

## Background Information

**Teacher note: The purpose of this excerpt is to provide background information to support *Examining Cross-cultural Observations* MT. It is intended for use within the context of the *Modelling the Tools* resource only. Terminology found in the excerpt must be considered within the context of the historical time period.**

The following excerpt is intended to help students recognize that anthropological accounts are culturally sensitive and, as such, may reflect elements of cultural superiority, ethnocentrism and stereotyping. This account describes the differences between the temperament of French and First Nations people from the point of view of Father Gabriel Sagard (in italics).

### Feelings

There were some considerable differences in temperament exhibited by the French and the First Nations people. Whereas French men of the time often gave full vent to their emotions, and were typically unrestrained in their expressions of affection or anger, the Hurons were generally very reserved. After observing the quiet resolution, patience and calm of the Huron, Sagard wrote:

*This gave me much to reflect upon, and made me wonder at their firmness and the control they have of their feelings, and how well they can bear with one another and support and help one another if need be. And I can truly say that I found more good in them than I had imagined, and that the example of their patience often led me to force myself more resolutely to endure with cheerfulness and courage everything vexatious that happened to me, for the love of God and the edification of my neighbour.*

George M. Wrong, *The Long Journey to the Country of the Huron by Father Gabriel Sagard* (Toronto, 1939), pp. 206 and 58–59.

Adapted from Ruth Sandwell et al. *Early Contact and Settlement in New France* (Vancouver, BC: The Critical Thinking Consortium, 2002), pp. 33–60. Permission granted by The Critical Thinking Consortium for use by Alberta teachers.