

Great Lakes— St. Lawrence Lowlands

July 18, 1785

Dear Helen,

It has been three years since we left Albany, New York, and I wonder how you and your family are. I am sorry we had to part, as we were friends. You must know by now that my father is a United Empire Loyalist—loyal to the British king. We had to leave Albany and come to the British Province of Québec. We were granted land in Granby. Before we left, some men threatened my father. They were angry because he did not support the United States breaking away from Britain.

When we first arrived in Québec, life was hard. The British gave us a tent to live in before we built our home here. Now we have completed our home, and we are much more comfortable. Father is happy that the land here is good for farming. We may get some dairy cows when more land is cleared. Mother and I continue our lessons. I am learning French! Most of our closest neighbours are also Loyalists, but there are many who live nearby who speak French. Sometimes I miss our old home. I am writing to you in the hopes that you will write back.

Mary

Canada: Our Stories Continue

The St. Lawrence River affects how many people live in this region. The waterways have always been used by the First Nations who lived in the area. Later, French and English explorers would also use the rivers and lakes to travel. The French were the first to settle along the St. Lawrence River, which was originally called the Fleuve St-Laurent. Loyalist families, such as Mary's family, came later. Today, ships bring people and goods into the region from around the world. Communities have developed along the river and the lakes. Although this region is one of the smallest regions in Canada, it has a huge population.

? Critical Inquiry TIP

Planning

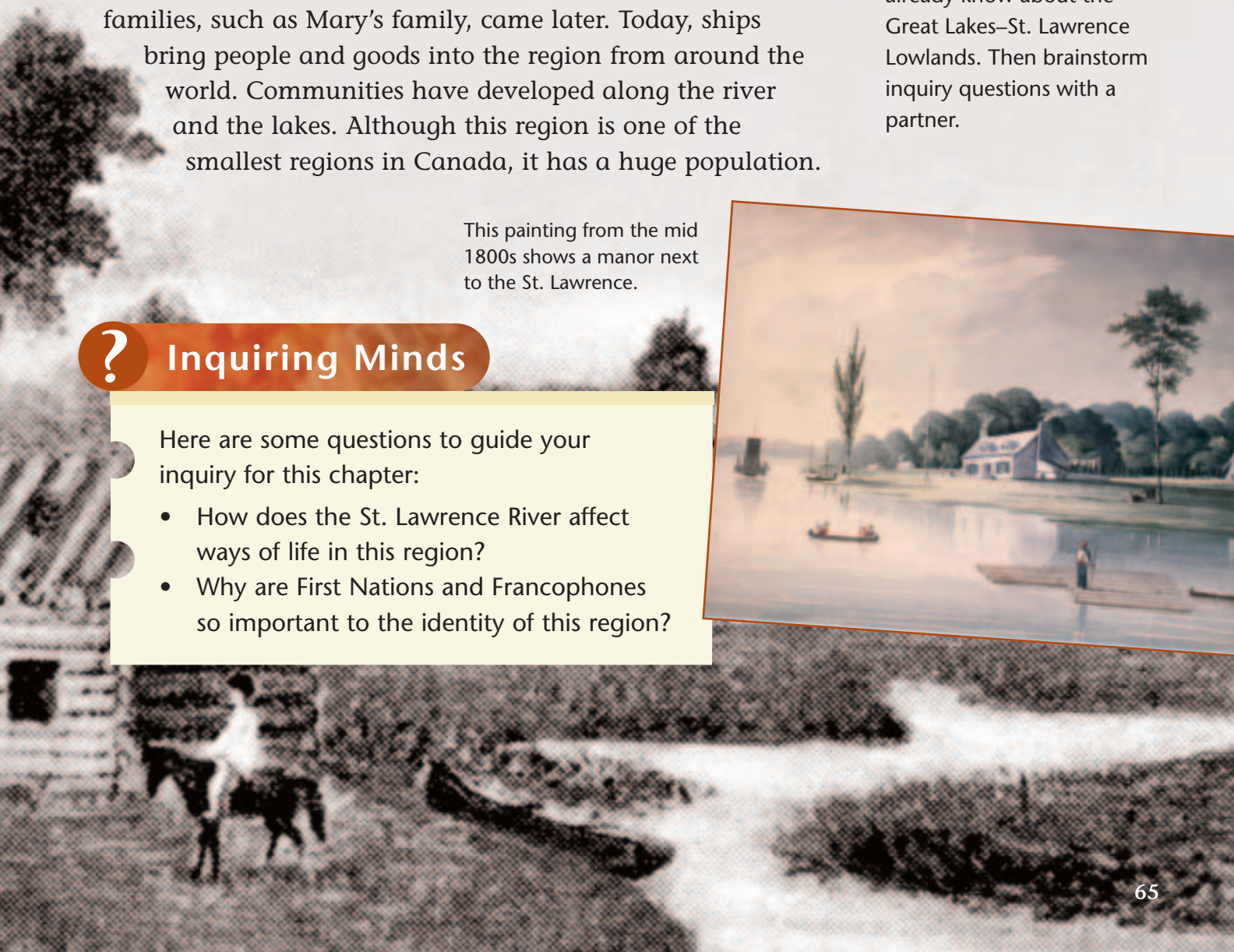
A good plan includes your own inquiry questions. Think about what you already know about the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands. Then brainstorm inquiry questions with a partner.

This painting from the mid 1800s shows a manor next to the St. Lawrence.

? Inquiring Minds

Here are some questions to guide your inquiry for this chapter:

- How does the St. Lawrence River affect ways of life in this region?
- Why are First Nations and Francophones so important to the identity of this region?



Let's Explore the Great St. Lawrence Lowlands!



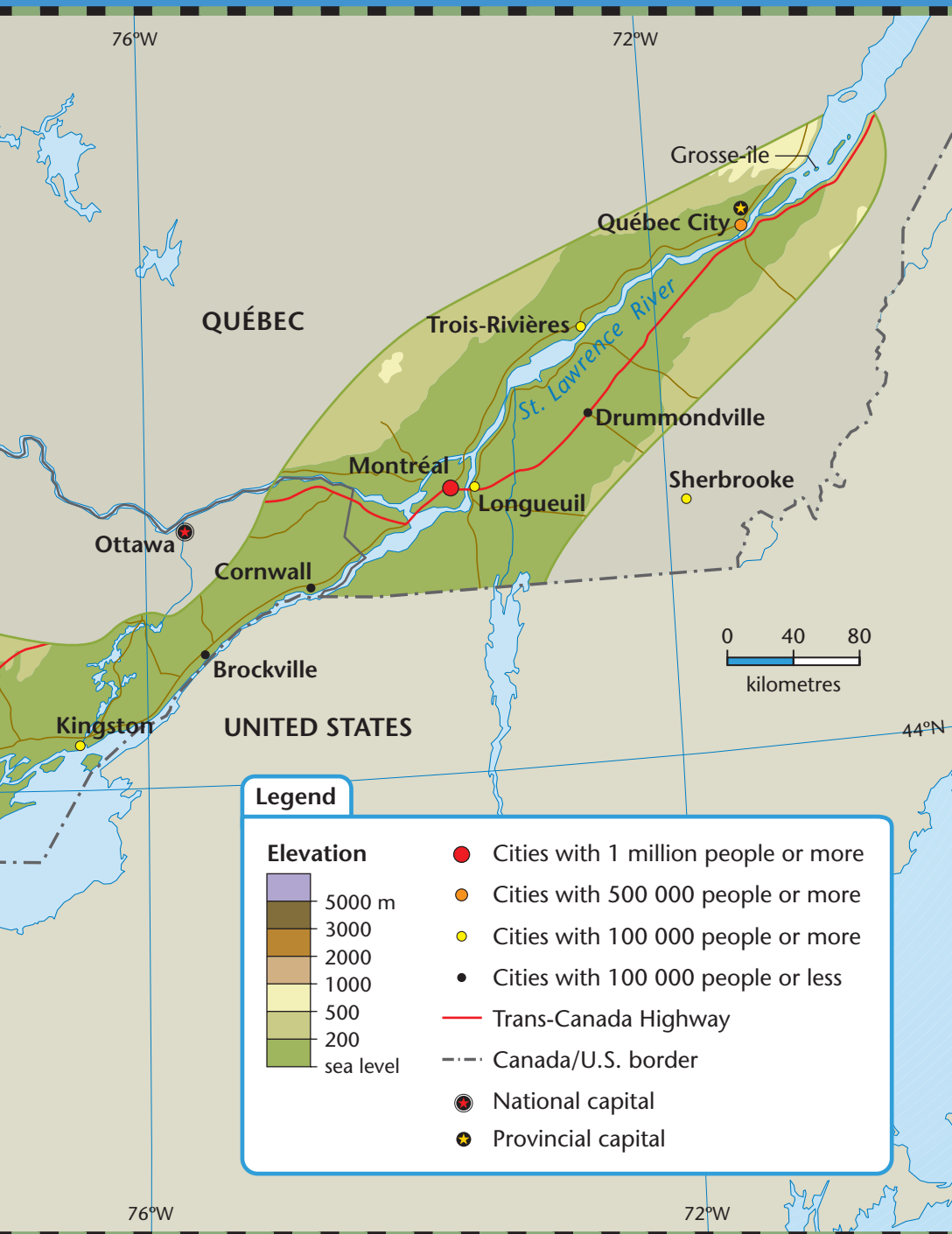
Bonjour! My name is Claire Martineau. I live in Montréal, Québec, on the St. Lawrence River. Montréal is the second-largest city in Canada. It is also the second-largest French-speaking city in the world!



The city of Montréal is on an island in the St. Lawrence River. It is one of the largest ports in the world.



Lakes—



Agriculture is very important in this region. A large variety of fruits and vegetables are grown here.



Ships travel along the St. Lawrence River to bring raw materials to this steel mill in Hamilton, Ontario. Other ships take the finished products to places around the world. What kinds of products are made from steel?

Skill Smart

- Make a chart like this one. Use latitude and longitude to describe the location of each place. Then use scale to measure the distance from Claire's city to the other communities.

City	Latitude, Longitude	Distance from Montréal
Québec City		
Toronto		
Windsor		

The Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands



I love going for a picnic with my family at Parc du Mont-Royal. We take the Métro—that's our subway.

words matter!

The **Iroquois Confederacy** is one of the world's oldest democratic societies. Six First Nations groups make up this alliance.

A **Canadien** was a Francophone born in New France.

Fertile soil is good for growing crops. The soil is rich with nutrients that plants need for good growth.

Québec City is one of the oldest cities in Canada. How does closeness to a river help a city grow?



The Lowlands are low, flat lands with gently rolling hills in southern Québec and southern Ontario. This region follows the path of the St. Lawrence River, as far as the western end of Lake Erie. Many of the cities, towns, and villages of this region have developed along this river and beside Lake Ontario, Lake Huron, and Lake Erie.

Roots of the Region

First Nations people have always travelled along the river to trade with other groups. Several groups within the Haudenosaunee [how-den-o-show-nee], or nations within the **Iroquois Confederacy**, live in this region. The Ouendat [wen-dat], also known as the Huron, live in the region as well.

In 1608, Samuel de Champlain founded the settlement of Québec. As more French settlers, explorers, and fur traders came, they used the St. Lawrence River to explore further inland. Their **Canadien** descendants farmed the land along the river. United Empire Loyalists came to the region in the late 1700s. In the mid 1800s, many Scottish and Irish people came to live and work in the region.

Why People Live Here Today

First Nations people continue to live in the region, as do the descendants of the French settlers and the Loyalists. People have also come from countries around the world to live in this region. They continue to come here today.

The Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands is **fertile**. A long growing season provides many people with work in the agricultural industry. Manufacturing is also an important industry here. Tourism and outdoor activities also bring people to this region.

What Affects Quality of Life in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands?

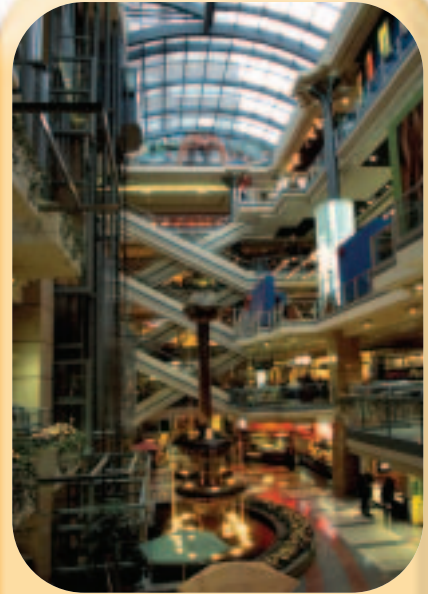
Look at these photos and read the point of view each person expresses. Decide how land, water, and climate affect people in the region.



In Picton, Ontario, you can get ice cream that is made from the milk from a nearby dairy farm. There are over 9000 dairy farms in Ontario.



This region gets a lot of snow in the winter, although temperatures are usually mild. This makes great weather for outdoor activities such as skiing, skating, and snowshoeing.



Hours can be spent in Montréal's RÉSO, or the "Indoor City," especially in the winter, when it's really cold. People can shop there, or see a hockey game.

Thinking It Through

- How do natural resources and climate affect quality of life for the people in these pictures?
- Are there any parks, lakes, or rivers that you go to in your community? If so, which ones? How do you think this affects the quality of life where you live?





Claire's Inquiry



My brother and I visited our cousins' farm in Trois-Rivières. While we were there, we saw an old stone foundation near the river. My cousin Guy told us that it was from an old flour mill. I asked:

- Why would the flour mill be here?
- Who would have used the mill?
- Why was there only a foundation left?

I saw this photo from 1897 of a Québec flour mill. Maybe this is what the building near the farm looked like!

Back at my cousins' house, I noticed they had some old paintings and furniture. There were some bowls and tools, too. I asked my cousin Sophie why her family kept these things. She said that having them helps them remember their family history.

The next day, Guy took my brother and me to the Musée québécois de culture populaire (the Québec Museum of Popular Culture) in Trois-Rivières. There, we found out that the flour mill would have been very important to the habitants in the past. Farmers in the area needed a mill to grind grain into flour. I decided to go to the McCord Museum when I got home. It is in Montréal. It is a great place to find out more information about the past. Maybe I'll learn more about my family history, too!

? Critical Inquiry TIP

Processing

Visiting museums is a great way to find information. Museums might have tools, clothes, or other objects from the past. There might be old photos, newspapers, record books, or people's diaries. Information at museums can give you an idea of what life was like in the past.

Skill Smart

- Choose an item in your home that is important to your family. Explain why it is significant.

Using Historical Resources

When Claire wanted to find out more about the mill near her cousins' farm, she went to the local museum for information. There, she looked at maps, documents, photographs, art, posters, and objects. The museum also had sound and film recordings. All of these resources tell stories and give evidence about the past. By examining them carefully, Claire could start finding the answers she wanted. For example, she found the photograph of a mill from 1897. She also found a letter from a habitant describing the flour mill close to his home.

Here are some ways Claire examined the resources at the museum and at her cousins' farm.

Document	Object	Map	Film/Sound	Photo/Art
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who wrote it? • When was it written? • What was the author saying? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it made of? • What was it used for? • Who might have used it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who made it? • When was it made? • Are there differences between this map and a contemporary one? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is on the recording? • Why were they interviewed? • What audience was the film made for? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it show? • Who was the artist or photographer? • What can I learn from this photo or drawing?

Practise the Skill

1. Find a historical resource that tells something about your community's past.
2. Using the table above as a guide, write a description of the resource.
3. What is the most important thing the resource shows about the history of your community?

How Did the First Nations Live on the Land?

More About...

The Canadian Canoe Museum

This museum opened in Peterborough, Ontario, in 1997. It has a collection of more than 600 canoes and kayaks taken from all over Canada. First Nations, Métis, and historical experts contributed to the design of the museum. The museum also teaches visitors in an outdoor paddling centre. Why do you think an entire museum could be dedicated to the canoe?



Long ago, different First Nations invented various kinds of canoes. Some were small, light, and easy to carry. Others were sturdy and could hold many people. French and British explorers quickly learned that canoeing was the best way to travel along Canada's waterways. This canoe was made in 1900.

Many First Nations have always lived in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands. The landscape and natural resources shaped different ways of life.

The Rivers and Lakes

Rivers and lakes in the region were very important to the First Nations who lived there. For example, being close to a river or lake gave the Ouendat access to food and water. They could travel long distances along the connected waterways. The Ouendat and the Haudenosaunee could load their canoes with food and goods to trade with other First Nations. Later, they traded with the French and the British.

What can you tell about travelling on rivers by reading the poem below?

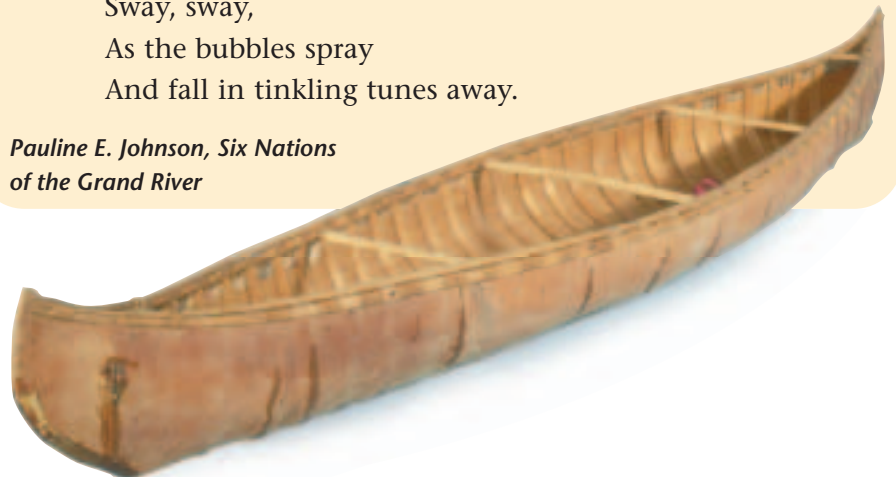
Voices of Canada

The Song My Paddles Sings

Be strong, O paddle! be brave, canoe!
The reckless waves you must plunge into.
Reel, reel,
On your trembling keel,
But never a fear my craft will feel.

We've raced the rapid, we're far ahead!
The river slips through its silent bed.
Sway, sway,
As the bubbles spray
And fall in tinkling tunes away.

*Pauline E. Johnson, Six Nations
of the Grand River*



The Forests

Much of the Lowlands was once covered with mixed forests. The animals found in these forests included deer, rabbits, moose, bears, and birds. These animals provided food and materials for clothing, shelter, and tools for the Ouendat and Haudenosaunee.

The trees of the forests were also useful. For example, birch, cedar, and elm were used to make canoes.



The Haudenosaunee were the first to collect and use maple syrup.



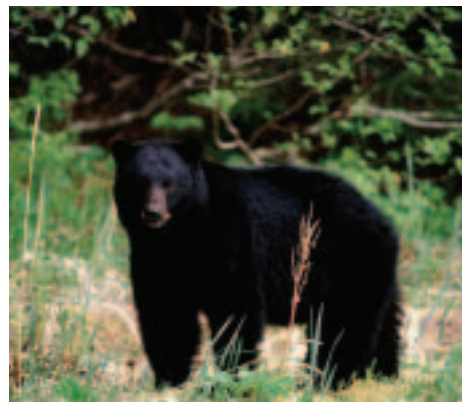
Voices of Canada

Medicine Plants

To the Haudenosaunee, plants were also used for medicine. Medicines not only healed people when they were sick, but kept them healthy at all times.

Medicines grow all over. They can be found in the forest. They are in the meadows, in water, on the shore. People who work with medicines teach us to walk gently on the earth, and to take only what we need. Learning the right ways of gathering and caring for medicine plants is a lesson in an entire way of living.

Suzanne Brant, Mohawk First Nations



The white-tailed deer and the black bear were the most important animals to the Haudenosaunee. They provided food and clothing. Why else were they important?

Thinking It Through

- Today, much of the forest in the Lowlands region has been cut down to make room for farms and communities. What do you think would be the most significant changes to their ways of life?



I've read that the Ouendat showed the Europeans how to make popcorn! I wonder what else European settlers learned from First Nations about farming in my region.

The Farmland

The Haudenosaunee and the Ouendat have always farmed in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands. The soil is rich, and the growing season is long because there are many warm days throughout the year. Most of the Haudenosaunee villages were located south of the St. Lawrence River, but their hunting territory stretched north of the river into Ontario and Québec. The Ouendat nations lived along Georgian Bay and Lake Huron.

Just as First Nations hunters have great respect for the animals of the forests and lakes, First Nations farmers respect the land. The Haudenosaunee give thanks to the food plants they harvest.



Voices of Canada

The Three Sisters

In late spring, we plant the corn and beans and squash. They're not just plants—we call them the three sisters. We plant them together, three kinds of seeds in one hole. They want to be together with each other, just as we want to be together with each other. So long as the three sisters are with us we know we will never starve. The Creator sends them to us each year. We celebrate them now. We thank Him for the gift He gives us today and every day.

Chief Louis Farmer, Onondaga First Nation

? Critical Inquiry TIP

Retrieving

It is important to save and organize the information you find. You can write headings in your notebook and jot down brief notes beneath them as you read this text and do other research.

This sculpture by Haudenosaunee sculptor Stanley Hill shows the three sisters—corn, beans, and squash. They are also called the “life supporters.” Are there similarly important crops grown in Alberta? Why are they important?



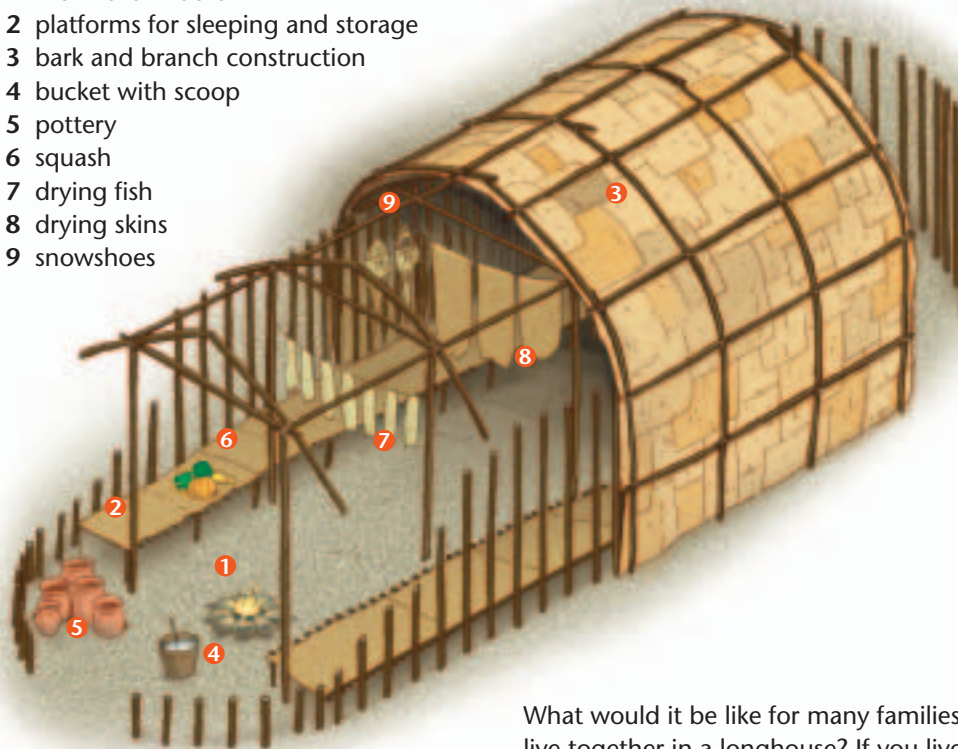
What Were First Nations Communities Like?

The Ouendat and Haudenosaunee formed villages near the fields where their crops grew. The oldest woman of each Haudenosaunee group was called the Clan Mother. This was an important position, as she was responsible for the welfare of the entire clan.

The villages were made of groups of **longhouses**. Longhouses were one long house where several related Ouendat or Haudenosaunee families lived. Down the middle of the building was a long row of fires. Along the sides were platforms for sleeping and storage. Look at the picture below. What do the items in this longhouse tell you about how the Haudenosaunee and the Ouendat lived?

The longhouse has always been important to these First Nations. It is where families lived, worked, and celebrated together. Today, it is a spiritual symbol for some of the Haudenosaunee, whose name means “people of the longhouse.”

- 1 fire in the middle
- 2 platforms for sleeping and storage
- 3 bark and branch construction
- 4 bucket with scoop
- 5 pottery
- 6 squash
- 7 drying fish
- 8 drying skins
- 9 snowshoes



What would it be like for many families to live together in a longhouse? If you lived in a longhouse, what rules would you make?

More About . . .

Matriarchal Societies

Longhouses were permanent homes built of wood. Each housed several families within the same First Nation. Every family traced their ancestry through their mothers and grandmothers. The Clan Mother was in charge of daily life. Families that are identified through their mothers are called matriarchal societies.

Voices of Canada

Listen to Us

What does this quote tell about the position of women in Haudenosaunee communities?

You ought to hear and listen to what we, women, shall speak, as well as the [chiefs], for we are the owners of this land—and it is ours. It is we that plant it for our use.

Haudenosaunee women in council with Colonel Proctor, a British soldier, 1791

Who Were the First Europeans to Come to the Lowlands?



I learned that the French were the first Europeans to settle in the Lowlands.

In 1534, the king of France sent Jacques Cartier to find a sea route to China. On his first voyage across the ocean, Cartier reached the Gaspé Peninsula. He found well-developed communities where the Haudenosaunee were living. However, many years would pass before settlers would come from France to begin a colony.

The Colony of New France

In 1608, Samuel de Champlain founded the settlement of Québec. French settlers were soon clearing the land and building homes. Champlain also made trade agreements with the First Nations. He sent French explorers to live among the Ouendat and learn their language. Although life was hard for the settlers, the colony gradually began to grow. Champlain was named governor of the colony of New France.

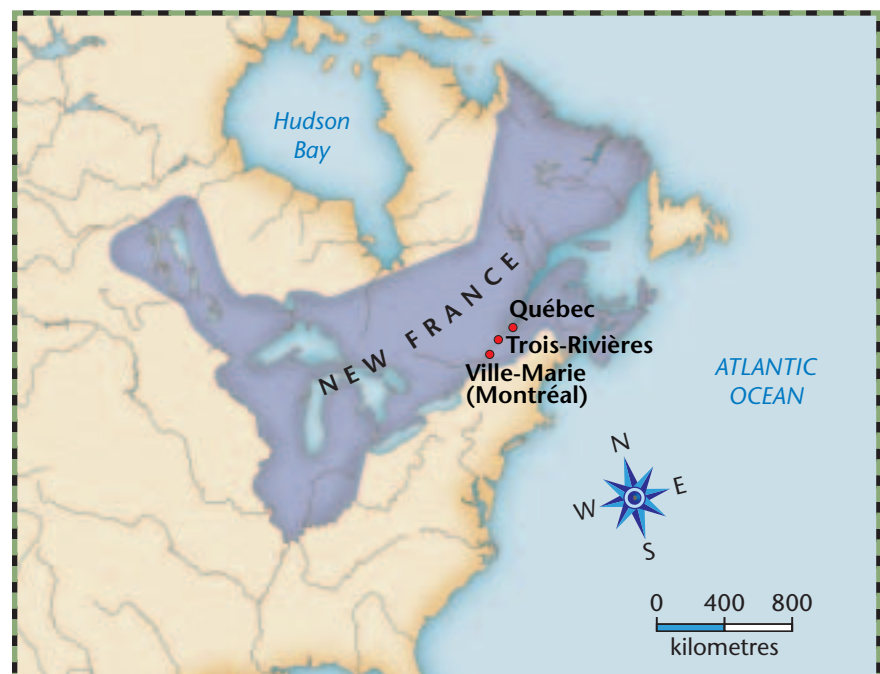
One hundred years later, New France included parts of what are now Atlantic Canada, Québec, Ontario, and the United States.



This modern painting by J.D. Kelley shows what Champlain may have looked like in 1615. Why do you think Champlain is called the “father of New France”?

What parts of modern-day Canada were covered by New France? Use an atlas and this map to identify the areas and to name the main waterways and lakes within New France.

New France, About 1712



The First Settlers of New France

In 1617, Louis Hébert sold his house and garden in Paris, France. He and his wife, Marie Rollet, took their three children on the greatest adventure of their lives. They were moving to New France to farm a piece of land beside the St. Lawrence River, which Champlain had promised them. Louis' goal was to build a farm that could support the family.

In their new country, Louis and Marie cleared land to grow grain and vegetables. They were the first wheat farmers in Canada. They also cleared land to raise chickens and pigs. They planted an orchard with apples they had brought from France. Louis also made and sold medicine. After a lot of hard work, the Hébert family became successful settlers in New France.



The Louis Hébert Café is a restaurant in Montréal. There is also a street and an area of Québec City named after the Héberts. How is the past a part of who Canadians are today?



This illustration from a book by the Abbé A.C. Hébert shows Louis Hébert sowing seeds on land in New France. Who else might have used this land? What characteristics do you think Marie Rollet and Louis Hébert must have had to be successful settlers?



The Trans Canada Trail passes by a natural wonder at Montmorency Falls, near Québec City. Located at the mouth of Rivière Montmorency, the falls were named after Henri II of France by Champlain in 1603. In winter, the icy water of the falls creates a huge cone of ice and snow, where people can ice climb or ski.



words matter!

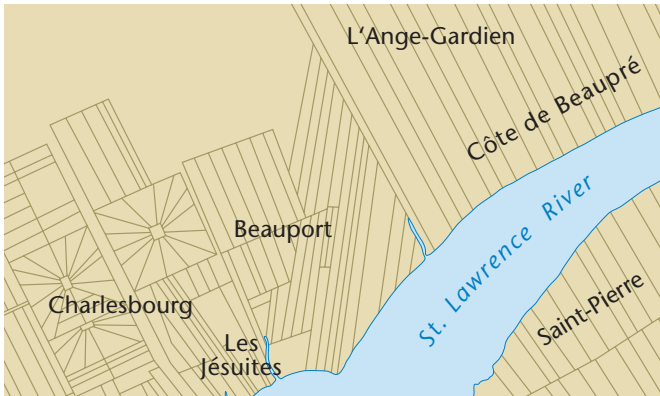
Seigneurs were land owners in New France who rented out pieces of land to habitants.

Habitants were French settlers in New France who cleared and farmed the land.

Ways of Life in New France

As more settlers arrived, life was centred on farming and trade. The land in New France was owned and controlled by wealthy men called **seigneurs** [san-YEUR]. **Habitants** [a-bee-tawn] paid the seigneurs with part of their harvest in exchange for being allowed to live on and farm the seigneurs' land.

THEN AND NOW



Under the seigneurial system, the land was divided into long, narrow strips. Compare the map to the photo. How do these farmlots compare to farms in Alberta? What might have been some advantages to the seigneurial system? Disadvantages?

Thinking It Through

- Read the Voices of Canada. How might the move have affected Marie-Claude's way of life? How does it compare to Mary's experiences, told in the letter on page 64?

Les Filles du Roi

Filles du roi [fee-doo-RWAW] means “daughters of the king.” This was the name given to hundreds of young women from France. Encouraged by the French king, they sailed to New France during the mid-1600s to marry male settlers and build families to work on the farms. Many people now living in Québec have ancestors who were filles du roi.



Voices of Canada

A Long Voyage

This is a diary note by a young fille du roi.

I was chosen to join the women heading for New France... I preferred to give up my homeland, make a [long] voyage and arrive in a new world. I remained there in silence, far from my country, without friends, or support of any kind...

From the journal of 14-year-old Marie-Claude Chamois, 1670

Missionaries in the Lowlands

For many Francophone settlers, practising the Catholic religion was important. Champlain invited priests from France. They provided religious services for the settlers and later ran schools for the children. The priests also wanted to teach the First Nations people about the Catholic faith. They travelled throughout New France to achieve this goal. Many were Jesuits. The Jesuits often noted their observations in letters and diaries. This vast collection became known as *The Jesuit Relations*. What they thought at this time can be learned from their observations.

As more priests and nuns came from France, they began to build their own settlements, called missions. Montréal began as Ville-Marie, a mission that had the first hospital in New France. It was in these missions that settlers and First Nations could seek help in times of need. Food, clothing, and medical help were provided by the priests and nuns year-round.



The reconstructed mission of Ste.-Marie-Among-the-Hurons can be found on the shores of Georgian Bay. How were the missionaries important to the development of New France?

More About...

Marguerite Bourgeoys

Marguerite Bourgeoys came to Ville-Marie from France in 1653. She taught young women the skills they needed to make a life in New France, and helped welcome the filles du roi. In 1658, she created the Congrégation Notre-Dame, a religious organization of women who worked as teachers. The Congrégation still exists today. Its members work around the world as teachers, missionaries, and social workers.



Voices of Canada

A Missionary's Life

What point of view does this quote represent? Would everyone on this journey have thought this way?

During the day, the sun burns you. During the night, you run the risks of... mosquitoes. You sometimes [go up] five or six rapids in a day; in the evening the only refreshment is a little corn; the only bed is the earth...

The Jesuit Relations



I can understand why French is an official language of Canada. Why did English become the other official language?

Why Was the Québec Act Passed?

For many years, France and Britain fought for control over North America. Both countries had established colonies, which were sources of great wealth because of the fur trade and other resources. In 1759, the British attacked Québec, and by the next year the British had taken control of New France. Later, they renamed the land along the St. Lawrence River the “Province of Québec.” They also created British laws that took rights away from Canadiens.

At this time, there were over 70 000 Canadiens living in the Province of Québec. Many feared the changes brought by the new British government. Merchants such as François Baby brought petitions to the British in London to protest the loss of Canadian rights. At the same time, British settlers living in the Thirteen Colonies were preparing to rebel against the British. Britain feared that the Canadiens would join in the rebellion. To help guarantee the loyalty of the Canadiens, the Québec Act was passed in 1774. It said that the Canadiens would be able to keep their land and the seigneurial system. They would be able to practise their religion freely, speak their language, and keep their civil laws.

As a result of the Québec Act, the majority of Canadiens remained neutral during the American Revolution. The rights in the Act guaranteed that they would be able to maintain their language and identity. The Québec Act was the first step towards bilingualism in Canada.



Voices of Canada

A Canadian Petition

...[end] these fears and this uneasiness, by restoring to us our ancient laws and customs. Then our fears will be removed, and we shall pass our lives in happiness...

From a petition brought to London by merchant François Baby, 1770

Gaining Religious Rights

Religion is perfectly free. I can exercise my ministry without any restriction.

Bishop Jean-Olivier Brand, 1775

In 1764, British military commander James Murray became the first British governor of Québec. He was sympathetic to the Canadiens and allowed French civil laws to continue. Many British settlers did not like this policy, but it did help lead to the creation of the Québec Act.



When Did the Loyalists Arrive?

After the American Revolution began in 1776, thousands of United Empire Loyalists moved north. Like Mary's family, they were loyal to the British king. Many of them spoke English and wanted to live under British rule. Most of the Loyalists went to communities in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Others came to the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands.

However, the Loyalists were uncomfortable with the ways of life that had been guaranteed in the Province of Québec by the Québec Act:

- They didn't like the seigneurial system. They wanted to own land themselves.
- They wanted the official language to be English.
- They wanted to practise their own religion.
- They wanted to have British laws.

The British government wanted to satisfy everyone. In 1791, it divided the colony into two parts: Upper Canada and Lower Canada. This way, each group could keep its language, its religion, and its way of life.

Upper and Lower Canada, 1791



Thinking It Through

- How would the giving of land grants to the Loyalists affect the people already living on the land?

? Critical Inquiry TIP

Planning

Ask your teacher to help you find information on the Internet. Many Web sites have useful information and images. But remember that not all Web sites are reliable. Make sure to use a variety of sources and compare the information they offer.

The names of Upper and Lower Canada were chosen because of the position of the areas next to the St. Lawrence River, which flows downstream to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Upper Canada was upstream, and Lower Canada was on the lower end of the river.



I want to look at a historical map that shows where the first United Empire Loyalist settlements were in my region. I'll compare it with a modern map to see if there are any connections from past to present.

Stories of the Loyalists

When the Loyalists first came to the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands, they often had difficulty finding good land. The Canadiens were already occupying the best lands in the Province of Québec. Many of the Loyalists settled farther west, in present-day southern Ontario. How did this contribute to the division of Upper and Lower Canada?



Voices of Canada

The Land Changes

I can never forget the impression I felt in contemplating these thousands [of people] in the midst of forests that had never been cleared for shelter until the log hut was fashioned... I am told now you can travel from Montréal to Ontario and Erie, through cultivated farms and good roads and that the wilderness has been converted into a paradise of plenty, and all this within 33 years.

Joseph Hadfield, 1785



Voices of Canada

Hardships

None of us had any shoes or stockings, winter or summer, as those we brought with us were soon worn out. At length my father tanned some leather, and I recollect the first pair of shoes he made which fell to my lot, I greased and putting them too near the fire, on returning to my grief found that my shoes were all shrivelled up, so that I could never wear them. It was twelve months before I obtained another pair.

James Dittrick, a United Empire Loyalist child



This sketch shows what the inside of a Loyalist farmhouse might have looked like once the Loyalists had built their new homes. How can you find out if this type of scene really happened?

Joseph Brant

Not all the Loyalists were British. Many were members of First Nations. Joseph Brant, or Thayendanegea [tai-yen-da-nay-geh], was a Mohawk leader born in Ohio. He was worried that if the Americans won the war in 1776, they would take more Mohawk traditional land in that area. Brant wanted to fight with the British against the Americans, but at first they would not let him. So he sailed to England and told the king: “The Mohawks have on all occasions shown their... loyalty to the Great King.” Brant did fight with the British—in fact, he became an officer in the army.

The American colonists won the war and took the Mohawk land as Brant had feared. Brant was able to convince the British government to set aside land for the Mohawk along the Grand River in Ontario. He then led almost 2000 Mohawks there from New York State. For the next 20 years, Brant worked to protect the land for his people.



This statue of Joseph Brant can be found in the city of Brantford. The city is on the land he negotiated with the British and is named after him. What does Brant’s leadership show about his commitment to his community?

An Interview with Brant’s Descendant

David Kanowakeron Hill Morrison UE is a descendant of Joseph Thayendanegea Brant. David is a member of the Six Nations of the Grand River.

What makes you most proud of your family’s Loyalist history?

I’m proud of [Brant’s] foresight and his courage... leaving a place which has been called home for a hundred years is different than leaving a place called home for thousands of years.

Where did your family members arrive in Canada?

My ancestors gathered at Fort Niagara and crossed the Niagara River on their way to their new homelands along the Grand River. They settled in an area where the city of Brantford, Ontario, is today.

What did your family members do when they arrived in Upper Canada?

Most of the Six Nations people became farmers and hunters. The move to the Grand River area wasn’t that much different from the climate and the environment they had lived in...



David Kanowakeron Hill Morrison UE includes the letters “UE” in his name. They stand for “Unity of the Empire.” Why might a person living today identify himself with the Loyalists?

What Was the Underground Railroad?

Voices of Canada

A Duty to Help

To me it was a command; and a settled conviction took possession of my mind that it was my duty to help the oppressed to freedom...

Alexander Ross, a Canadian who helped slaves find their way to Canada, around 1855

In 1830, a man named Josiah Henson landed on a beach in Fort Erie, Ontario. He had just crossed the Niagara River at night in a boat. Later, Josiah wrote:

When my feet first touched the Canada shore, I threw myself on the ground, rolled in the sand, seized handfuls of it and kissed them and danced around...

Josiah Henson and thousands of other **slaves** escaped to freedom using the “Underground Railroad,” which was not a railway at all. It was the name for the people who worked secretly to help slaves reach Upper Canada safely. Some people helped the runaways move from one safe place to another. Others offered their houses to sleep in and hot meals to eat. For some escaped slaves, the journey could take as long as a year. For many, the destination was the Lowlands.

words matter!

Slaves are people who are owned by another person and made to work for little or no money. Parts of the Thirteen Colonies, and later, part of the United States, forced Black people to work as slaves for almost 200 years.

Black Settlements in Upper Canada, 1835–1870



This map shows the communities where many escaped slaves settled when they reached Upper Canada. Find Owen Sound on the map. How can you find out more about the Black people who settled there? What did they do when they came to the community?



This stamp was designed to remember Josiah Henson. He settled in Dresden, Ontario. He helped other escaped slaves learn how to farm. What are other ways he contributed to his community?

Thinking It Through

- Today, many people from around the world seek safety, or asylum, in Canada. Are their reasons for coming the same as in the past or are they different?

How Did the Great Migration Change the Lowlands?

About 8 million immigrants, mostly from Britain, Scotland, and Ireland, came to the British colonies in Canada between 1815 and 1850. This was called the **Great Migration**. These immigrants faced many hardships aboard ship and once they arrived. Thousands of British and Irish people settled in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands. For many, this was a chance to start a new life. Read these stories to find out more about why they came and about their lives in the new land.



My friend Marc says that his ancestors were Irish people who came to Québec during this time. How can I trace my own ancestry?



Voices of Canada

The Irish in Québec

Irish newcomers to Québec found themselves in a place where they did not speak the common language, French. However, many remained happy that they had come.

Whenever an Irish [person] told me of his hard up-hill fight, he was sure to add: “The laws are good and just, and we enjoy everything we have a right to hope for. We have nothing to complain of here, and we all wish that you were as well off at home.”

John Frances Maguire, 1868



Voices of Canada

A Canadian Song

Come, launch the light canoe!
The breeze is fresh and strong;
The summer skies are blue,
And ‘tis a joy to float along.
Away o’er the waters!
The bright-glancing waters,
The many-voiced waters,
As they dance in light and song.

Susanna Moodie



Susanna Moodie came from England. She and her family settled in Upper Canada in 1832. Moodie published many writings about her life as a settler. What does this poem show about her character and her life? What can you find out about how her life changed when she came to Upper Canada?



Voices of Canada

Grosse-Île

Catherine Parr Traill travelled by ship from England and landed at Grosse-Île. She was Susanna Moodie's sister. This is what she wrote in her journal:

August 12, 1832. We reached Grosse-Île yesterday evening. There are several vessels lying at anchor close to the shore; one bears the melancholy symbol of disease, the yellow flag; she is a passenger-ship, and has the smallpox and measles among her crew.

Catherine Parr Traill

Stopping at Grosse-Île

Many ships with immigrants from Europe were overcrowded, and often there was not enough food and water. Terrible diseases spread among the passengers, many of whom died before they arrived in Canada.

To make sure that diseases did not spread throughout Lowlands communities, all ships had to stop at Grosse-Île. Grosse-Île is an island in the St. Lawrence River, not far from Québec City. There, doctors tried to cure as many people as they could before letting them onto the mainland. Despite their attempts, thousands of people died on Grosse-Île.

More About . . .

Irish in Québec

Many children were left orphans after their parents died on Grosse-Île. Patrick and Thomas Quinn were adopted by a Francophone named George Bourke. With him, they learned French and adopted a Francophone identity. Today, there are many Francophone families in Québec with Irish last names.

Skill Smart

- Prepare a tour guide script that explains the importance of the Grosse-Île site.



This memorial was built on Grosse-Île in 1909. It is dedicated to the memory of the Irish people who died on the island. Is this memorial still in place today?

Contributions of the People

Did you ever wonder why we celebrate St. Patrick's Day? St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland, not Canada. But when Irish immigrants came to Canada, they brought their celebrations, traditions, and ways of life with them. Scottish and English immigrants did the same thing.

Immigrants from Scotland, Ireland, and England contributed more than just holidays and games to their new country. They worked as teachers, priests and nuns, politicians, farmers, engineers, explorers, and artists. Their work helped shape our schools, churches, communities, and government. Today, the descendants of these immigrants form a large part of Canada's population. In 2001, more than 3 million people living in Canada identified themselves as being of Irish ancestry. More than 4 million were Scottish, and over 5 million English.



? Critical Inquiry TIP

Creating

A poster is one way you might present information about different traditions and celebrations in Canada.

Curling was probably invented in Scotland. The first curling club in Canada began in Montréal on the St. Lawrence River.



Egerton Ryerson was the son of British loyalists. He was born in Upper Canada in 1803. Ryerson helped found the Upper Canada Academy. In 1844, he became the Superintendent of Education in Upper Canada and would leave a lasting mark on the education system. He put libraries in all schools, and started a textbook publishing press. A school he founded in Toronto would later become Ryerson University.



Tommy Douglas (1904–1986) was born in Scotland, but grew up in Winnipeg. A preacher, social activist, and politician, Douglas was premier of Saskatchewan and the leader of the NDP. He led the creation of Medicare, a system which gives all Canadians access to free medical care. In 2004, he was voted "The Greatest Canadian".

How Has the Region Changed?



Can you imagine trying to paddle through the Lachine Rapids?



This lock is near Montréal.

The Lowlands does not look the same as it did 300 years ago. Over time, more and more people have come to the region. Newcomers often changed the land to fit their needs.

Creating the St. Lawrence Seaway

Today, ships can travel on the St. Lawrence River from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Superior. In the past, people had to portage around rapids, such as the Lachine Rapids near Montréal. The rapids prevented larger ships from travelling on the river.

Over the years, people built canals and locks. Canals are long, narrow strips dug out of the land and filled with water. They are used to join two bodies of water. Built into the canals are locks. Locks act like staircases or elevators for ships. Using canals and locks, workers connected the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes, and other rivers and lakes. This system is called the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The St. Lawrence Seaway



Effects of the Seaway

In order to build the St. Lawrence Seaway, more than 6500 people had to move to new towns. Ten villages were flooded. They became known as the “Lost Villages.” How might you feel if you were forced to move or your community was destroyed? How do these two people feel?



Voices of Canada

Prosperity

The mayor of Cornwall thought that the new Seaway would bring prosperity to his city.

We in Cornwall are very happy [about] the St. Lawrence development. It will bring industry to Cornwall. Cornwall will be a prosperous little city for the next few years. And I daresay it will be one of the largest cities in eastern Ontario.

Mayor Horowitz, 1954



Voices of Canada

Leaving Home

Three years before the flooding, this farmer spoke of how he felt about moving away from his farm.

It's a really hard thing to do after 23 years because I'm very much attached to [my farm]. It's hard leaving orchards... you can't take them with you.

W.J. Kirkwood, Aultsville, Ontario

Making a Difference

After the Seaway was built, shipping activity on the St. Lawrence River increased. Factories were built close to the river and the Great Lakes, because the Seaway allowed for easier shipping of materials and products. These factories cause pollution. What effect does that have on local wildlife?

Beluga whales live in parts of the St. Lawrence. Pollution in the river has made them sick and unable to reproduce. Today, environmental groups in the area monitor

the condition of the river and campaign to reduce pollution.

An important result of the campaign to help the beluga was the creation of the Saguenay–St. Lawrence Marine Park. Managed by Parks Canada and Parcs Québec, the park protects a section of the St. Lawrence. The park helps to protect the ecosystem where the whales live, and also educates the public about the importance of protecting the fragile marine environment.



Should We Control How Big Our Cities Get?

When cities spread quickly, more land is used than people need. This is called **urban sprawl**. Cities often grow so big that they join up with other cities. Farmland in between the cities is used to build new homes, schools, libraries, and stores.


Toronto: A Century of Changes

More than 1000 years ago, people began settling in the area known today as Toronto. The area was a meeting place between lakes Ontario and Huron. Today, people from many countries still come to make their home in Toronto. The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is the City of Toronto plus the surrounding areas. The GTA has more than 4.5 million people.



The picture on the left shows Yonge Street in Toronto in 1907. Today, Toronto is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world.

Read the following views to learn more about what different people think about urban sprawl.



There is so much building going on that I have my choice of jobs. It's great for my family. We can live near my work, and I'm making good money.

Green areas need to be preserved in our city. Parks keep cities healthy.

Wildlife used to live in the forests and along the rivers in my area. But as the city grew, the animals and birds lost their homes. We have all lost something very valuable now.

I love my new house! We live near a park where I can play with my friends. My parents drive to work on the nearby highway.

Over to You

1. Discuss each point of view. How many different points of view are presented?
2. Do the points of view represent an individual or a group? What do they have in common?
3. Do you live in or near a large community in Alberta? How do you think urban sprawl might affect you? How might it affect you if you lived far away from a large community?

Build Your Skills!

Discuss a Historical Resource

Choose an example of a historical resource from this chapter. It could be a photograph, a map, an interview, an object, or a story, such as a Voices of Canada. Discuss why this resource could be used to illustrate the past in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands.

Research a Community

Find out more about a city or a town in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Lowlands.

- How did it start? How did the community get its name?
- What are some historical sites in the community?

Use your information to create a newsletter to tell the story of the community. Include ways people can help preserve and remember the history of the community. Try using technology to make your newsletter.

Design a Licence Plate

This is a licence plate from Québec. “Je me souviens” is French for “I remember.”

- Create a design for a licence plate for your family, school, or region. You can include symbols that bring more meaning to the design. Explain your idea.
- Why did Québec choose “Je me souviens” as its motto? How does the motto represent the province?





Putting It All Together



During her inquiry, Claire discovered that museums were an important source of information about the past. While she was researching, she realized that she could organize the museums she found to keep track of what kind of information they offered. This made her research easier. This is what part of her tracking chart looked like:

Name of Museum	Where it is located	Web site	Information
McCord Museum of Canadian History	Montréal	http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/en	History of Montréal
Marguerite Bourgeoys Museum	Montréal	http://www.marguerite-bourgeoys.com	History of Marguerite Bourgeoys and the Notre-Dame-de-Bon-Secours Chapel

Review the inquiry questions for this chapter:

- How does the St. Lawrence River affect ways of life in this region?
- Why are First Nations and Francophones so important to the identity of this region?

Take Time to Reflect



What happens when someone moves to a new place? Think about the Loyalists when they first came to this region. Conduct an interview with someone in your school or community who has recently come from a different place. What effects did this have on the person? Write or record your interview. Save your work for your Canada Collection.