

Date Reviewed

February 2023

Course

[Social Studies 4](#)

Topic

British Columbia Joins Canada

Big Idea

British Columbia followed a unique path in becoming a part of Canada.

Essential Question

Was joining Canada the best decision for BC?

Learning Standards**Content**

Students are expected to know the following:

- economic and political factors that influenced the colonization of British Columbia and its entry into Confederation

Curricular Competencies

Students are expected to be able to do the following

- Differentiate between intended and unintended consequences of events, decisions, or developments, and speculate about alternative outcomes

Core Competencies

[Communication](#) - I can tell the story of how BC became part of Canada.

[Thinking](#) – I can analyze the causes and consequences of BC joining Canada.

[Personal and Social](#) - I can consider why we celebrate Canada Day.

First People's Principles of Learning

Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Introduction

- Show the video [Welcome home to Canada—Celebrate being Canadian](#) (2:16).

- Using a [Think Pair Share](#) strategy, have students discuss which scenes they connected with and why.

Pre-Assessment

- Ask, “How do we celebrate Canada Day?” (*responses may include: sing ‘O Canada’, wear red and white, parade, fireworks, picnic, sports...*)
- Then ask, “Why do we celebrate Canada Day on July 1st?” (*students may not be aware that we are celebrating Canada becoming a country—it’s Canada’s birthday*)
- Have students predict whether all the parts of Canada joined together at the same time.

Interactive Learning Activities

Part 1: How did Canada become a country?

- Provide students with access to Canadian Confederation Facts for Kids and the handout “How did Canada become a Country?”
- Read aloud each section and provide students with time to record notes on the handout.
- Go over the handout using “Answer Key: How did Canada become a Country?”

Part 2: Why did BC join Canada?

- Provide students with the handout “Reading: Why did BC join Canada?”
- Read aloud, stopping to ask clarifying questions such as:
 - Why did Great Britain lose interest in BC after the fur trade and gold rushes ended?
 - Why was the United States interested in BC?
 - Why was Canada interested in BC?
- Have students use words and images to show their understanding on the handout “Graphic Organizer: Why did BC join Canada?”
- Note that the First People of BC were not asked whether or not they wanted to join Canada. Joseph Trutch, BC’s first Lieutenant Governor, refused to negotiate treaties with First Nations. As a result, BC is the only province in Canada to exist on unceded land.

Post-Assessment

- Have students work with a partner or in small groups to create an advertising campaign to convince BC to join Canada in 1871.
- Remind them to focus on what Canada offered BC.
- Advertisements may include posters, brochures, radio ads, or moving pictures (videos).

Extension Activities

- Hold a debate about whether BC should have joined the United States or Canada or remained a British colony.

Additional References

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<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/british-columbia-and-confederation>

Materials and Resources

(see next pages)

How did Canada become a Country?

Read "How did Canada come together?"

Define the following terms:

Colony
British North America Act
Confederation

Read "What about Canada's Indigenous peoples?"

Define the following terms:

Treaties
Reserves
Residential Schools

Read "What was Canada before it united?"

Answer the following questions.

Which colonies joined to form Canada in 1867?
When did BC join Canada?

Answer Key: How did Canada become a Country?

Read "How did Canada come together?"

Define the following terms:

Colony <ul style="list-style-type: none">• group of people who make their home in a new land
British North America Act <ul style="list-style-type: none">• united colonies in 1867
Confederation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canada's union into a country on July 1, 1867

Read "What about Canada's Indigenous peoples?"

Define the following terms:

Treaties <ul style="list-style-type: none">• agreements between countries
Reserves <ul style="list-style-type: none">• small areas of land that First Nations were moved onto
Residential Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous children were taken from their families to learn to live like Europeans

Read "What was Canada before it united?"

Answer the following questions.

Which colonies joined to form Canada in 1867? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Province of Canada (Ontario & Quebec)
When did BC join Canada? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1871 (4 years later)

Reading: Why Did BC Join Canada?

As the Caribou Gold Rush in BC came to an end, new industries began to grow in its place. Former miners began farming in the fields and logging in the forests. These industries did not provide as much money as the gold rush. There wasn't enough money to build roads and create businesses. There were not enough people to buy land or pay taxes.

BC had to make a choice about what to do next.

Remain a British Colony

Great Britain was no longer interested in governing BC since it was costing them more and more money. The British government chose the leaders of the colony. BC no longer felt like their needs were being met by Great Britain.

Join the United States

The United States was interested in the land and resources of BC. To the south, the state of Washington was quickly filling up with settlers. To the north, the United States had bought Alaska. The United States wanted BC as a link between Alaska and the American states of the Pacific Northwest.

Join Canada

Canada was expanding across the prairies. The Canadian government wanted the country to go from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, so they wanted BC to join. Canada also wanted to prevent the US from taking over BC.

People in BC wanted:

- a country that would pay the colony's debts.
- a wagon road to connect BC to the rest of Canada.
- to be able to elect their own government and make their own decisions.

Canada agreed to:

- take on BC's debt and give them money every year
- build a railway across Canada to BC
- allow BC a provincial government as well as senators and members of Parliament in the federal government

BC decided to join Canada on July 20, 1871.

Graphic Organizer: Why did BC join Canada

Use words and images to complete the chart to show why BC decided to join Canada.

What did BC want?	What did Canada offer?