

The Fur Trade

Predict

How did the fur trade change ways of life?

An Innu man described the importance of the beaver: "The Beaver does everything perfectly well, it makes kettles, hatchets, swords, knives, bread; in short, it makes everything... The English have no sense, they give us twenty knives like this for one Beaver skin." Why do you think an English trader would disagree, saying that twenty knives was not too much to trade for a single beaver skin?

Have you ever traded anything with someone? How did you trade? Did you ever need to bargain for what you wanted? How did you bargain?

Before the Europeans came to North America, First Nations peoples traded with each other for items they needed. For example, the Ouendat of the Great Lakes area traded the corn they grew for furs from their neighbours, the Kichesipirini. When Europeans arrived in North America, the First Nations peoples traded North American goods for European goods. The Europeans were especially interested in beaver pelts, or furs, which were valuable in Europe for making hats.

The fur trade became more and more important to the Europeans. By the end of the 1500s, fur trading was the most important activity for Europeans in North America. Trade led to exploration, settlement, and increasing contact between European and First Nations peoples.



The hunt for beaver pelts brought many Europeans to Canada. They set up trading posts where they traded goods such as rifles, blankets, and iron tools for furs. This painting is by C.W. Jefferys (1869–1951). It captures a scene of fur trading activity taking place around 1785. How are the two traders in this painting treating each other's goods?

Chapter Focus

- Why was the fur trade important to New France?
- What was the British involvement in the fur trade?
- How did competition lead to exploration in the west?
- How did people trade?
- What changes did the fur trade bring?

Why Was the Fur Trade Important to New France?

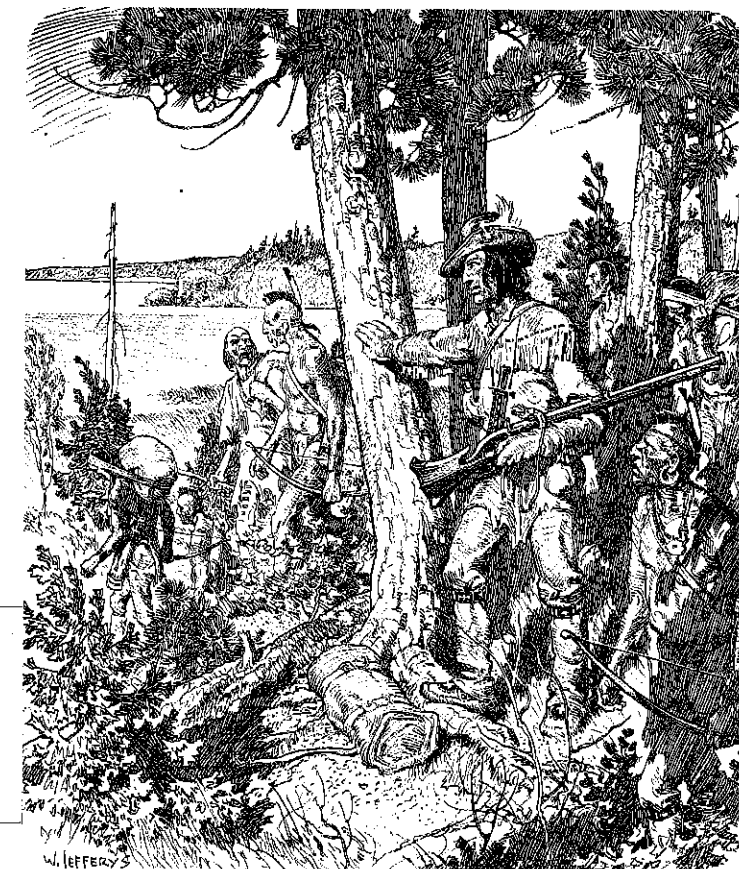
Originally, European governments were interested in exploration in North America. They were especially interested in finding a route to Asia. However, merchants became more and more interested in North American goods. Beginning in the 1580s, French merchants started to send ships to North America just to trade for furs.

As demand for fur grew in Europe, the French government began to realize how valuable the lands in North America might be. It began to create settlements in Acadia and along the St. Lawrence River to protect France's claim to the land and the rich fur resources. In 1612, the French government gave Samuel de Champlain the responsibility of strengthening France's interests in North America. The government wanted him to create settlements, control and expand the fur trade, look for mineral riches, and find a water route to India and China.

The Coureurs des Bois

When the fur trade began, First Nations traders travelled to European trading posts to trade. Before long, some European traders began going to First Nations settlements to trade. These men were called the **coureurs des bois** (*koo-rur de bwa*), or "runners of the woods." They learned the languages and ways of the First Nations peoples. Some lived among the Ouendat, Kichesipirini, and other First Nations peoples. They established close relationships and important trade ties.

Étienne Brûlé is sometimes called the first *coureur des bois*. In 1610, Champlain sent him to live with the Ouendat. He lived with them for more than 20 years. This etching by C.W. Jefferys shows Brûlé in 1615. Whose point of view do you think this etching represents?



Denis Riverin (ree-vuh-ran), a seigneur and a merchant of New France, wrote this description of coureurs des bois and their way of life. What does this source tell you about the coureurs des bois' way of life? What do you learn about the geography of the land to which the coureurs des bois had to adapt?

The *coureurs des bois* are [Canadiens] who were either born in Canada or [Frenchmen] who came to settle there. They are always young men in the prime of life for old age cannot endure the hardships of this occupation.

Since all of Canada is a vast forest, it is impossible for them to travel by land. They travel by lake and river in canoes ordinarily occupied by three men. These are made of birchbark drawn over a frame of very light and thin cedar wood. Since a canoe cannot be made from a single sheet of bark, several pieces are sewn together with pine roots more flexible and lighter than willow. To prevent leaks, the seams are coated with a gum which [First Nations peoples] extract from pine trees. [First Nations peoples], and especially the women, are excellent canoe makers. Few [Canadiens] are successful.

The *coureurs des bois* themselves conduct their canoes using paddles made of hard, light wood. A canoe skillfully manned can cover 75 kilometres in one day in still waters and still faster in swift waters and rapids. When impassable cascades or waterfalls are encountered, the men put ashore, unload the bundles and transport them with the canoe on their backs and shoulders through the forest for a half kilometre up to 10 kilometres, until the cascades are left behind and the water becomes more navigable. This is called a *portage*.

The French merchants and *coureurs des bois* played an important role in early explorations of New France. However, they became an issue for the French government, which wanted to create settlements there. It believed that this was the only way to gain greater control of the land and trade in North America. The French merchants who controlled the fur trade were not interested in creating settlements. They believed settlements would get in the way of their trade. The French government took control of the fur trade away from the merchants, and sent a governor to New France to watch over the colony and the fur trade.

Voyageurs

Many young men were attracted to the way of life of fur trading. Many saw it as a life of adventure and freedom. The number of *coureurs des bois* grew quickly, making it difficult to control the fur trade.

As a growing number of *coureurs des bois* worked in the fur trade, the governor of New France worried that too many young men were off trading, or "wood running," rather than having families and helping build the settlement. The governor passed a law to try to control the wood running. The law said that anyone who wanted to trade had to first get the governor's permission. The traders of New France who were given permission to trade called themselves *voyageurs* (voy-a-jur). Many *coureurs des bois* continued to trade without permission, but they could be punished, put in jail, or even hanged if they were caught.

The *voyageurs* were often called adventurers and explorers, and they have become a symbol of the spirit of the fur trade. The *voyageurs'* life was difficult. They paddled large birchbark canoes on the waterways of northern and central Canada that became the highways of the fur trade. They had to be strong for the long days of paddling and to carry the large loads of furs. However, the *voyageurs* also had a lively spirit. They often sang songs to the rhythm of their paddles. Many of these were old songs from France. Today, you can still listen to recorded versions of these songs.

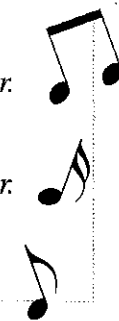


William Henry Blett (1809-1854) created this painting of voyageurs portaging. How do you think this difficult task contributed to the voyageurs' image?



Youpe! Youpe! sur la rivière
Vous ne m'entendez guère
Youpe! Youpe! sur la rivière
Vous ne m'entendez pas

Hurrah, hurrah on the river.
You can hardly hear me.
Hurrah, hurrah on the river.
You can't hear me at all.



Pause

1. What do you think might have been some challenges of being a *coureur des bois* or *voyageur*? What do you think they might say they enjoyed about their work?

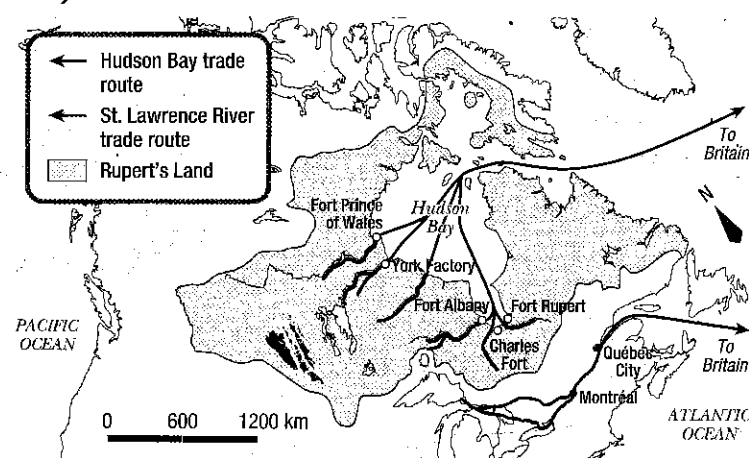
What Was the British Involvement in the Fur Trade?

In 1659, a *coureur des bois* named Pierre-Esprit Radisson and his brother-in-law Médard Chouart des Groseilliers (groh-zay-yay) had an idea. They believed that it would be cheaper and faster to send ships into the Hudson Bay to collect furs rather than travelling the great distance down the St. Lawrence River to Montréal. The two men presented this idea to the leaders of New France. The leaders not only ignored the idea, but they fined Radisson for trading without permission.

Radisson and des Groseilliers secretly left the French colony and took their idea to a group of British merchants. In 1668, the British merchants sent Radisson and des Groseilliers to explore the Hudson Bay route. When the two returned to Britain with their ship loaded with furs, the British merchants formed the Hudson's Bay Company. The company hoped to set up trading posts and ship furs to Britain through the Hudson Bay.

In 1670, Britain's king, Charles II, gave the Hudson's Bay Company control of all the land where the rivers flowed toward the Hudson Bay. Since no European had ever explored this land, even the Hudson's Bay Company did not realize how huge of an area this was. The land controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company was named Rupert's Land after the company's first governor, Prince Rupert.

Major Fur Trade Routes



This map shows Rupert's Land and the British trading forts and trade routes in Hudson Bay. In the years between 1670 and 1763, the Hudson's Bay Company set up trading posts, or factories, at the mouth of major rivers. Trappers brought their furs there to trade. Why do you think rivers became known as the "highways" of the fur trade? What other images in this chapter would help you answer this question?

SKILLS at Work

Looking at the map, why do you think Radisson and des Groseilliers believed that the Hudson Bay route would be good for trading furs?



Life at a Hudson's Bay Company Trading Post

Many men from England and Scotland came to Canada to work with the Hudson's Bay Company. They explored and built trading posts to expand the Hudson's Bay Company's trade.

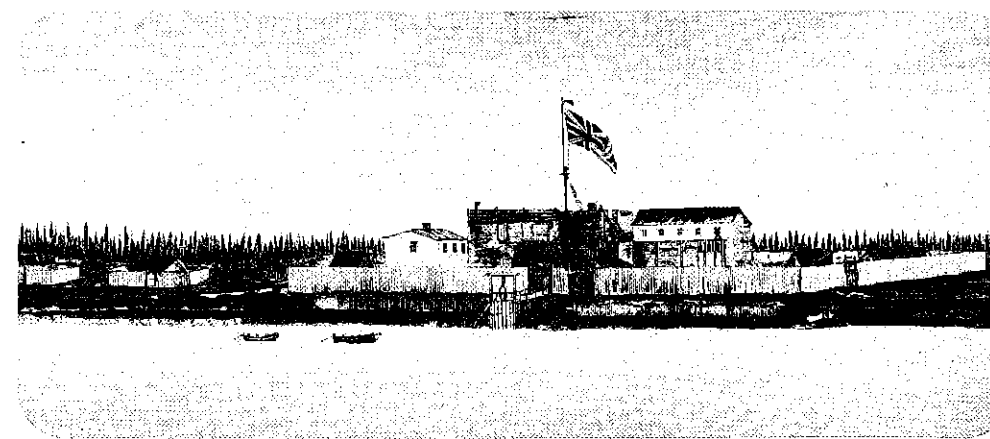
James Knight came from England to Fort York. He worked for the Hudson's Bay Company and was responsible for expanding the fur trade north. He described building a fur trading post:

"I design and please God to go for Churchill River as soon as the ice is clear which is the latter end of June or the beginning of July, which is as soon as man can get along shore, with as many men as can be spared here to cut timber and get it rafted down the rivers for building and settling of a factory there, which must be done in the summer; for it will be too late to do it after the ship's arrival by reason of the difficulty of getting of timber and winter setting in so soon and hard upon us; and if this is not done this summer there will be another year lost in doing anything at that river."

Excerpt from *Letters From Hudson Bay, 1703-40*, by James Knight, September 17, 1716.

Fur trading posts are also called **factories**. Use the map at the back of this textbook to locate the Churchill River. In which geographic region is this river? What does Knight's description tell us about the challenges of building trading posts in this region?

Trade offered the chance to establish relationships between peoples. Trading posts such as Fort William provided important meeting places. During the winter, Fort William was quiet and empty. By the summer, however, it was filled with hundreds of First Nations traders and voyageurs. Canoes arrived at Fort William from the north loaded with furs. Canoes arrived from Montréal loaded with supplies. Furs and supplies were traded.



This painting of East Main Factory (on the east side of James Bay) was created by artist William Richards in the early 1800s. (For the location of this fur trading post, see the map on page 141.) What is at the centre of this factory? What does it represent? Why is it there?

Thinking Like a Historian



When historians look at different sources, they try to **interpret**, or come to an understanding of, how things in the past might have been. When you read the following journal excerpts by James Isham, what is your understanding of what life was like? Isham came from England to work for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1732. He commanded the factories of York and Churchill. He kept a journal and described many aspects of his life.

"The Wall's of our housses we here Live in are 2 foot thick of Stone, —the windows small with 3 inch wooden shetter's, which is Close shutt 18 hour's Every Day, in the winter,

—four Large fires are made in Large Brick stoves (Build for that purpose) Every Day, which as soon as the wood is Burn't Downe to a coal, the top of the chimnley is close stop't with an Iron Cover, this Keeps the heat within the houses, tho at the same time the smoa'k makes our heads to ac'h...

in 4 or 5 hour's after the fire is out and the chimnly still close stop't, the inside of the wall of our housses are 6 or 8 inches thick of Ice, which is Every Day cutt away with Hatchetts, —three or 4 times of a Day we make Iron shott of 24 lb. weight hott in the fire, and hang up at the window's of our appartments, yet will not hinder a 2 Gallon Botle of water freezing by the fire side...."

Excerpts from *Isham's Observations and Notes*, 1743–49, by James Isham.

You Be the Historian

1. In the days of fur trading, some words in English were spelled and capitalized differently than today. Read the journal out loud. Discuss the words that you had difficulty understanding. Rewrite the journal excerpt in your own words. Does your rewrite make the passage easier to understand? Explain.
2. What does this passage tell you about how the Europeans coped with the cold? How do we cope with the cold today?

Jobs in Fur Trading Posts

The head of a fur trading post was called the chief factor. He managed the operation of the fort.

Other men who worked for the company were called servants of the Hudson's Bay Company. Hundreds of these men came from the Orkney and Lewis Islands of Scotland. Servants were tradesmen, clerks, and labourers. Tradesmen included boat builders, blacksmiths, carpenters, and coopers, or barrel makers. Clerks kept records of all the furs that were shipped in and out of the fort. Labourers included cooks, gardeners, and explorers who were responsible for finding new trading routes.

Lewis and Orkney Islands



People and Places

York Factory



An unknown artist created this image of York Factory in 1854. York Factory was an important trading post from 1682 until 1957. Locate York Factory on the map on page 141. How would you describe its location? What would the climate be like at this location? What challenges would this climate present?

Life at York Factory was not easy. Summers in the Hudson Bay Lowland were short and wet. The few hot days in July and August brought swarms of mosquitoes and black flies. Winter set in early and lasted until May or June. Still, people reacted to this hardship by being creative. They created beadworks, carvings, and ironworks, such as door handles and latches.

Robert Ballantyne, a Scottish clerk who came to work for the Hudson's Bay Company when he was 16, called York Factory "a monstrous blot on a swampy spot, with a partial view of the frozen sea!" However, Ballantyne loved the Canadian wilderness, and wrote many long letters home about the land, birds, animals, and weather to his mother in Scotland.

Pause

1. Why do you think there were so few stories of women in the fur trade?
2. How do you think lives of voyageurs compared to lives of fur traders at a fort or factory?

How Did People Trade?

Before people could trade, they had to decide on a way of trading that everyone understood. They also had to understand each other. This could be a challenge when people from so many different cultures were involved.

Deciding on a Trading System

One of the challenges of trading was to create a **barter**, or exchange, system that everyone understood and agreed on. To do this, the Hudson's Bay Company introduced a coin called a **made-beaver token**.

A **made-beaver** was the name given to a beaver pelt that had been worn for at least one season. Worn pelts were actually more valuable because the wear made the fur softer.

If a trader brought in a made-beaver, he would receive a token. However, he might have to bring in several pieces of furs of lesser value to get one token. Furs were also rated by quality and size. For example, a trader would need to have 20 squirrel hides to receive one made-beaver token. He would only need two otter pelts. Tokens could be used to buy goods at the trading post.



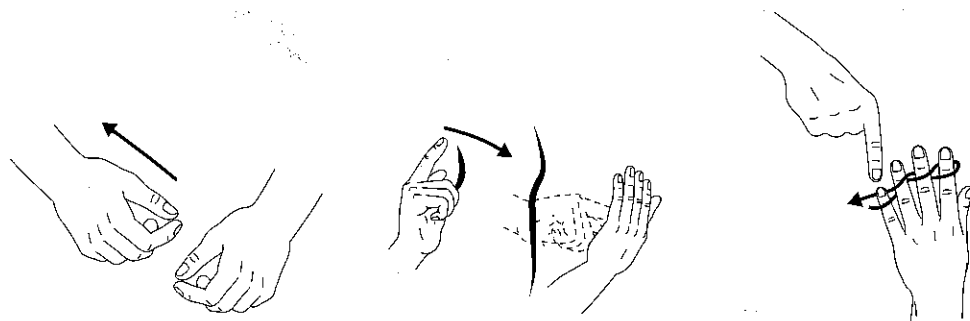
Whose symbols do you think are on these Hudson's Bay Company made-beaver tokens? If you had been asked to create a made-beaver token, what images would you have used? Why?

CONNECT

Have you been in a situation where you had to communicate with someone who did not speak your language? Were you able to resolve the problem? If so, what did you do?

The Languages of Trade

Another challenge of trading between cultures was to find a language that everyone understood. One way the traders overcame this challenge was by using **trade jargon**, which was words used in trade that everyone understood. Another way was by using hand motions and gestures, or sign language, to represent words.



arrow

arrive there

among

These are part of the sign language that some First Nations peoples of the Plains shared. Sign language was generally easy to recognize and learn. Signs usually expressed ideas rather than words.

Blending of Languages

When early French fur traders came to North America, they brought their language with them. French became a main language of trade. Over the years, French and First Nations languages mixed to form a language that traders understood. For example, in the posts around the St. Lawrence River, the language of trade was a mix of Ojibway and French. As the *coureurs des bois* and *voyageurs* moved west with the fur trade, the French language spread and mixed with other First Nations languages.

By the time the fur trade was fully developed in the west, even more languages were heard at the posts. English was used more and more as the Hudson's Bay Company spread westward. The Métis languages were common at the posts as well. They blended both European and First Nations languages.

- Bungi is a mixture of Orkney Scottish and Cree. The Orkney Scots came from Scotland to work for the Hudson's Bay Company.
- Michif is the traditional language of the Métis. (We will learn about the Métis on page 144.) It is a mixture of French and Cree.

Differing Perspectives about Trade

Another challenge of trading between different cultures is the different views on what trade means and how it is done. First Nations peoples viewed trade as more than just an exchange of goods. It was a way to celebrate, renew, and strengthen peace and friendships. For example, the Plains Cree and Nakoda (naa-ko-daa) had a long friendship and trade relationship. They used trade as an opportunity to recognize that friendship and make it even stronger.

Trade also provided a chance to form new ties and make agreements. These might be formal agreements, called **treaties**. These agreements were important symbols of relationships among nations and a way of keeping peace between different groups of people. Treaties were not written but everyone was expected to know about and respect them. That is why large gatherings, such as trade, were important in helping to maintain these agreements.

For European traders, however, trade was simply an exchange of goods. These different perspectives sometimes led to misunderstandings and challenges in future agreements and treaties made between First Nations and European people.

Pause

1. In what ways is language important to identities?
2. How might the difference in perspectives about trade create challenges for different peoples involved in the fur trade?
3. What challenges do you think differing perspectives on treaties might bring?

What Changes Did the Fur Trade Bring?

The fur trade brought many changes to people's lives. Not only did it affect how people lived, but it also resulted in a new people, the Métis.

The Métis People

The relationships between European traders and First Nations women were very important to the fur trade. They created trust and friendships between the traders and the First Nations communities. First Nations women also played a very important role in trading. They understood the customs and language of their people, acting as translators in trade talks. They also knew how to live and travel on the land. The traders depended on them for their day-to-day survival.

European traders and First Nations women often had children together. People who are of mixed European and First Nations ancestry are called Métis. Métis children learned the skills and knowledge of both their mothers and fathers.

Voices

France Picotte is a prominent member of the Métis Nation of Ontario. She describes her pride in her Métis identity and what she has learned about being Métis:

As we grew up, we were always very, very proud to say 'I'm part this'....We didn't use the word Métis; we were always 'part'....When we got involved with the Métis Nation...it was only then that I realized that I wasn't part anything. I was a whole something.... I was a whole Métis. It was a person. It was a culture. It wasn't part this and part that....I realized that I was a whole person.

Excerpts from a video recording on "The Métis Search of Identity." The Métis Nation of Ontario web site.

Different Métis people lived in different areas and had different ways of life. For example, the Great Lakes Métis lived near the trading posts around the Great Lakes. Many of them worked as clerks, interpreters, canoeists, and packers. The Plains Métis lived on small farms or settlements in the winter months. In summer, they hunted buffalo.

The Métis Buffalo Hunt

The buffalo was an important part of Métis life, culture, and identity. People from a Métis community would often travel hundreds of kilometres to where the buffalo herds were. Traditionally, First Nations hunters would herd buffalo over cliffs, called jumps, or into enclosures, or pounds, where they could be brought down using spears, arrows, or guns. The Métis hunters had a different method. They would ride alongside the charging herds, firing rifles from horseback.

After a buffalo hunt, women cut and dried the meat. Some of the meat was made into pemmican, which is a mixture of ground buffalo meat, melted fat, and dried berries. Not only was this an important source of food for the Métis and First Nations peoples, but it became an important trade item with European fur traders as well.

The Pemmican Trade

In 1779, Peter Pond, an explorer and fur trader, brought pemmican back east from a trip he made to the Athabasca River. This food was perfect for traders and explorers. It was light to carry, did not go bad quickly, and provided a good source of energy. Posts were built along the rivers of the west for the pemmican trade. This increased the demand for buffalo meat. Making pemmican was as important an event as the hunt. It involved many members of the community and took many days to make. Women and children worked long and hard hours together.



The buffalo hunt was important to many First Nations and Métis communities and quality of life. After a buffalo hunt, women cut and dried the meat. They also used some of the meat to make pemmican. This painting was done by artist M. François Girard for the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Québec. It is based on sketches and information gathered about the Plains peoples.

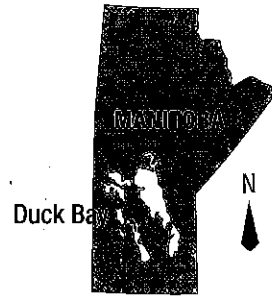
CONNECT

Does your family eat foods that are part of your culture's traditions? What culture does the food your family eats represent? What traditional foods are part of your community?



People still make and eat pemmican today. It is a high-energy food, like the energy bars that today's athletes and hikers eat. This 1930s photograph shows Mary Big Belly of the Sarcee (Tsuu T'ina) reserve, Alberta, making pemmican.

Kids Speak



“ Hello, I am Lise from Duck Bay, Manitoba. My community started as a fur trading post. Our Métis identity is important to us, and every year, our school celebrates our Métis culture during Métis Week. Two weeks before our celebration, we have a logo contest where we all make a drawing that represents the spirit of our people. The winning logo is then printed on T-shirts that we wear during Métis Week.

This year, we changed one of the classrooms into the one-room schoolhouse that was built in our community and another classroom into a trapper’s home. Our class created a giant bulletin board display of the Métis on a hunt. The grades 6 and 7 students set up a restaurant where they cooked fish and baked bannock. The grade 8 students turned their classroom into a Métis home from the fur trading years. They also gathered pictures to create their family trees.”

Symbols of Identities

Métis Identities



Infinity symbol



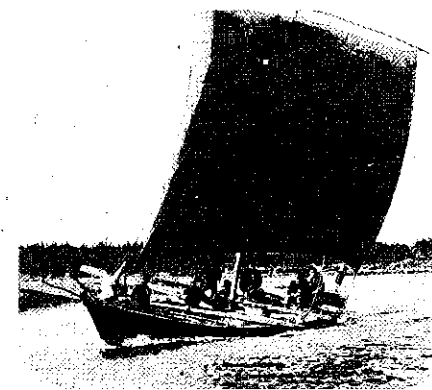
The symbol on these performers’ outfits is called the infinity symbol. Infinity means never-ending. The Métis have adopted this symbol to represent the joining of two different cultures—European and First Nations. It also stands for Métis people’s belief that they will be on Earth forever.

The infinity symbol also appears on the Métis flag, which is the very first flag created in Canada. It is 150 years older than the country’s flag. Sometimes, the colour on the flag is red instead of blue. Red is the colour of the British, and blue is the colour of the French.

The Red River jig is a mix of Scottish, Irish, and French square dance music with First Nations powwow footwork. The Scottish fiddle is a favourite musical instrument. Why is this music and dance so important to Métis identity?



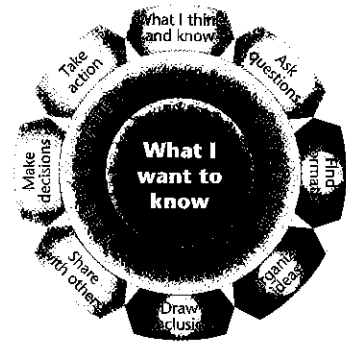
This 1888 photograph shows a line of Red River carts in Calgary. The Métis invented the Red River cart to transport goods, such as buffalo hides. It was easy to repair and its large, spoked wheels did not sink into the soft mud of the plains. The cart could also be used as a raft when the wheels were taken off. Grease was not used on the wheel axles because dirt would stick to the grease, so the wheels made squeaky sounds when they moved.



The fur trade was a way of life for the Métis, and they created tools to make this life easier. A Métis, William Sinclair, invented the York boat in 1835. It was flat-bottomed and heavy, but could carry larger loads of furs and supplies than canoes could. In this 1880s photograph, a York boat is travelling on Hayes River to the York Factory.

Pause

1. What do the Métis symbols tell you about who the Métis are, how they live, and what is important to them?
2. Why do you think the York boat and the Red River cart were important to Métis ways of life?



What is Joseph Dion saying about the effects of the fur trade on First Nations peoples? What European items did they receive in exchange for furs? How were the buffalo affected? How would this have affected ways of life?

How Did the Fur Trade Change Ways of Life?

Joseph Dion (1888–1960) was a Métis man from the Onion Lake Reserve, Saskatchewan. His father was Métis and his mother was Cree. In his book, *My Tribe the Crees*, he described the trade that took place between his people and the Europeans:

“The blankets we needed; they were a good substitute for the cumbersome buffalo robes and besides; their many bright colours fascinated us. A new blanket over our shoulders was something to be proud of. The knife was essential, therefore we bought it at a high price. And we never dreamed that the gun, which we were so anxious to own, would be the means of the ultimate extermination of our main source of livelihood, the buffalo.”

Excerpt from *My Tribe the Crees* by Joseph F. Dion, 1979.



This painting by Arthur H. Hider shows a Woodland Cree trapper at Fort Prince of Wales, near modern-day Churchill, Manitoba, in 1734. What European influences can you see in this image?



This image appeared in a book called *Picturesque Canada*, published in 1882, but it is unknown when this picture was actually created. It shows Hudson’s Bay Company employees portaging. How do you think First Nations peoples and Europeans influenced each other’s lives?

Changing Occupations

Many First Nations and Métis peoples became involved in the fur trade. Some traded directly with the Europeans while others became “middlemen.” Middlemen traded goods for the furs of other First Nations peoples who did not want to travel to the posts. They then took these furs to the trading posts, trading them to whichever European post offered the highest price.

Other people provided food to traders. Food was often scarce, so it was very valuable. Sometimes trading posts hired First Nations and Métis hunters to supply food.



William Richards created this painting in the early 1800s. A man and a woman are returning from a hunting trip. How do you think the Europeans would have adapted to the climate of North America? How would they have adapted to the landscape?

Changes on the Plains

There were few beavers on the plains, but the fur trade still had an enormous effect on life there. The Métis and First Nations peoples who lived there hunted buffalo. As an increasing number of people moved into the region, the demand for buffalo hides, dried buffalo meat, and pemmican grew. These people began to make a living trading these items.

The population of the buffalo quickly dropped. More were being hunted because of the growing demand for their hides and meat. Also, their grazing land was being taken over by settlements, farmlands, and the railway. It is estimated that before 1800 there were between 40 and 70 million buffalo roaming the plains of North America. By 1900, there were less than a thousand. How do you think the decrease in buffalo would have affected the lives of those whose main source of food was buffalo?

European Tools

Sharpened stone and shell blades had been used by First Nations peoples for thousands of years. They were shared and used by the community. European tools were made from iron, which meant that they were sharper and did not break. These tools were often owned by the person who traded for them. As a result, these tools began to represent wealth, creating differences between community members.

Inquire

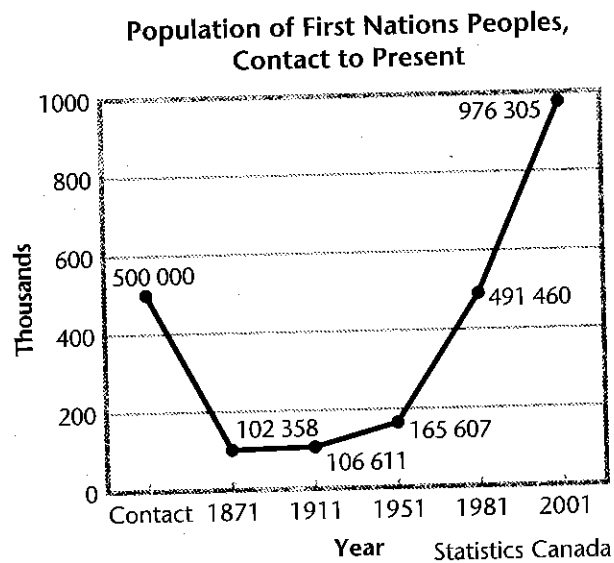
1. European artists created the paintings on pages 148 and 149. How might the details in the paintings and images be different if they were photographs? What should we consider when we use paintings or diagrams created by an individual as research sources?
2. Create a chart to show how you think diseases and conflict would have affected First Nations communities, their economy, their territory, and their relationships with neighbouring nations.
3. Choose one of the effects of the fur trade about which you are most curious. Work with a partner or in a small group to learn more about this effect. Think about the steps of the inquiry model that you would take.

Conflict

The competition of the fur trade created conflict between First Nations. There were conflicts over territories, trade routes, and trading partnerships. It also created conflict within communities because there was less sharing of wealth.

Disease

Europeans carried diseases that the First Nations peoples had not been exposed to before. Their bodies had no way to fight them off. Diseases such as typhoid, diphtheria, colds, influenza, measles, whooping cough, tuberculosis, and smallpox swept through First Nations communities, wiping out huge numbers of people. This decrease in population affected ways of life in communities and relationships between communities.



As ways of life changed, many traditional sources of food became scarce. Some communities faced starvation. Diseases greatly decreased First Nations populations. Armed conflicts and starvation also took many lives.

← Looking Back

The fur trade was responsible for many changes. New communities began and ways of life changed. What were the ways of life of the fur traders? How did they contribute to Canada's history and identity? How did the fur trade affect ways of life? A new people, the Métis, were born of First Nations and European parents. How did Métis cultures and ways of life bring changes to the fur trade?

On your own, with a partner, or in a small group:

- Review the Predict question at the start of this chapter: *How did the fur trade change ways of life?* What predictions did you make? What new things did you learn that you could add to your predictions?
- Choose one of the following to describe a few of the effects of the fur trade on ways of life:
 - * Write a letter home to Europe.
 - * Create a mural.
 - * Create a scrapbook of symbols.

Your work should consider both the positive and negative changes.

Building the History Canada Multimedia Museum

In Chapter 7, we began to gather ideas for the *History Canada* multimedia museum. Use what you have learned in this chapter to add to your ideas. Scan the chapter again for key information and images. What were the most important events? What images are related to these events? Make note of your ideas.

Looking Forward

As the Hudson's Bay Company's expansion continued, how do you think the influence of the British on Canada increased? What challenges do you think the fur trade faced as time went on?

The next chapter will explore how events in different parts of the world caused people, mainly of British descent, to move to Canada in the 1800s.