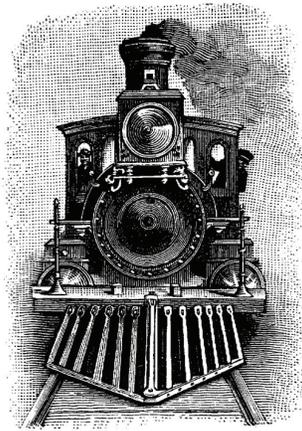


SIMPLIFIED SOCIAL STUDIES UNIT

SUPPORTING THE TOPIC :

Canada 1867 - 1900



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**Grade / Topic Level : Grades 9 - 12
(Approximate reading level : Grade 4 - 5)**

**CANADA 1867 – 1900
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1. Canada is a Federation

Key Words:

- ❖ **federation** : the joining of a number of colonies into one country, with each colony keeping some of its own government.
- ❖ **confederate** : verb meaning to join together into a federation.

Canada is New a Federation

On July 1, 1867, the three colonies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Canada (Canada East and Canada West) joined together in a **FEDERATION**. This made a new country called the Dominion of Canada. The process of joining together into a federation is called "confederating". So Canada is also called a "confederation".

Being a federation meant that the provincial governments would still have control over some things, while the federal government had control over other things.

At the Charlottetown Conference, the rules for how Canada was going to be governed were discussed and written down. John A. Macdonald was probably the most important man overseeing this job. He wanted a strong federal or central government to control the country and the directions that its political leaders wanted it to take. He had seen the disaster of the American Civil War where a weak federal government was not able to stop strong state (= provincial) governments from leaving the union. A senseless and costly war had resulted. The British Parliament liked this idea and supported him greatly. They appointed John A. Macdonald as the first Prime Minister. In Britain he was also made a knight. This gave him the right to put "Sir" in front of his name. So Sir John A. Macdonald is the name we use for our first prime minister. He was also the prime minister who got the railway completed across Canada.

On the next page is a diagram of the federal government. In the next column is a short explanation of how our government works and the roles that people play in the government.

How Does Our Government Work?

On election day in a federal election, all people who are Canadian citizens over the age of 19 are able to vote. This includes people who might be out of the country travelling or in our armed forces.

In Canada we do not vote for the leader of the political party to lead the country. We don't vote for the prime minister; we vote for the political party itself. Canada is divided up into at least 308 different areas called ridings. Each riding has almost the same number of people. Each riding has people belonging to political parties who want to get elected to the House of Commons. The party that gets the most elected people then forms the government. This party usually has a majority of seats in Parliament and so can govern Canada. If the leader of the political party is also elected, then that person becomes the Prime Minister. By late evening on election day, almost all of the votes cast by the voters have been counted. Then Canada has a new government.

The Prime Minister (PM) then looks at all the people in his party and chooses 25-40 of them to be in the Executive Council, the Cabinet. These people will be running much of the government. From this cabinet, the PM chooses people to run the different ministries of government: Foreign Affairs, Revenue, Defence, etc. They are also responsible for outlining many of the laws that will be passed on to Parliament for discussion. Some may be voted on and then made into law. Members of the Senate are appointed for life by the prime minister. This group of people is similar to the old Legislative Council before 1867. They examine the laws to see if they are suitable. The PM also appoints the Governor General.

QUIZ 1: Canada: 1867 - 1900: Canada is a Federation

1. A strong federal government was the type that Britain favoured.

(Circle) TRUE FALSE

2. The party that has a majority in Parliament governs the country.

(Circle) TRUE FALSE

3. Canadians vote for the prime minister of Canada.

(Circle) TRUE FALSE



4. Sir John A. Macdonald was in favour of a federal union because _____

5. What were the two rewards that John A. Macdonald received from the British government?

A. _____

B. _____

6. For a person to vote in Canada they must be :

A. _____

B. _____

7. What is a riding? _____

_____ How many of
them are there in Canada? _____

8. How does a political party get the right to govern Canada? _____

9. How is the prime minister chosen to lead the country? _____

10. What is the modern name of the Executive Council? The _____.

How many people are usually in this group? _____ What is
the job they are supposed to do? _____

11. Who appoints the Senate? _____ What was the old
name for the Senate? _____