

Sir George-Étienne Cartier

Heritage Minute Learning Tool

Introduction

This learning tool complements **Historica Canada's** Sir George-Étienne Cartier Heritage Minute by exploring the role of Cartier in the negotiations surrounding Canada's Confederation.

This guide was made possible with the generous support of TD Bank Group, whose commitment to Canadian history and story-telling has been celebrated.

The role that Sir George-Étienne Cartier played in uniting the provinces of Canada is so extensive that it was impossible to choose only one achievement to commemorate. Therefore, the Heritage Minute features a series of Cartier's notable accomplishments.

◆ This statue of Sir George-Étienne Cartier, unveiled in 1885, was the first to be placed on Parliament Hill. Courtesy of Public Works and Government Services Canada.



◆ Sir John A. Macdonald reveals Cartier's statue in this Heritage Minute scene, created with the help of CGI (computer-generated imagery).

Extended Research

The Heritage Minute about Sir George-Étienne Cartier's role in the unfolding of Confederation across the country references several important events in his career. See if you can pick out what they are when viewing the Heritage Minute. You can watch the Heritage Minute here: www.heritageminutes.ca.

English Language Learners

English language learners may want to review the following terms to better understand the video:

Vast, Manitoba, British Columbia, diversity, envision, wagon road, bold, Confederation.

Make a timeline of the Cartier-related events noted in the Heritage Minute by exploring in-depth the list of topics below. For each entry on your timeline, see if you can provide one to three pieces of additional information related to that event. For example, when writing "led Québec into Confederation" you might add something like "was a close ally of Sir John A. Macdonald" and "attended both the Charlottetown and Québec Conferences." To further extend your research, try finding one or two events on your own to add to the timeline, in addition to the four main ones listed below.

Teacher Tip: Students can use a website of their choice individually or in groups to create interactive timelines on a computer, or they can create timelines on chart paper in the classroom. As an alternative, using an outline map of Canada from the period of Confederation, your students can make an annotated map, noting Cartier's achievements, the date, and where they took place.

Topics

1. Cartier's role leading Québec into Confederation
2. Cartier negotiating Manitoba's entry into Confederation
3. Cartier negotiating British Columbia's entry into Confederation
4. Cartier's contribution to the construction of a railway across Canada



Scenes from both the John A. Macdonald and the Cartier Heritage Minutes were filmed at Wycliffe College in Toronto.

Ranking Cartier's Achievements

After researching the importance of each of the events portrayed in the George-Étienne Cartier Heritage Minute, it's time to evaluate how significant they were in Canada's history.

Developing Criteria for Judgement

The **Historical Thinking Concept** of establishing historical significance is an important way to explore the past. This will be useful when deciding which event in Cartier's career was the most important.

As a group, determine two or three criteria to help you rank the events portrayed in the Heritage Minute. For example, you might consider the impact of the events (e.g. how long-lasting or transformative were they?) or the number of people that they affected.

Teacher Tip: Teachers may wish to discuss the criteria for assessing historical significance as a class before moving on to the next stage.

Rank the events noted in the Heritage Minute, in order of importance.

Work in groups of three to discuss and rank the four topics listed in the previous activity based on their impact on Canadian history. When you are ready, share your findings with the class. Be prepared to justify your choices.

In this Heritage Minute scene—a recreation of the Confederation debates in Québec City in 1865—Cartier faces off against Parti rouge leader Sir Antoine-Aimé Dorion.



A photograph of Sir George-Étienne Cartier taken in 1871, two years before his death. Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

Headlines

Newspaper headlines are short, informative, and should make a reader want to learn more about the story. Using the Heritage Minute as your guide, write a newspaper headline for each of the four topics listed in the first activity.

For example, if you were to make a headline about the Charlottetown Conference mentioned in the Sir John A. Macdonald Heritage Minute, you might write something like:

“Macdonald Brings Champagne to Charlottetown in the Hopes of Making a Nation”

Sometimes newspaper headlines have a secondary headline called a “deck” that gives more information. Feel free to add a second line if you want to use the two-headline style.

After you have made a headline for the events portrayed in the Heritage Minute, make one overall headline that captures the spirit of Sir George-Étienne Cartier. Be sure to share your results. Write them on newsprint and post them in the class if you like.



◊ Cartier led the negotiations that brought Manitoba and British Columbia into Confederation, depicted through imagined dialogue in these Heritage Minute scenes.



◊ Cartier shared Macdonald’s vision of a Canada united from sea to sea and was instrumental in realizing it.

Why This Heritage Minute?

Your teachers will assign one of the questions listed below to your work group. In your group, discuss the given question and write down your answers in point form. The class can then convene and share the questions and answers as a large group.

1. According to the Heritage Minute, Sir George-Étienne Cartier had a very large role in many important developments in Canadian history. However, more Canadians are familiar with Sir John A. Macdonald. Why do you think this is the case? Consider that in the Heritage Minute, John A. Macdonald says of Cartier, “Confederation could not have happened, but for him.”
2. In the Heritage Minute, Cartier says of Canada that “diversity will be Canada’s strength.” Do you think Cartier was correct?
3. In the Heritage Minute, Sir John A. Macdonald describes Cartier as being “bold as a lion.” What do you think this means? Is being “bold as a lion” a positive description?
4. Compare the Heritage Minute about Sir John A. Macdonald’s role in Confederation to the one about Sir George-Étienne Cartier’s role. How does the storytelling approach differ? In what ways are they similar? Which Heritage Minute do you prefer?

Take a class vote on the final question.



◊ Delegates of the legislatures of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland sit for a photograph at the Québec Conference in 1864. Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

Fun Facts

This is the only Heritage Minute shot in a montage style; every other Heritage Minute explores one single storyline or moment.

The famous 1884 painting by Robert Harris of the Fathers of Confederation prominently features John A. Macdonald standing in the centre. Seated next to him is George-Étienne Cartier.

After the Québec Conference in 1864 successfully concluded, Cartier hosted a celebration party and dinner for all the politicians in attendance.

In Montréal, there is an 87-foot statue of Cartier.

George-Étienne Cartier’s first name is not spelled with an ‘s,’ the French way, because he is named for King George III.

The final line of Macdonald’s speech in the Cartier Heritage Minute, “Canada, son pays, ses amours,” is adapted from Cartier’s patriotic song, “Ô Canada! mon pays, mes amours”

Activity questions in this learning tool are based on the Historical Thinking Concepts created by professor Peter Seixas. For more information visit: www.historicalthinking.ca

Speech Writing Activity

Situation

The 150th anniversary of Confederation takes place in 2017, and the Canadian government has decided to mark this anniversary by rededicating the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway (the 401). You have been asked to write a brief speech for the prime minister to deliver at the rededication ceremony. A rededication ceremony is one in which a monument or special place is remembered and celebrated once more.

Use the information you learned from watching the two Confederation Heritage Minutes, as well as your notes from previous activities, to write a one- or two-minute speech for the ceremony. Be sure to include quotations about both Cartier and Macdonald in your speech.

English Language Learners

English language learners can write a shorter version of the speech or write a postcard to the prime minister telling him why he should come to the highway to rededicate it.

- Actor Jean L'Italien played George-Étienne Cartier in both the French and English versions of the Heritage Minute.

- Traditional Ontario highway signposts signal the officially named Macdonald-Cartier Freeway.



DID YOU KNOW? The 401, Canada's busiest highway stretching from Windsor, Ontario, to the Québec border, is officially named the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway?

- The Fathers of Confederation**
Artist: Rex Woods, 1968, ©
House of Commons Collection, Ottawa

