

Excerpts from:

**ABORIGINAL STUDIES 10**

# **Aboriginal Perspectives**

Copyright ©2004 Les Éditions Duval, Inc.

## NAMES OF FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT PEOPLES

Throughout history, different names may have been used in reference to specific First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Some of these names were attributed incorrectly or inappropriately. Others may have been correct, but the First Nations or Inuit group has come to prefer a different name, usually derived from their own language. To the best of our ability, we have used names and terms preferred by contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in this textbook.

When you are conducting research, however, you may find former names in history books and Web sites. The following chart, while by no means a complete listing of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples of Canada, offers some guidance for the correlation of contemporary and historical names of peoples, particularly those that you might find mentioned in this textbook.

Contemporary Name	Alternate Name(s)	Notes
A'aninin (ah-nin-in)	Gros Ventre, White Clay People, Aaninen	United States nation
Anishinabé (a-nish-na-bay) or Saulteaux (so-tow)	Ojibway, Ojibwa, Anishnaabe, Anishnabe, Bungee	The language is often called Ojibway; in Alberta it is called Saulteaux. Called Chippewa in the United States
Aamskaapipikani	South Peigan, South Piikani, Blackfeet	Refers to United states nation related to Blackfoot Confederacy
Blackfoot Confederacy	Blackfoot	
Cayuga		Member of Six Nations Confederacy
Cree or Nehiyaw	Cris	
Dakota	Sioux	
Dené Tha' (de-nay-thah)	Slavey, Slave, Dene-thah, Dene Dha	
Dene Sḡliné (de-nay-soong-lin-ay)	Chipewyan, Dene Souline, Denesuline	
Dunne-za (da-nay-za)	Beaver, South Slave	
First Nations	Indian, Tribe, Native	
Gitksan	Tsimshian, Gitksan	
Gwich'in	Loucheaux, Kutchin, Tukudh	
Haisla	Kitimat	
Heiltsuk	Bella Bella	
Innu	Montahfais, Montagnais-Naskapi	
Inuit	Eskimo	
Inuvialuit	Western Inuit	
Haudenosaunee (how-den-o-show-nee)	Iroquois	Six Nations Confederacy
Kainai	Blood	Member of Blackfoot Confederacy
Kichesiprini	Algonquin	
Kitlînermiut	Copper Inuit	
Ktunaxa (doo-na-ha)	Kutenai, Kootenay	
Kwak'waka'wakw or Oweekeno	Kwakiutl, Kwagiutl, Kwakwawaw, Kwagiulth	
Lakota	Sioux	
Métis	Half-breed, Country-born, Mixed-blood	

Continued...

Contemporary Name	Alternate Name(s)	Notes
Mi'kmaq	Mi'maq, Micmac, Micmaw	
Mohawk		Member of Six Nations Confederacy
Nakoda	Stoney, Assiniboine, Nakota	The Paul First Nation in Alberta prefers the name <i>Stoney</i>
Nakota	Assiniboine, Sioux	
Nisga'a	Nishga, Nisga	
Nlaka'pamux	Thompson	
Nuu-chah-nulth	Nootka	
Nuxalk	Bella Coola	
Odawa	Ottawa	
Oneida		Member of Six Nations Confederacy
Onondaga		Member of Six Nations Confederacy
Ouendat	Huron, Wendat	
Piikani	Peigan, Pikuni, North Peigan	Member of Blackfoot Confederacy
Secwepemc	Shuswap	
Seneca		Member of Six Nations Confederacy
Siksika	Blackfoot	Member of Blackfoot Confederacy
Stl'atl'imx	Lillooet	
Tłchq	Dogrib	
Tlingit		
Tsilhqot'in	Chilcotin	
Tsuu T'ina	Sarcee, Sarsi	
Tuscarora		Member of Six Nations Confederacy
Wet'suwet'en	Babine Carrier	

In Alberta, the major Aboriginal languages spoken in the province include Blackfoot, two variants of Plains Cree (one sometimes known as Woodland Cree), Dene Słliné, Dené Tha', Dunne-za, Métis Cree, Michif, Nakoda, Sauteaux, and Tsuu T'ina. A basic greeting in some of these languages is included in the chart below, along with Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit peoples. Your teacher can help you to pronounce each of these greetings with a pronunciation guide.

Language	Greeting	Translation
Blackfoot	oki	"hello"
Cree	tân'si	"hello"
Dene Słliné	edłáneté	"how are you?"
Dunne-za	neeah	"welcome"
Inuktitut	atitu	"hello"
Métis Cree	tâ'nisi	"hello"
Michif	tánishi	"hello"
Nakoda	abawăstet	"good day"
Sauteaux	ânîn	"hello, how are you?"
Tsuu T'ina	da ni t'a da	"how are you?"



## Aboriginal Peoples in Canada

### AS YOU READ

Pages 4–7 introduce you to the cultural diversity of contemporary Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Aboriginal languages highlight this diversity. People who study languages classify them into families of languages that show similar characteristics. Did you know that there are more language families among Aboriginal peoples in Canada than there are language families in all of Europe? Within these families are fifty-eight different languages, along with many more variants (often called dialects). What might be some of the positive and negative consequences of this linguistic diversity?

**E**VERY SOCIETY OR GROUP OF PEOPLE HAS A CULTURE. A CULTURE IS THE COLLECTION OF HEREDITARY BELIEFS, VALUES, AND SHARED KNOWLEDGE OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE.

THIS COLLECTION OF IDEAS AND ATTITUDES GIVES individuals a common **perspective** or point of view. This perspective helps shape the customs, routines, roles, and rituals that make that group of people distinct from others. A **cultural group** is a number of physically or historically related people with a common culture.



Canada's constitution (1982) recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples, but each of these groups is diverse, including individuals with many different goals and priorities.

In its broadest sense, **Aboriginal peoples** refers to all people who are descended from the original inhabitants of North America. International organizations, such as the United Nations, use the term **indigenous peoples** to refer to a land's original people. Aboriginal cultures originate from this land. Their entire cultural history takes place on this landscape.

In 1982, the Canadian constitution recognized three groups of Aboriginal peoples: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. Each of these groups has a unique history, set of

languages and variants, and range of cultural practices.

**First Nations** has more than one meaning. It often refers to a cultural group or **nation** of indigenous peoples, such as the Kainai, Cree, Anishinabé, or Mi'kmaq. First Nations people were once known by the name **Indians**. However, *Indians* is considered offensive to many people today, partly because the name does not reflect the true position of First Nations as indigenous peoples of Canada. This textbook uses names preferred by Aboriginal groups, unless quoting federal government legislation, where the term *Indian* is still common.

Canada's First Nations are diverse historically, culturally, and linguistically. The term *First Nation* can also refer to the government of a group of First Nations people. There are over 630 First Nations governments today, each representing the interests of a distinct group of people.

**Inuit** people are from Arctic areas of North America, as well as other countries with polar regions. *Inuit* means "the people" in Inuktitut, the Inuit language. Inuit peoples also have diverse cultural traits that vary across the huge Arctic region. Six variants of Inuktitut are spoken in Canada.

Inuit people are also indigenous to Canada, although they are culturally different from First Nations.

The term *métis* comes from a French word that refers to a person of mixed heritage. It first came into

use in the sixteenth century, when the French began to visit North America regularly. **Métis** became a name used to describe the heritage of children born of French fur traders and First Nations women.

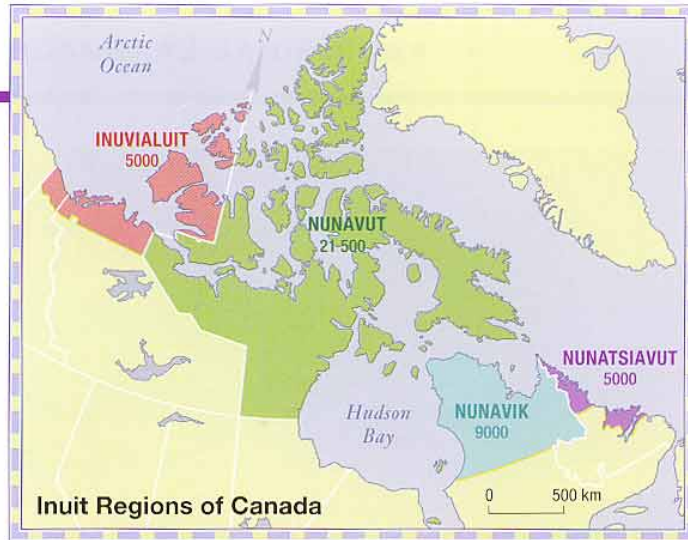
As the fur trade developed through the next 300 years, the name Métis gradually became more specific. Métis increasingly referred to a culturally distinct nation of people with First Nations–French ancestry. Many of these people lived in the Red River area of what is now Manitoba.

In the twentieth century, the term became broader, often including people with an English– or Scottish–First Nations heritage who were also from Red River. Today political organizations such as the Métis Nation of Alberta define the **Métis Nation** as a group of individuals who are associated with a recognized Métis family or community and who **self-identify** as Métis people.

### SELF-IDENTITY

None of the definitions offered so far will fit all people who consider themselves to be Aboriginal. For example, many individuals of mixed heritage identify themselves as Canadian, or First Nations, or sometimes as more than one group, depending on the situation. How a person self-identifies is a significant part of having an Aboriginal cultural identity.

Despite this simple fact, some people are classified into groups by



governments or political organizations, no matter how they self-identify. How this situation came to be has a long history that you will begin to explore in this textbook.

### CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The map on page 6 shows the major Aboriginal language families in Canada today. Most of these language families include diverse cultural groups. Indicating that several languages are in the same language family does not mean that the languages are the same. For example, English, Russian, and Hindi are all classified in the same language family — the Indo-European language family. Most people would not consider these languages or cultures to be similar. The same principle applies to Aboriginal languages and cultures.

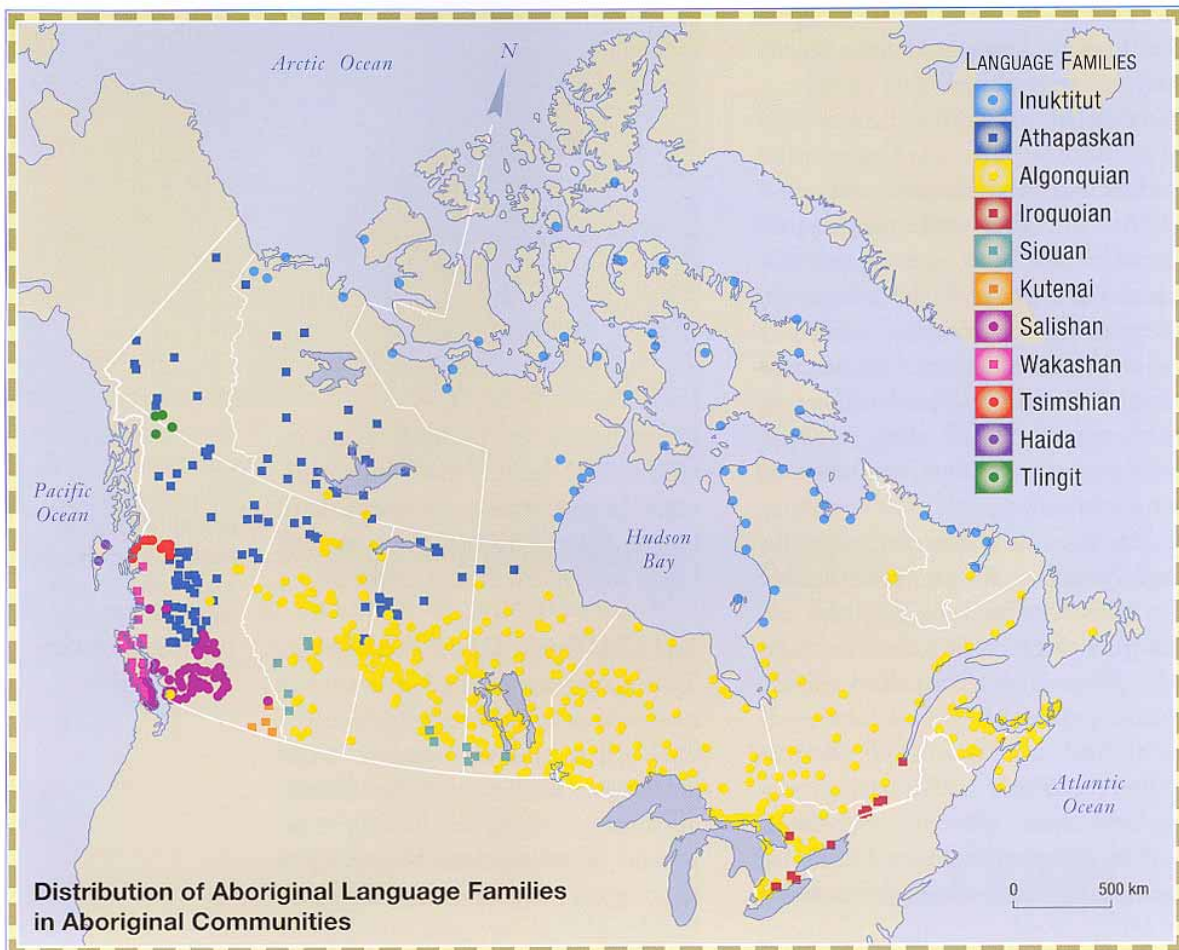
Language families indicate groups of languages that are distantly related. They may indicate groups of people that were long ago related, living in the same region, or having regular contact with one another.

*The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, a political organization that represents Inuit peoples' interests to the federal government, recognizes four main regions of Inuit peoples. This map shows these regions and their populations.*





## ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE FAMILIES IN CANADA



### ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE FAMILIES AND LANGUAGES<sup>1</sup>

ALGONQUIAN FAMILY	Algonquian <sup>2</sup> , Algonquin, Attikamek, Blackfoot, Cree, Malecite, Mi'kmaq, Montagnais-Naskapi, Ojibway, Oji-Cree
ATHAPASKAN FAMILY	Athapaskan, Carrier, Chilcotin, Chipewyan, Dene, Dogrib, Kutchin-Gwitch'in (Loucheux), North Slave (Hare), South Slave
HAIDA (isolate) <sup>3</sup>	
INUKTITUT FAMILY	Inuktitut
IROQUOIAN FAMILY	Iroquoian, Mohawk
KUTENAI (isolate) <sup>3</sup>	
SALISH FAMILY	Salish, Shushwap, Thompson (Ntlakapamux)
SIUAN FAMILY	Dakota/Sioux
TLINGIT (isolate) <sup>3</sup>	
TSIMSHIAN FAMILY	Gitksan, Nishga, Tsimshian
WAKASHAN FAMILY	Nootka, Wakashan

<sup>1</sup> This map and chart give the names Statistics Canada uses in its surveys. Some names are now considered out of date.

<sup>2</sup> Michif, a Métis language that combines French and Cree words, is included in data for the Algonquian language, which is part of the Algonquian Language Family.

<sup>3</sup> The term *isolate* indicates a language for which there are believed to be no other related languages.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1995 Census

Linguistic groups are sometimes more useful in understanding cultural connections. A **linguistic group** is composed of nations who speak the same basic language, although different variations may exist. For example, the Cree linguistic group has five major variants across Canada. One Cree person speaking to another in a different variant could likely make himself or herself understood. However, a Cree person speaking to a Blackfoot speaker will not be understood, even though Cree and Blackfoot are part of the same language family. Blackfoot is its own linguistic group.

Individual communities within one linguistic group can also show many cultural differences from one another.

## ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN CANADA

In the 1996 Census, 799 010 people reported that they were First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. About 6400 people reported that they consider themselves to be a member of more than one Aboriginal group. During this census, Statistics Canada was unable to complete census counts on seventy-seven reserves and settlements. They estimate that approximately 44 000 individuals were therefore not included in their data for 1996. Most of these people are First Nations.

Area	Total Population	First Nations	Métis	Inuit
Canada	28 528 125	554 290	210 190	41 080
Newfoundland	547 160	5430	4685	4265
Prince Edward Island	132 855	825	120	15
Nova Scotia	899 970	11 340	860	210
New Brunswick	729 630	9180	975	120
Quebec	7 045 080	47 600	16 075	8300
Ontario	10 642 790	118 830	22 790	1300
Manitoba	1 100 295	82 990	46 195	360
Saskatchewan	976 615	75 205	36 535	190
Alberta	2 669 195	72 645	50 745	795
British Columbia	3 689 755	113 315	26 750	815
Yukon Territory	30 655	5530	565	110
Northwest Territory	64 120	11 400	3895	24 600

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census

### Indigenous Knowledge

In small groups, present some or all of the census information on this page in another format. For example, you might create a pie chart of Aboriginal peoples that shows what percentage of the Aboriginal population each of the three groups composes. Another idea might be a bar graph comparing the Aboriginal population in each province.

### LOOKING BACK

This section has introduced you to many new terms and concepts that you will need to understand well before reading the rest of this textbook. Review pages 4–7 and write definitions for each bolded term. Now turn to the glossary at the back of this textbook to read the definitions of each term. Sometimes the glossary presents the term in a slightly different way. Take turns quizzing a partner until you can define each term without referring to your notes.



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MAJOR ABORIGINAL CULTURAL GROUPS IN ALBERTA

Understanding the diverse history of the groups and individuals that comprise the Aboriginal population in Alberta can make understanding many current issues easier. The next few pages feature some of the history of the First Nations and Métis groups considered indigenous to Alberta.

Major migrations of First Nations coincided with the beginning of the fur trade on the Hudson Bay. Cree and Nakoda peoples moved farther and farther west in search of fresh trapping areas and western First Nations trading partners. This migration might have been like many others in history, sometimes advancing and sometimes retreating, but this time the Cree had guns from their European trading partners. Unarmed groups could do little to stop them. The Tsuu T'ina and the Blackfoot Confederacy were pushed south and the Dunne-za moved north. These movements in turn impacted the lives and territories of other groups in what is now Alberta.

Some nations, such as the A'aninin (Gros Ventre), the Shoshoni, and the Ktunaxa (Kutenai), once lived in the region, but no longer have territory in Alberta. The A'aninin were allies of the Blackfoot Confederacy, but moved south to the United States in 1861. The Piikani First Nation in Alberta are sometimes considered the North Piikani, with the South Piikani from Montana as the fourth member of the Blackfoot Confederacy.

Another significant cultural group represented in Alberta's population is the Haudenosaunee. During the fur trade era, many Haudenosaunee people came west to work in the trade. Many of their descendants still live in Alberta. You will learn more about this history in Chapter Five.

### ANISHINABÉ

The Anishinabé in Alberta are originally from the Eastern Woodlands near what is now Sault Ste Marie. They moved west in the late 1700s to work in the fur trade for the North West Company. The Anishinabé first settled in Manitoba, but then moved farther west and adopted a lifestyle of buffalo-hunting. They were close allies of the Plains Cree.



### BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY

Niitsitapi (*Real People*)

The member nations of the Blackfoot Confederacy were once part of a single group. At some point, they split into three closely allied groups: the Kainai, the Piikani, and the Siksika. Historically, the Blackfoot Confederacy lived in large clan-based groups on the Plains and nearby foothills. According to oral history, they have always lived in this region and their culture was traditionally linked economically and spiritually with the buffalo.

*The buffalo was a magnificent resource that attracted many First Nations and Métis peoples to the region that is now Alberta. What features of the buffalo's main habitat made a large hunt such as the one depicted in this painting possible?*





Look closely at this photograph. In which of Alberta's ecological regions do you think this Cree man might be? There may be more than one answer.

## CREE

Nehiyaw (*Real People*)

Three distinct groups of Cree have a history in this province. The Plains Cree traditionally lived in the east central region of Alberta in the areas of the Battle and North Saskatchewan Rivers. In Cree, their name means "Downstream People," referring to their location farther west from their original territory. They spent part of the year in the woodlands in extended family groups. In the summer, when the buffalo gathered in huge herds on the Plains, Plains Cree joined forces in large groups to hunt the animal.

The Woodland Cree were traditionally expert hunters and trappers. This group of Cree eventually became the backbone of the fur trade as suppliers and traders with other groups. Many Woodland Cree women



These Dene Sųliné people are hunting duck. What characteristics do you notice about their environment? How does this fit with what you learned earlier in this chapter on pages 8–15?

married fur traders, so many Métis people share elements of the Woodland Cree cultural heritage.

The Rocky Mountain Cree today live in the Grande Cache area. They once lived in more eastern regions of the country, but moved west during the fur trade. They eventually settled along the mountains and foothills.

## DENE SŪLINÉ

(the term *Dené* means "person or people" in all Athapaskan languages)

For centuries, the Dene Sųliné people occupied the boreal forest and waters between Great Slave Lake and Hudson Bay. Their traditional territory encompassed a large triangular area in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, as well as much of northeastern Alberta. Although their territory

*Fort Chipewyan has a clear sense of its community as the historic hub of the fur trade, as well as a sense of humour, as seen in this sign at the Fort Chipewyan airport. Two major trading companies had posts at Fort Chipewyan, leaving a lasting legacy for the community. Many Métis people with names such as Flett, Wylie, Campbell, and Fraser still live in the area.*



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MAJOR ABORIGINAL CULTURAL GROUPS IN ALBERTA

*What features do you notice about the surroundings of this 1910 Dunne-za camp near Peace River, Alberta? What do these features suggest about the resources the people of this camp may have relied upon?*



reached as far as Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean, they normally stayed inland, travelling the extensive water system of rivers, lakes, and muskeg.

Traditionally they lived and migrated in family groups, catching fish and hunting caribou, wood buffalo, and waterfowl. When the Hudson's Bay Company opened in Fort Churchill, the Dene Sųliné began a trading relationship with the Europeans and expanded their territory even further.

### DENÉ THA'

The Dené Tha' are the most northerly First Nation in the province. In their own language, Dené Tha' means "simple people." Dené Tha' traditional hunting grounds extend far into the Northwest Territories, but they consider Alberta's Caribou Mountains and Hay River regions part of their homeland. Traditionally they rarely left woodland areas, even if caribou were plentiful on the barren grounds to the north.

### DUNNE-ZA

The name Dunne-za means "pure people," but in common usage, the Dunne-za refer to themselves as Chatay, which means "beaver people." The Dunne-za traditionally lived in northern Alberta along the Peace River, which was often known by the Dene Sųliné name Tsa Des (river of beavers). The Dunne-za lived in small family groups and were expert trappers and hunters in their heavily wooded environment.

### REFLECTION

Reflect upon the two statements below, one by a Dene person who believes his cultural identity comes from the land, and one by a Plains Cree person who believes language is more significant in her cultural identity. Which statement reflects something about your own sense of cultural identity? If neither, explain the source of your own cultural identity. Answer this question in your journal.

One of my Elders told me a situation. He said we can get rid of all the Dene people in Denendeh, we can all die off for some reason, but if there was another human being that came stumbling along and came to Denendeh, the environment would turn him into a Dene person. It's the environment and the land that makes us Dene people.

— Roy Fabian, Hay River, Northwest Territories, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*

For Plains Cree people, language is the most important gift from the Creator. It shapes our sense of who we are and the values and ceremonies that flow from this identity. The environment, or Mother Earth, is important, too, but today we live with mainstream society. Even our reserves are surrounded and have been changed by non-Aboriginal people.

— Mary Cardinal Collins, Edmonton



## MÉTIS PEOPLES

Many Métis peoples in Alberta are the descendants of Métis families who moved west from the Red River area in Manitoba as it became increasingly settled and agricultural. They wanted to live a life based on the buffalo hunt. These Métis were sometimes called the Winter Rovers. Although today Métis people can be found in almost every town and city in Alberta, many live in the **Métis Settlements** that were founded in the 1930s to provide a land base for the Métis peoples in the province. They are the only Métis people in Canada to have a land base.

## NAKODA

The Nakoda people were once part of the Yanktonai Sioux, a cultural group of First Nations living between the Mississippi River and Lake Superior. In the early seventeenth century, the Nakoda separated from this group and moved north. By 1670, the Nakoda were a distinct cultural group. They eventually became close Cree allies. Along with the Cree, they moved west along the North Saskatchewan River during the fur trade in pursuit of fresh trapping areas and new trading partners. In time, the Nakoda split into two branches. One continued the woodlands lifestyle that was their heritage. The people of the Paul and Alexis Bands (*Isgabi*) are descendants of these people. The second took up the Plains culture of the buffalo hunt. The people of the Morley Band (*Iyethkabi*) are their descendants.



## TSUU T'INA

*Tsotli'na (Earth People)*

The Tsuu T'ina are related to northern Alberta's Dunne-za. They may have split into two groups around the time that the Cree and Nakoda moved west. They have lived apart from the Dunne-za for long enough that their languages are today quite different. Although they once lived mainly in the foothills, the Tsuu T'ina increasingly adapted the Plains life that revolved around the buffalo. They were close allies of the Blackfoot Confederacy and frequently intermarried with them.

*This Métis couple is shown in a jumper on their way to Lac La Biche for a New Year's Celebration in 1895.*



*Traditionally close relationships between members of the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Tsuu T'ina are maintained today. Here you see former Tsuu T'ina Chief Roy Whitney giving a gift to Siksika Elder Tom Crane Bear during the Tsuu T'ina's give-away at a 1998 powwow.*

## FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS LANGUAGES IN ALBERTA

This chart shows the major First Nations and Métis cultural groups considered indigenous to Alberta. Keep in mind, however, that Alberta is also home to many Aboriginal peoples from other regions. These people tend to live in urban centres in family groups.

Review the information on pages 24–27 to find at least two points of information that are reinforced by the information in this chart. For example, you might note that the Tsuu T'ina are in the same language family as the Dunne-za, reinforcing the statement that they were long ago part of the same group.

### ALGONQUIAN LANGUAGE FAMILY

#### Blackfoot Confederacy

Kainai (*Blood*)

Piikani (*Peigan*)

Siksika (*Blackfoot*)

#### Cree

Plains Cree or *Nehiyaw Paskwaweyiniwak*

Rocky Mountain Cree or *Nehiyaw Asinywaciyiwiniwak*

Woodland Cree or *Nehiyaw Sakawiyiniwak*

#### Anishinabé

(Saulteaux, Western Ojibway)

### ATHAPASKAN LANGUAGE FAMILY

Dene Sųliné (*Chipewyan*)

Dené Tha' (*Slavey*)

Dunne-za (*Beaver*)

Tsuum T'ina (*Sarcee*)

### SIOUAN LANGUAGE FAMILY

Nakoda (*Assiniboine/Stoney*)

### MÉTIS LANGUAGES

Métis-Cree

Michif

## WORDS FROM THE LAND



Language	buffalo	beaver	horse	canoe	dog team	dog sled
Blackfoot	iinií	ksisskstaki	ponokáómitaa	aahkihsa'tsis	iimitaohkipistaa	
Cree	paskwáw mostos	amisk	mistatim	címan	otápahastimwewin	toboggan*
Dene Sųliné	ejere	tsá	tjco	tsi		
Dené Tha'	haikyo	tša	k'lycho	e-lą	k'lydedeya	
Dunne-za	kaymoe hukgree	cha	klaynchook	ala		klayzha woosloozhy
Métis Cree	pusk'wáw mostos	ámisk	mistá'tim	oosi		átimotápânâsk
Michif	boefloo	kastor	zhwal	canoh		
Nakoda	tatanka**	coba	shortā	wa dah***		shūga cusnahā
Saulteaux	miskotē-pisihki	amihk	mištātīm			
Tsuum T'ina	hani tii	mi cha di ko di	ist/i			

\* word borrowed from Abenaki language

\*\* male buffalo, refers to hump on back

\*\*\* log carved into boat



## MAP GUIDE TO FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS SETTLEMENTS IN ALBERTA



The map on page 31 shows the location of the Métis Settlements as well as all First Nations with reserves in Alberta. A **reserve** is land set aside for the use of a First Nation by the federal government. Each First Nation is coded according to its main cultural group. The map guide on this page gives the names of each First Nation and the corresponding number(s) of its reserves on the map. Note that some First Nations have more than one area of land.

### Anishinabé/Cree

O'Chiese 203, 203 A

### Blackfoot

#### Confederacy

Kainai 148, 148 A

Piikani 147, 147 B

Siksika 146

### Cree

Alexander 134

Beaver Lake 131

Bigstone Cree 166, 166 A–D, 183

Driftpile 150

Duncan's 151 A, 151 K

Enoch 135

Ermineskin 138, 138A

Fort McKay 174, 174 A–B

Fort McMurray 175, 176, 176 A–B

Frog Lake 121, 122

Heart Lake 167

Horse Lake 152 B–C

Kapawe'no 229, 230, 231, 150 B–D

### Cree (continued)

Kehewin 123

Little Red River 162, 215

Loon River Cree 200

Louis Bull 138 B

Mikisew Cree 217–225

Montana 139

Saddle Lake 125, 128

Samson Cree 137 A

Sawridge 150 G–H

Sturgeon Lake 154, 154 A–B

Sucker Creek 150 A

Sunchild Cree 202

Swan River 150 E–F

Tallcree 163, 163 A–B, 173, 173 A–C

Whitefish Lake 155, 155 A–B

Woodland Cree 226–228

### Dene Sų́łíné

Athabaskan Chipewyan 201,

201 A–G

Chipewyan Prairie 194,

194 A–B

Cold Lake 149, 149 A–B

### Dené Tha'

207, 209–214

### Dunne-za

164, 164 A

### Nakoda

Alexis 133, 232–234

Paul 133 A–C

Nakoda 142, 142 B, 143, 144, 144 A, 216

### Tsuu T'ina

145

### Métis Settlements

Buffalo Lake 5

East Prairie 4

Elizabeth 7

Fishing Lake 8

Gift Lake 3

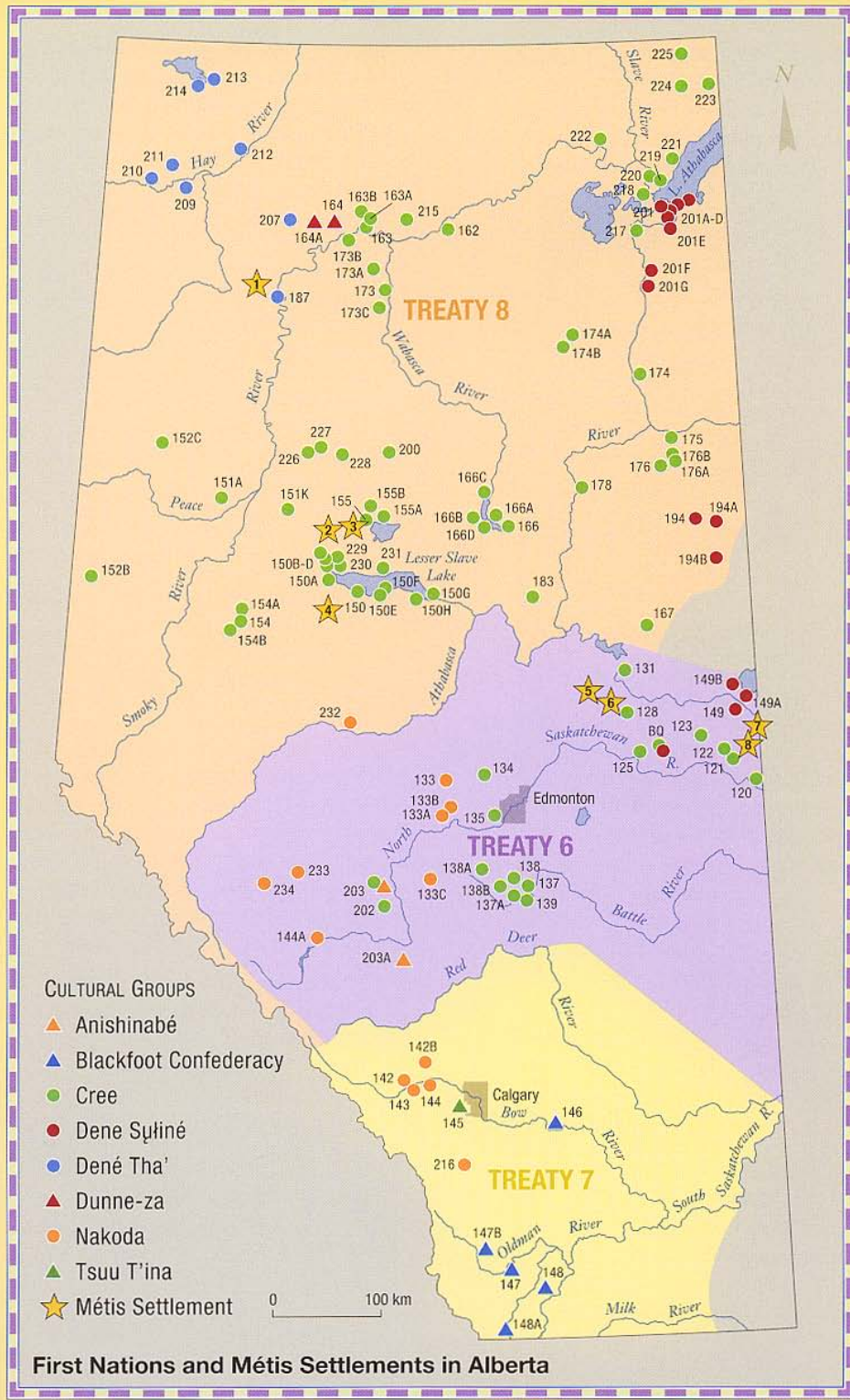
Kikino 6

Paddle Prairie 1

Peavine 2



- Although each First Nation and reserve has been listed by a single cultural group, many communities include more than one cultural group. For example, while the Heart Lake First Nation is located in the Treaty Eight geographic area, it is considered part of Treaty Six. Heart Lake has many Cree speakers along with its Dene Sų́łíné-speaking population.
- You will not find the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation, which is Cree for "Rocky Mountain People," on this map. This group lives near Grande Cache and includes an ancestral mix of Cree, Dunne-za, Sekani, Nakoda, Anishinabé, Haudenosaunee, and Métis people. The nation has six land cooperatives granted by the provincial government. These land holdings are not official reserves, because most members of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation are **non-Status Indians**, which means they are not registered for benefits under the federal government's **Indian Act**. Learn more about these land cooperatives by visiting [www.aseniwuche.com](http://www.aseniwuche.com).
- One First Nation in Alberta does not have a reserve: the Lubicon Lake Cree. Their **land claim** is still outstanding.





### A WEB OF CONNECTION

Talking circles are a type of organized discussion for a topic that has no right or wrong answer. The purpose of a talking circle is to share ideas, feelings, and points of view, but not to reach a decision.

To keep the discussion welcoming to everyone participating, it is useful to



*Speakers may respond to the topic in any way they choose: sharing a personal experience, telling a story, giving an opinion, or relating the topic to another issue or idea.*

follow a talking circle protocol. This activity includes protocol ideas, but your class may want to define your own rules. Your teacher may be able to help you find out the protocol used by local communities.

Whatever protocol you use, remember that the goal is to make everyone feel that they are a valued and respected part of the circle.

It is a good idea to use an experienced facilitator. The facilitator acknowledges participants for their contributions and may clarify comments with non-judgmental language. If necessary, the facilitator may recall the circle to the topic or to



*What does a circular seating arrangement imply about those participating? How does sitting in a classroom arrangement have a different effect on participants?*

protocol. This is a challenging role that takes practice. Your class may wish to approach an Elder in the community to facilitate a talking circle. Your teacher will help you with the appropriate protocol to make this request.

### Sample Protocol

1. Only one person should speak at a time. This can be managed by moving from person to person in a clockwise direction around the circle. This technique ensures that all participants have an equal chance to contribute.
2. Everyone else in the circle should listen without judging or speaking.
3. Each person should feel free to speak or to be silent on their turn. Participants may say "pass" without negative reaction from other participants or the teacher.
4. All questions and comments should address the topic under discussion, not comments another person has made.

Each talking circle in this textbook will include a reading that you may use to begin your talking circle. You may wish to focus on the ideas of your classmates without any added perspectives.

Each quotation respects the original choice of words by the speaker including terms, such as *Whiteman* or *Indian*, that are now considered out of date in most circumstances. The word choice by the speaker may reflect a specific situation or time period in which such words were accepted.

Each talking circle will end with a short exercise, such as the one below, to help you reflect upon what you've learned in the circle.

### REFLECTION

What is your connection to land? Is it a strong or weak force in your life? Are you connected to a reserve, settlement, or homeland? In your journal, write your answers to these questions or write a response to the talking circle discussion.



We had everything. Well, you just had to go out on the land to get it. We ate healthy foods — meat and lots of fish. We didn't need any pills. If we were sick, there were lots of herbs. There's a plant for everything. There's even herbs for children. The Creator has provided us with everything we need to live a good life. We picked lots of low bush and high bush cranberries and blueberries. We dried lots of saskatoons because they don't lose their sweetness. We always made lots of jam, too.

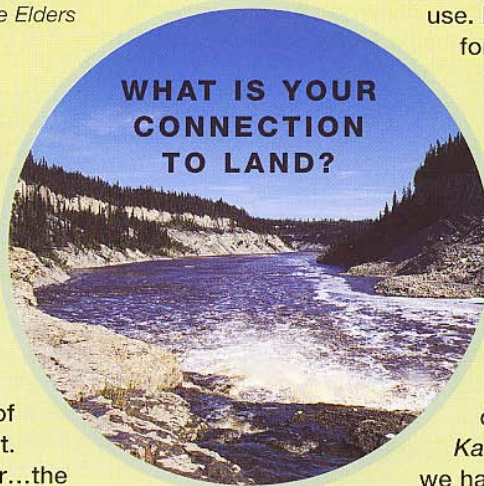
— Eva Nanooch, Fox Creek Reserve, adapted from *Those Who Know: Profiles of Alberta's Native Elders*

And you know we, the Dene here, we were put here by the Creator on this earth to live with a certain purpose, with a certain way, we know that; we see that in our ways, our land, wildlife that provides for us...The land is healthy as a result of what the Creator does for it. Rain, snow, winter, summer...the seasons of the year, all keep everything in balance and we as people live in balance with those seasons. We go from one season to the next. That's how we lived before the Whiteman came here, we shared, we worked with each other.

— Victor Echodh, Black Lake Dene Suliné First Nation, *Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan*

The people respected the land and lived off it, depending on its resources. However, nature is uncertain and changeable. Sometimes there was plenty, and sometimes starvation was a fearful reality. People respected nature because they survived at its whim.

— Phyllis Cardinal, Saddle Lake First Nation, *The Cree People*



### WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO LAND?

We do not exist in isolation from the other living things. My grandfather told me this. He said, "We do not exist by ourselves without the help of other things. This tree here helps us to keep warm because we burn its branches and use them to make stakes for our tipis to hold them down. The rocks we use to hold things down and to heat our sweat lodges." The Indian medicines we used we had to dig up. We were taught about them and we dug for them. The old man's medicines were different from the old woman's. My grandfather would say that he was given these plants to use. It was in the fall when we dug for the roots. They grew in particular places, not just from anywhere. One type of root, which grew in a rocky location, particularly where we hauled water from, was called *aiksikkooki*. It had a bitter taste. Another root was called *sooyiahts*. It was good for burns. We would also spend much time collecting *ka'kitsimoi*. *Ka'ksimiistsi* was another plant we harvested. We used it to make a tea in the wintertime, especially to help with colds.

— Issokoyioomaahka (Bill Heavy Runner), Kainai First Nation, *Kipaitapiwahsinnooni: Alcohol and Drug Abuse Education Program*

### LOOKING BACK

With your teacher's assistance, use correct protocol to invite an Elder or other community member from a local First Nation or Métis community to your class. Ask your guest to talk about traditional ways of life for his or her community.



## Language and Worldview

**L**ANGUAGE AND CULTURE ARE INTERTWINED AND CANNOT BE SEPARATED. LEARNING AN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE MEANS ABSORBING THE very foundation of an Aboriginal identity — the web of relationships that bind the self, community, and natural world. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, in consultation with Elders, reported that “thinking and dreaming in a language means that the speaker has internalized the principles for organizing the world that underpins that language.” These “principles for organizing the world” are another way of describing worldview. To internalize a worldview is to literally see the world from that view.

A language is rich and varied in its expression of the key cultural experiences of its speakers. For example, there are many words used by the Woodland Cree for *moose*. The prominence of moose in their language is related to the significance of the animal to the traditional Woodland Cree livelihood. Indigenous peoples from Hawaii would likely have few words, if any, for moose in their language. Yet they might have a large vocabulary to describe the behaviour of the tides or particular fish.

Whatever is most important to a culture is described most precisely in its language. For example, Nehiyawewin, the Cree language, has many terms to describe relatives.

### AS YOU READ

Language is the window to a culture’s worldview. There are gaps between languages because different cultures have different beliefs. Certain concepts may not be shared. While translation from one language to another provides an approximate meaning, subtle distinctions are often lost or need lengthy explanations.

As you read pages 81–85, consider why language education is considered by many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples to be one of the most important goals for their youth.

See the chart on page 82 for examples.

Aboriginal languages reflect a cultural belief in connection and interdependence. Many words eliminate boundaries and emphasize change, transition, and transformation. Nothing is static. Even an object such as a rock can be both physical and spiritual at the same time. Aboriginal languages reflect this dynamic view of the world with many verbs. Verbs are words of motion, action, change, and transition.

### CREE WORDS FOR MÔSWA OR MOOSE

George Cardinal, an Elder and hunter from Peerless Lake, Alberta, provided these examples:

<i>onîcaniw</i>	female moose before giving birth
<i>nôses</i>	female moose after giving birth
<i>oskâyis</i>	newborn moose calf
<i>piponâskos</i>	yearling
<i>yikihcawases</i>	one-year-old male moose
<i>waskewceses</i>	two-year-old male moose
<i>okinomwacayeses</i>	three-year-old male moose
<i>oskowskwamotayew</i>	four-year-old male moose
<i>mistiyâpew</i>	big bull moose

In contrast, the English language reflects a worldview that draws separations between things — black and white; saint and sinner; animate and inanimate. As a language, it tends to emphasize nouns over verbs. Objects are living or not living; stories are fact or fiction.

A shared language unites people with a sense of shared understanding. As one Elder states, “Talking Cree ... you have the feeling of your culture, your own feelings, values ... you know them better.” Language provides a path to understanding that is

more difficult to find in another language. One Dene Sų́líné verb, for example, can contain as much information as one English sentence.

### ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES TODAY

Today about 26 per cent of the Aboriginal population — about 206 000 people out of 800 000 people — claim an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue which is the first language a person learns to speak, usually at home. The most individuals by far speak Cree,

## TALKING ABOUT YOUR RELATIVES IN PLAINS CREE

Cree words for relatives generally describe them in ways that identify them as kin from a mother’s or father’s side. This linguistic precision demonstrates the significance of extended family relationships in Cree social life.

### Daughter or Son Speaking

<i>nikāwiy</i>	(my mother)	<i>nimis</i>	(my older sister)
<i>nohtāwiy</i>	(my father)	<i>nistes</i>	(my older brother)
<i>nōhkōm</i>	(my grandmother)	<i>nisimis</i>	(my younger sibling)
<i>nimosōm</i>	(my grandfather)		



### Mother’s Relatives

her sisters	
her brothers	
her nephews	– by her sisters – by her brothers
her nieces	– by her sisters – by her brothers



### Daughter Speaking

<i>nikāwīs</i>	(my aunt)
<i>nisis</i>	(my uncle)
<i>nisimis</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nītim</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nimis</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nicāhkos</i>	(my cousin)



### Son Speaking

<i>nikāwīs</i>	(my aunt)
<i>nisis</i>	(my uncle)
<i>nitawimāw</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nīcās</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nicōwām</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nītim</i>	(my cousin)

### Father’s Relatives

his sisters	
his brothers	
his nephews	– by his sisters – by his brothers
his nieces	– by his sisters – by his brothers



### Daughter Speaking

<i>nisikos</i>	(my aunt)
<i>nohcāwīs</i>	(my uncle)
<i>nītim</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nimis</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nicāhkos</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nimis</i>	(my cousin)



### Son Speaking

<i>nisikos</i>	(my aunt)
<i>nohcāwīs</i>	(my uncle)
<i>nīcās</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nitawimāw</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nītim</i>	(my cousin)
<i>nicōwām</i>	(my cousin)



Inuktitut, and Ojibway. Linguists are confident that these three languages will survive in the future.

However, Statistics Canada considers 95 per cent of Aboriginal languages to be endangered, which means they are spoken by enough people that survival is a possibility, but only if community interest is present and education programs are available. All languages depend on people to speak them and keep them alive. In cultures based on an oral tradition, languages contain the cultures themselves, so loss of language could mean loss of culture. In 1996, 120 people spoke Ktunaxa, one of the most endangered languages in Canada. Fewer than 6 per cent of Métis adults speak Michif; fewer than 5 per cent of Métis children speak any Aboriginal language.

One reason for the different rates of language retention is the number of people in each culture. There are almost 80 000 Cree speakers spread across the country — Cree speakers are the most numerous group of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

Another factor is geography. In general, the more isolated a region was from European society's impact, the less its people adopted French or English. For example, Inuktitut speakers still tend to live in their traditional territories. The Arctic has historically attracted few settlers and outside influences arrive slowly. This has helped Inuktitut survive as a vibrant language.

In comparison, the Ktunaxa people, a small nation, traditionally

## WORLD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION (WIPCE)

The sixth tri-annual World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education was held in Stoney Park, near Morley, Alberta, in August 2002. WIPCE is an international organization working towards the goal of indigenous peoples' control over their own education. The conference in Morley had the theme *The Answers Are Within Us*, celebrating indigenous peoples' ability to transmit their ancestral heritage from generation to generation.

With a daily sunrise ceremony, evening cultural exchanges and performances, and workshops presented in tipis, the event promoted experiential teaching, which places value on knowledge based on experience. Such experiential knowledge is the knowledge of Elders.

*The Answers Are Within Us* conference also furthered action on WIPCE goals such as indigenous language education for young people.



*The Kainai Grassland Singers are shown here getting ready for a performance during the conference.*

### REFLECTION

1. Use a dictionary to determine the root word of *experiential*. Why is Elders' experiential knowledge of such value?
2. If you know an Aboriginal language, where did you learn it? How does it affect your worldview or perspective on life? Discuss these questions in small groups.



*Many Aboriginal students across Canada learn Aboriginal languages at school, such as this Cree student in northern Quebec. However, unless they also speak the language at home, the students are statistically less likely to pass the language on to their children. How does this fact compare to your own experience? Have you ever learned another language in school?*

lived in southeastern British Columbia. Their territory was easily accessible to other nations and was directly in the path of westbound traders and explorers. Communication in other languages had always been an essential part of their culture, even before European contact. The Ktunaxa culture has

The arrival of television in the region in the 1970s presented the greatest danger to culture and language ... Younger people like myself, years ago, would go round and visit with the Elders and sit down and listen to them talk ... [Now,] homes in the area are bombarded with information ... that has little relevance to this land-based culture.

— Billy Day, Inuvialuit Communications Society, Inuvik, Northwest Territories, May 6, 1992

therefore been greatly affected by interactions with other cultures and languages.

There are exceptions to these generalizations. Even some isolated communities are losing their traditional languages, especially today. Global communication technologies mean that few communities are completely removed from the reach of satellite transmissions from mainstream media.

Over the last fifty years, government policies that have resulted in the separation of families, as well as the lack of support for Aboriginal languages, have greatly reduced the number of Aboriginal mother tongue speakers.

First Nations people living in Cold Lake, Alberta, are just one First Nation community in Alberta that is determined to preserve its language. Currently, one in ten residents speaks Dene Sųliné. Through the Daghida project — a name proclaiming “we are alive” — community members are working with the University of Alberta on programs that will help them retain both their language and thousands of years of traditional knowledge. One program goal for the future is to establish cultural camps. Students who attend these camps will learn traditional skills in Dene Sųliné, such as trapping, fishing, gardening, and crafts.



## MÉTIS INNOVATION AND ADAPTATION

The Métis Nation emerged as a distinct cultural group by blending elements of European and First Nations cultures in creative ways. This ability to combine useful elements of both cultures made the Métis an enormous asset in the fur trade. With the exception of those living in or near Red River, most Métis people tended to live close to fur trading posts. Pages 148–149 include many examples of Métis cultural innovations.

*Métis women used the leather skills of their First Nations ancestors to make clothing patterned on European styles. They then decorated this clothing with elaborate beadwork, such as the pattern seen here on Louis Riel's deerskin jacket.*



### Beadwork

For centuries First Nations and Inuit women had used natural materials, such as porcupine quills and moose or caribou hair to decorate clothing and other objects. When they received European glass beads, women added them to decorate their moccasins, leggings, bags, and jackets. Some Métis women began to incorporate European women's embroidered floral designs into their beadwork. These Métis women became so well known for their beaded flowers that some First Nations called them Flower Beadwork People.

### The Métis Sash

The Métis are also known for their finger-woven sashes that were tied around the waist with the fringes hanging down. Although today the sash has mainly symbolic value, it once had highly practical uses. It was used to carry heavy objects, as a key holder, a first aid kit, a washcloth and towel, and an emergency horse blanket or bridle. Even the fringes were sometimes used to supply a sewing kit on hunts. The sash is still worn by some Métis people on ceremonial occasions. Its colours are traditionally red, blue, green, black, and yellow.

### The Red River Jig

Whenever groups of Métis people met at summer or winter camps, there was always singing, storytelling, and feasting. Dancing was and continues to be a favourite form of entertainment for many Métis people. Although they have many forms of traditional dances, the Métis are most famous for the Red River jig. This dance combines the intricate footwork of First Nations

*Métis dances, such as this one performed by the Edmonton Métis Cultural Dancers, are a way many people reinforce their common bond and cultural identity.*



dancing with the music of European reels and square dances. Traditionally, a jig would start in the early evening and not finish until dawn. The Scottish fiddle became a favourite Métis instrument. Most people could not afford to buy expensive imports, so they made their own out of maple and birch wood.

### The York Boat

The York boat is another Métis innovation. Developed by William Sinclair in 1835, the York boat replaced the birchbark canoe as the preferred mode of travel in the fur trade in some regions. The canoe was valued for its speed, but it lacked the strength and durability needed to handle thousands of kilograms of freight over rough water. As the fur trade expanded, so did the need for a stronger method of transportation. The York boat took its name from the Hudson's Bay Company's toughest trade route between York Factory and Norway House, Manitoba, where it was first used. The heavy York boat could be rowed or sailed, but it had to be dragged over portages, which earned it the nickname "the man killer" by those who had to do the work.

### The Red River Cart

One of the best-known symbols of Métis culture is the Red River cart, which was used to haul belongings or meat and hides back from buffalo hunts. The design of the cart was similar to those used in the Scottish Highlands and some parts of Quebec. The Métis version was made entirely of wood so it was easy to repair. The large, spoked wheels were fashioned so they would not sink into soft mud. Grease was not used on the axles because dirt would stick and seize the wheels. The carts became known for the high-pitched sound they made as they travelled.



*The Red River cart doubled as a raft when the wheels were taken off.*

## LOOKING BACK

In the early years of the fur trade, First Nations found the relationship with Europeans to be beneficial. New trade goods affected their quality of life in many positive ways. In addition, First Nations populations far outnumbered even the most populated European settlements and trading posts. If the relationship had not been positive, they could have easily turned the foreigners out or refused to assist them. Europeans needed First Nations help, so this refusal would have likely meant their death or quick return to their homelands.

However, over time, the changes experienced by First Nations were less positive. In small groups or as a class, discuss why First Nations did not end trade with Europeans and drive them away as soon as negative effects were apparent. In your answer, consider issues such as growing First Nations dependence on trade goods, kinship bonds between First Nations and Métis peoples and changing attitudes. Review pages 140–149 to find other ideas for your discussion.



## ABORIGINAL AND EUROPEAN RELATIONS (1763–1970)

1763	<b>Royal Proclamation</b> Recognizes the First Nations right to possess all land in British territories outside established colonies	1750
1857	<b>Gradual Civilization Act</b> Promotes the assimilation of First Nations peoples into Euro-Canadian society	1775
1867	<b>British North America Act</b> Unifies the British colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick into the Dominion of Canada and gives the Dominion government responsibility over First Nations peoples	1800
1869	<b>Gradual Enfranchisement Act</b> Outlines a policy of assimilation of First Nations peoples	1825
1869	<b>Red River Resistance</b> A Métis resistance led by Louis Riel rejects the Canadian government's claim to their land	1850
1870	<b>Manitoba Act</b> Creates the province of Manitoba and recognizes Métis land title in the province	1875
1871	<b>Treaty Number One</b> Signed by the federal government with the Anishinabé and Swampy Cree of southern Manitoba	1900
1871	<b>Treaty Number Two</b> Signed by the federal government with the Anishinabé of southwestern Manitoba	1925
1873	<b>Treaty Number Three</b> Signed by the federal government with the Anishinabé of northwestern Ontario	1950
1874	<b>Treaty Number Four</b> Signed by the federal government with the Cree and Anishinabé of southern Saskatchewan	1975
1875	<b>Treaty Number Five</b> Signed by the federal government with the Anishinabé and Cree of north-central Manitoba	
1876	<b>Treaty Number Six</b> Signed by the federal government with the Plains and Woodland Cree of central Alberta and Saskatchewan	
1876	<b>Indian Act</b> Consolidates all laws relating to First Nations and gives the federal government many political, economic, and social powers over First Nations people	
1877	<b>Treaty Number Seven</b> Signed by the federal government with the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Tsuu T'ina and Nakoda of southern Alberta	
1883	<b>Residential School Policy</b> Establishes the first residential schools for First Nations peoples in western Canada	
1885	<b>1885 Resistance</b> Establishes a Métis government at Batoche, which is defeated by federal government forces	
1885	<b>Riel's Execution</b> Riel is tried, found guilty of treason, and hanged	
1899	<b>Treaty Number Eight</b> Signed by the federal government with the Cree, Dunne-za, and Dene Sùliné of northern Alberta and northeastern British Columbia	
1905	<b>Treaty Number Nine</b> Signed by the federal government with the Dene Sùliné and Cree of north-central Ontario	
1906	<b>Treaty Number Ten</b> Signed by the federal government with the Dene Sùliné and Cree of northern Saskatchewan	
1921	<b>Treaty Number Eleven</b> Signed by the federal government with the Dené Tha', Tłı̨chǫ (Dogrib), Gwich'in (Loucheux), and Hare of the Mackenzie River Valley.	
1929–1930	<b>James Bay Treaty Number Nine</b> Signed by the federal government with the Anishinabé and Cree of northern Ontario	
1938	<b>Métis Population Betterment Act</b> Passed by the Alberta government to establish twelve Métis Settlements to improve living conditions for the province's Métis peoples	
1951	<b>Indian Act Revisions</b> Lift bans on political organizations and the ability of First Nations to sue the government	
1960	<b>First Nations Right to Vote</b> Receive right to vote in federal elections	
1969	<b>White Paper</b> Proposes ending all legal and constitutional rights related to First Nations, abolishing the Indian Act, and ending all federal government programs for First Nations peoples	
1970	<b>Red Paper</b> Consolidates the First Nations' response to the federal government's White Paper; demands that the special legal status of First Nations peoples be retained and all treaty obligations kept	

### Indigenous Knowledge

With your teacher's help, divide the events listed in the timeline among students in your class. Make each person responsible for expanding their section of the timeline with at least five significant ideas. Take turns typing the points in a file of class notes and give a copy of the notes to each student.