 1618

To My Most Eminent King,

Much time has passed since I first came to discover the treasures of this land we have called New France. This land is lush and green, full of towering trees, clear running water, and abounds in animals and fish. After leaving my beloved France in 1603, I sailed with my captain, Pierre Du Gua de Monts. Together, we established a permanent settlement near the entrance to the St. Lawrence River. We hoped Ste. Croix Island would serve to protect New France and discourage illegal fur traders because of its position. Alas, this was not to be. We moved to Port Royal in 1605, but its poor location failed to maintain our monopoly on the fur trade.

With the blessing of Captain Du Monts, my crew and I managed to establish a habitation at Quebec. My crew members and some of the Hurons, have helped me to explore and map much of the St. Lawrence River and the surrounding lands. We have developed a mutually satisfactory trading alliance with the Hurons. We have tried to establish peaceful relations with the different groups of natives, but the Iroquois continue to resist all our efforts. The settlers in Quebec have had a hard winter. Twenty-eight men died of scurvy. Only eight men have survived the cold, harsh weather. The fur trade continues to grow, but I fear that the colony of New France will only firmly establish itself with renewed efforts to increase the number of settlements and settlers.

I am asking you to send 300 families to renew the settlements in New France. Any settlers who arrive in this country will find a great wealth can come from the fisheries, furs, mines, and farming of various kinds. I estimate that profits of six and one-half million livres could come from New France each year with the help of hard-working settlers. I beg you to approach the members of your court, the aristocrats, and the bishop. Any money that is put into the development of this great colony will surely be money well-spent.

I remain your humble servant,

Samuel de Champlain



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AGREEING TO DISAGREE?

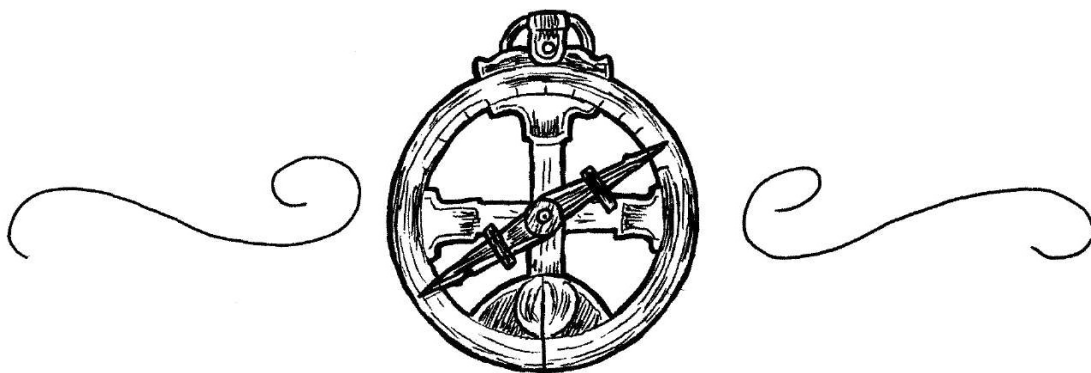
Answer the following questions by supporting your answers from Champlain's letter wherever possible:

☞ Champlain felt that the French government had to maintain a monopoly of the fur trade in the New World. Was this necessary, or was he just being greedy or paranoid?

☞ Why do you think the Iroquois resisted all efforts by the French to establish peaceful relations?

☞ Why do you think 28 of Champlain's men died of scurvy during their first winter? What might have prevented this from happening?

☞ On what four industries/occupations did Champlain base his conviction that New France could one day produce great wealth? Were his hopes eventually realized?





In 1763, **The Treaty of Paris** was signed by France, Britain and Spain to end the **Seven Years War**. This treaty was very important, as it transferred Quebec from France to Britain, giving Britain control over almost all of North America. The Treaty of Paris also stated that there would be no punishment for French Canadian militiamen; that people could still worship in the Roman Catholic religion; and that the clergy and seigneurs retained all their rights and privileges.

Following their loss to the British, French Canadians were faced with an important decision. Many of the wealthiest, educated French Canadians decided to abandon the colony, leaving the clergy and seigneurs as the only leaders from the old regime. Historians refer to this as the **decapitation**. The void left by their departure was filled by British merchants and traders who eagerly took over industry, commerce, and the fur trade.

The French now had to guard their language and culture against **assimilation** which was an important part of the original policy of the British. With this in mind, The **Royal Proclamation of 1763** shrunk the boundaries of Quebec.

In 1774, eleven years later, Britain reversed their policy of assimilation with **The Quebec Act**, whose terms included the expansion of the boundaries of the French colony deep into what is now the United States. It also served as a kind of *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* for French Canadians, giving them far more rights than were enjoyed by many colonists in other parts of the British Empire.

The Quebec Act was an attempt to maintain and build on the support of the French Canadian majority in Quebec, for the British were convinced that there would be a revolt shortly in the Thirteen Colonies (United States), and they didn't want that to happen in Quebec. The Americans, on the other hand, now had even more reason to rebel against the British, calling it an "Intolerable Act".