

# Canada and the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples

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"The single greatest failure of the Canadian experiment, so far, has been our inability to normalize -- that is, to internalize consciously -- the First Nations as the senior founding pillar of our civilization,"

- *John Ralston Saul*

**"EDUCATION GOT US INTO THIS MESS AND EDUCATION WILL GET US OUT" – WHY ARE CANADIANS CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF RECONCILING WITH OUR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE?**

*Summary:*

- Since Europeans first arrived in North America, the people indigenous to the lands that now make up modern Canada were slowly assimilated; first by the French, then the British, and finally by the Canadian government. Now, our Indigenous people are making a comeback of sorts. This unit will focus on some of the basic questions surrounding our Indigenous people including:
  - o Who were the First Peoples and how did they structure their world prior to contact with the Europeans?
  - o What were the immediate and long-term impacts of European colonization on our Indigenous peoples?
  - o In what ways has the Canadian government attempted to assimilate the Indigenous people since Confederation?
  - o In what ways are Indigenous Canadians fighting back?

## Articles:

***The Wet'suwet'en conflict disrupting Canada's rail system***

- *BBC News, February 20, 2020*

***What makes me a Canadian settler***

- *David Moscrop in the Washington Post Feb. 27, 2020*

***Canadians will tire of disruptions, and Indigenous people will suffer***

- *Conrad Black in the National Post, February 28, 2020*

## Enduring Understandings in Focus in this Unit:

1. First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples play an ongoing role in shaping Canadian history and identity.
2. First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples have a long history in North America, and their diverse and complex cultures continue to adapt to changing conditions.
3. The oral traditions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples teach the importance of maintaining a balance among the emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of life.
4. The relationship between First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples moved from autonomous coexistence to colonialism to the present stage of renegotiation and renewal.
5. First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples have achieved constitutional recognition of their unique status as Aboriginal peoples in Canada, along with recognition and affirmation of their existing Aboriginal and treaty rights.

## Unit Structure:

1. Life before the Europeans
2. Aboriginal History from Contact with the Europeans to Confederation:
  - a. The Relationship with Early Explorers (Trade, Religion, Government) and with the French and British Colonial Governments
3. From Allies to Assimilation – The Aboriginal People and the New Dominion Government of Canada
4. Resistance
5. Political Resurgence and Current Topics