

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

EDUCATION GUIDE



BEB COMMISSION



BORDEN ET SON ÂNE
Le Soleil, Quebec, 26 May 1917

Canadiens-Français
Enrolez-vous!

NOTRE PREMIÈRE LIGNE DE DÉFENSE EST EN FRANCE.



DAVIDSON DUNTON

Me. Moi + Canada

CANADIAN RADIO COMMISSION
Bilingual Program

GUIDE PÉDAGOGIQUE LA LOI SUR LES LANGUES OFFICIELLES

A PROJECT OF
UN PROJET DE HISTORICA
CANADA

WITH SUPPORT FROM
AVEC LE SOUTIEN DU

MESSAGE TO TEACHERS

This guide is an introduction to the *Official Languages Act* and the history of language policy in Canada, and is not exhaustive in its coverage. The guide focuses primarily on the Act itself, the factors that led to its creation, and its impact and legacy. It touches on key moments in the history of linguistic policy in Canada, though teachers may wish to address topics covered in Section 1 in greater detail to provide a deeper understanding of the complex nature of language relations. The complicated nature of recorded history and curricular requirements do not allow us to tell everyone's stories, and we hope that teachers will share other perspectives, experiences, and stories.

This guide complements provincial and territorial curricula in middle and high school history and social science classes. The historical thinking framework developed by Dr. Peter Seixas and the Historical Thinking Project has inspired classroom activities to promote research and analysis, engage in critical thinking, promote communication skills, and explore ethical questions. The lessons may be used sequentially or individually.

Historica Canada's bilingual education guides are part of a collaborative process that engages history educators, academic historians, and community stakeholders in content creation and lesson planning. This guide was developed in collaboration and consultation with Dr. Lindsay Gibson, Dr. Marcel Martel, Dr. Serge Miville, and Dr. Martin Pâquet.

NOTE ON LANGUAGE:

In this guide, the terms *francophone* and *French Canadian* are used interchangeably.

NOTE ON ACCESSIBILITY:

Accommodations for Special Education, English language learner, and English as a second language students are included under the appropriate sections, and identified as "**Modification.**" These tips are written for teachers. Many of the activities in this guide require advanced reading skills. Consider pairing language learners with stronger readers. Teachers may want to consider pre-teaching important words or concepts to help students understand the big ideas involved in these activities. Students may find it helpful to keep a personal dictionary.

COVER IMAGES:

SCHOOLCHILDREN PROTEST REGULATION 17 IN OTTAWA, LE DROIT, FEBRUARY 1916 [COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA/CRCCF/FONDS ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE DE L'ONTARIO/C002 PH2-144 C].

COMMISSION CO-SECRETARY NEIL MORRISON SPEAKS AT A BICULTURALISM MEETING IN SHERBROOKE, 1961 [COURTESY TORONTO STAR ARCHIVES/TSPA_0004124F/FRANK GRANT].

CARTOON ABOUT CONSCRIPTION FROM LE SOLEIL, QUEBEC, 26 MAY 1917.

GEORGE SHIELDS, THE EVENING TELEGRAM, TORONTO, 26 APRIL 1934 [COURTESY BEGBIE CONTEST SOCIETY].

DAVIDSON DUNTON, 1967 [COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/DUNCAN CAMERON FONDS/A209871].

EXCERPT FROM FIRST WORLD WAR RECRUITMENT POSTER FOR FRENCH CANADIANS, CA.1914-1918 [COURTESY RARE BOOKS & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS/MCGILL LIBRARY/WP1.R17.F3/ARTHUR H. HIDER].

REGULATION 17, ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, JUNE 1912 [COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA/CRCCF/FONDS ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE DE L'ONTARIO/C002 C2/82/71].

ANDRE LAURENDEAU, 1964 [COURTESY TORONTO STAR ARCHIVES/TSPA_0061834F/FRANK GRANT].

"LANGUAGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN, AND REMAINS, AT THE HEART OF THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE."

Graham Fraser,
former Commissioner
of Official Languages
(2006–2016)



FLAGS OF QUÉBEC AND LA FRANCOPHONIE, 2018
[DREAMSTIME.COM/JEROME CID/142899004].

Linguistic plurality is a cornerstone of modern Canadian identity, but the history of language in Canada is not a simple story. Today, English and French enjoy equal status in Canada, although this has not always been the case. The 50th anniversary of Canada's *Official Languages Act* (OLA) represents an opportunity to learn about the history that led to the Act, and its subsequent legacy.

Languages have long been a way for minority communities to hold onto cultural heritage, ancestral memories, and unique knowledge and traditions. Language has been used historically by Indigenous peoples and French-Canadian communities (and other diverse language communities) to resist a determined English-speaking Canadian society pushing to create a homogeneous British-Canadian national state. This history of resistance has helped define our social and political climate.

By the mid-20th century, Québec was the only francophone-majority province in Canada, but members of this population were largely excluded from elite decision-making structures and placed at an economic disadvantage compared with the province's powerful anglophone minority. In 1963, as the Quiet Revolution prompted a crisis of national unity, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson created the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in response to growing unrest among French Canadians in Québec.

The Commission revealed that French Canadians were not well represented in the economy or in the decision-making ranks of government. It also found that educational opportunities for francophone minorities outside Québec did not equal those provided for the anglophone minority in Québec, and that francophones across the country could neither find employment within nor be served adequately in their language by federal government agencies.

The *Official Languages Act* came into force on 7 September 1969, marking a turning point in Canadian linguistic history. The federal law gave French and English equal status as the two official languages of Canada, requiring all federal institutions to offer services in French and English, creating job opportunities for French Canadians, and offering greater economic opportunity to francophones across the country. It offered much-needed support to francophone communities outside Québec with access to few resources in French at the time. The Act also paved the way for Canada's multiculturalism policy, which was adopted by Pierre Trudeau's government in 1971, effectively recognizing the plurality of cultural identities in our country.

This guide explores the history, legacy, and continuing discussion about language relations and policy in Canada, while examining the impact of the *Official Languages Act* on communities across the country.



CHARLES ALEXANDER, "L'ASSEMBLÉE DES SIX COMTÉS À SAINT-CHARLES-SUR-RICHELIEU EN 1837", 1891. OIL ON CANVAS [COURTESY MUSÉE NATIONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS DU QUÉBEC/1937.54/PHOTOGRAPHE/MNBAQ/JEAN-GUY KÉROUAC].

ONLINE RESOURCES

Supplementary worksheets (noted in **bold** throughout) can be downloaded from the **Historica Canada Education Portal**. The following list of bilingual resources supports educators and students but is not exhaustive.

- **HISTORICA CANADA EDUCATION PORTAL:**
education.historicacanada.ca/en/tools/626
- **THE CANADIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA:**
thecanadianencyclopedia.ca (articles noted in **bold** throughout)
- **THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT (UPDATED IN 1988):**
laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/O-3.01/page-1.html
- **THE REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM:**
publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2014/bcp-pco/Z1-1963-1-5-4-1-eng.pdf
- **OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES:**
clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/index

LANGUAGE POLICY & RELATIONS IN CANADA: TIMELINE

TIME IMMEMORIAL

An estimated 300 to 450 languages are spoken by Indigenous peoples living in what will become modern Canada.

1497

John Cabot lands somewhere in Newfoundland or Labrador, marking the first English-sponsored voyage to present-day Canada.

1534

French explorer Jacques Cartier makes contact with Mi'kmaq peoples in modern-day Prince Edward Island. His diary indicates that some of the words used by the Mi'kmaq resemble Portuguese, suggesting contact with early European cod fishermen.

1627

A French edict creates the Compagnie des Cent-Associés, which is granted the colony of New France. The act indicates that Indigenous peoples who convert to Catholicism through the actions of missionaries become royal subjects who have to submit to French laws, including the use of the French language.

1749

In Nova Scotia, which includes most of the former French colony of Acadia, the British under governor Edward Cornwallis pass a colonial constitution that effectively makes English the only official language. French-speaking Acadians are expelled in 1755.

CA. 1750

Relationships between European fur traders and Indigenous women lead to the emergence of Métis culture. Over time, the Michif language evolves from European and Indigenous influences.

1760

The Articles of Capitulation of Montréal ensure that, despite the English capture of New France, the French language will continue to be used for legal documents and other materials that maintain legal continuity.

1763

The Treaty of Paris ends the Seven Years' War and officially hands most of New France to Great Britain. The agreement does not specify language usage in the new British colony of Québec.

1764

The *Quebec Gazette*, a bilingual newspaper that prints news and official notices, begins publication. It is the ancestor of the *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph*, which claims to be North America's oldest newspaper.

PETROGLYPHS
IN WRITING-ON-
STONE PROVINCIAL
PARK, ALBERTA.
[DREAMSTIME.COM/
PHOTAWA/12622594].

EXILE OF THE ACADIANS
FROM GRAND PRE [COURTESY
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA/C024549].

THE ACADIANS FROM GRAND PRE.

TERRITORIAL EVOLUTION,
1867 [LICENSED UNDER THE
OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENCE -
CANADA/COURTESY NATURAL
RESOURCES CANADA/HTTPS://
OPEN.CANADA.CA/DATA/EN/
DATASET/CB4B61C0-8893-11E0-
8E79-6CF049294510].

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT
[COURTESY PARLIAMENTARY
ARCHIVES/HL/PO/
PU/1/1867/30E31V1N5].

1774

The *Quebec Act* is passed by the British parliament. To maintain the support of the French-speaking majority in Québec, the act preserves freedom of religion and reinstates French civil law. Demands from the English minority that only English-speaking Protestants could vote or hold office are rejected.

THE MITRED
MINUET [COURTESY
LIBRARY AND
ARCHIVES
CANADA/
E01156641].



1791

The *Constitutional Act* divides Québec into Upper Canada (English majority) and Lower Canada (French majority). It allows voters and members of either legislature to be administered oaths in English or French.

1840

Based on the recommendations of the Durham Report, the *Act of Union* unites Upper and Lower Canada as the Province of Canada. Designed to assimilate the French-speaking population, Section 41 of the Act designates English as the only language allowed for government business.

1845

The Canadian legislature approves a motion asking permission from the British government to revoke Section 41 of the *Act of Union* in order to allow the use of French. Three years later, Queen Victoria gives her assent to legislation that gives Canadians control over language usage.

1849

At the opening of the Canadian legislative session, Governor General Lord Elgin reads the throne speech in English and French, the first time it had been presented bilingually since 1792. Texts of laws are published in both languages.

1857

The passage of the *Gradual Civilization Act* (formally the *Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes in the Province*) by the Province of Canada encourages enfranchisement for Status Indian men from the age of 21, which means speaking, reading, and writing English or French, voluntarily giving up treaty rights, and changing surnames for government approval.

1867

The Dominion of Canada is established on 1 July. Section 133 of the *British North America Act* permits the use of English and French in Parliament, the Québec legislature, and federal and Québec courts.

1870

The *Manitoba Act* allows the use of English and French in the new province's courts and legislature. Recognition of equal status for each language emerges from a list of rights issued by the provisional government led by Louis Riel.

TRIAL OF LOUIS RIEL
[COURTESY GLENBOW
ARCHIVES/NA-826-8].



1877

An amendment to the *Northwest Territories Act* provides equal status to English and French in the territorial courts. At this time, the Northwest Territories included present-day Alberta, Nunavut, Saskatchewan, and Yukon, as well as northern portions of present-day Manitoba, Ontario, and Québec.

1884

The federal residential school system for First Nations children is established. The first residential school, the Mohawk Institute, had opened to boarders in 1831. Students attending the boarding schools are instructed in English or French and punished for speaking Indigenous languages. Attendance is made compulsory in 1920. The last school closes in 1996.

1890

English becomes the only official language in Manitoba. Legislation eliminating public funding for Catholic schools, which included many French language students, provokes the Manitoba Schools Crisis, which leads to a compromise in 1896 that allows some language and religious instruction outside class hours.

1892

English becomes the only official language for education and legislation in the Northwest Territories.

LÉGISLATEURS FRANÇAIS AU MANITOBA DEPUIS 1870



FRENCH CANADIANS IN MANITOBA LEGISLATURE, CA. 1870-1927 [COURTESY GLENBOW ARCHIVES/NA-60-101].

ANDRE LAURENDEAU, 1964 ▶ [COURTESY TORONTO STAR ARCHIVES/TSPA_0061834F/FRANK GRANT].



1918

The *Civil Service Act* enacts reforms to federal public service hiring that emphasize an applicant's ability to work in English only, causing a decline in the percentage of French-speaking public servants.

1927

Ontario stops enforcing Regulation 17 and adopts recommendations of the Scott-Merchant-Côté Commission to give French instruction the same importance as English. The regulation is eliminated for good in 1944. Premier Kathleen Wynne issues a formal apology in 2016 for Regulation 17.

1959

Parliament introduces simultaneous interpretation in the House of Commons, allowing MPs to speak in either French or English.

1963

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism is launched by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson. Better known as the "Bi and Bi" or "B&B" Commission, it spends the next seven years investigating ways to strengthen the equality of English and French. Major reports are released in 1967 and 1968.

1973

The Resolution on Official Languages in the Public Service of Canada allows public servants to work in their preferred official language, increasing the use of French.

1974

The Québec National Assembly passes Bill 22, which makes French the official provincial language. It allows public signage to include another language alongside French.

1974

The *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act* legislates bilingual information on consumer products.

1977

Premier René Lévesque's government passes Bill 101, the *Charter of the French Language*, in the Québec National Assembly. All public advertising and signage are required to be in French. Education in English is limited to children who have a parent that attended English elementary schools in the province.



POLITICAL BUTTON FROM 1987 MEECH LAKE ACCORD [COURTESY CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY/2009.7.46/IMG2010-0082-0079-DM].



EMBLEM OF NEW BRUNSWICK [DREAMSTIME.COM/MAXIM GREBESHKOV/130380332].

1990

The failure of the Meech Lake Accord, which would have recognized Québec as a distinct society, leads to a second unsuccessful attempt to gain Québec's consent to sign the 1982 constitution (Charlottetown Accord, 1992) and the 1995 referendum on Québec independence.

2002

New Brunswick revises its *Official Languages Act*, updating it to create an Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, allowing citizens to receive health care in both languages, and mandating a review of the legislation every 10 years. Moncton becomes Canada's first officially bilingual city.

2007

Ontario creates the position of French Language Services Commissioner to improve francophone services. The position is eliminated in 2018.

2008

Prime Minister Stephen Harper issues an apology for the federal government's role in operating residential schools, recognizing their long-term effects on Indigenous culture and languages.

1912

Ontario institutes Regulation 17, making English the official language of the province's public education system beyond the first two years of elementary school. An amendment the following year allows French to be studied one hour each day.

1914

The 22e Battalion (later Royal 22e Régiment) is formed to participate in the First World War. Sent to Belgium the following year, it would be the only francophone unit of the Canadian Expeditionary Force to fight on the front lines.

1916

The passage of the *Thornton Act* abolishes bilingual education in Manitoba. French is not to be restored as an equal language to English in the province until 1970.

1916

During the Battle of the Hatpins, parents take over Guigues Elementary School in Ottawa to support the refusal of teachers Béatrice and Diane Desloges to teach their francophone students in English. For several weeks, mothers armed with hatpins and scissors prevent police from entering the school. The provincial government abandons its attempt to enforce language restrictions at the school.

Roman Catholic Separate Schools and English-French Public and Separate Schools

CIRCULAR OF INSTRUCTIONS
For the School Year September to June, 1919-1920

◀ REGULATION 17, ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, JUNE 1912 (COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA/CRCCF/FONDS ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE DE L'ONTARIO/C002 C2/82/71).



◀ LA FRANCOPHONIE (LICENSED UNDER THE OPEN GOVERNMENT LICENCE - CANADA/COURTESY NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA/HTTPS://WWW.NRCAN.GC.CA/EARTH-SCIENCES/GEOGRAPHY/ATLAS-CANADA/EXPLORE-OUR-MAPS/REFERENCE-MAPS/16846).

1969

Under the leadership of Acadian premier Louis Robichaud, New Brunswick becomes officially bilingual. It is the culmination of efforts by Robichaud to strengthen the access of francophone New Brunswickers to government services, efforts that include opening the Université de Moncton in 1963.

1969

Based on a recommendation from the B&B Commission, the federal government under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau passes the *Official Languages Act*, which provides bilingual access to all federal services. The Act also creates the position of the Commissioner of Official Languages, which is filled by Keith Spicer in 1970.

1970

Canada is one of 21 countries that establish La Francophonie, an international organization charged with fostering cultural, educational, scientific, and technological co-operation among francophones.

1971

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau introduces a national multiculturalism policy, recognizing the importance of cultural and linguistic groups outside of English and French communities.

1980

On 20 May, Québec's Parti Québécois government asks for a mandate to "negotiate a new constitutional agreement with the rest of Canada, based on the equality of nations." Nearly 60% of Quebecers vote against separatism in the referendum.

1982

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is included as part of the new Canadian Constitution. It reinforces federal bilingual policy, and, via Section 23, protects the rights of parents where English or French are minority languages to have their children educated in their language.

1984

The Northwest Territories passes an ordinance guaranteeing the right to bilingual territorial services. This right is extended in 1990 to nine Indigenous languages.

1988

The *Official Languages Act* is revised to reflect the implementation of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* by updating the rights of the public to bilingual federal services and promoting the use of both languages in general.

CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

◀ CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS (COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/ROBERT STACEY FONDS/CROWN COPYRIGHT/R11274-148/1 OF 3).

◀ LOGO OF THE UNITED NATIONS (HTTPS://COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKI/FILE:UN_EMBLEM_BLUE.SVG).

◀ INUKSHUK NEAR ARVIAT, NUNAVUT (DREAMSTIME.COM/SOPHIA GRANCHINHO/119254135).

2008

The Nunavut legislature passes its *Official Languages Act*, giving official status to English, French, and Inuktitut. The *Inuit Language Protection Act* guarantees the right to education in Inuktitut and promotes the revitalization of the language.

2016

Alban Michael, the last fluent speaker of the Nuchatlacht language, passes away in Campbell River, British Columbia. While forced to learn English at a residential school, he maintained his ability to speak in Nuchatlacht to communicate with his mother.

2016

Indigenous Affairs minister Carolyn Bennett announces that Canada fully supports the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which recognizes the right to maintain and support Indigenous languages. Stephen Harper had given his endorsement in 2010, but with qualifications that gave Canada "objector" status.

2019

In February 2019, the federal government tables legislation for an *Indigenous Languages Act*, which receives royal assent on Indigenous Peoples Day (21 June 2019).

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS:

Turning Points:

A turning point marks a specific moment that signals the start of something new; the significant moment when something begins to change.

Historical Significance:

Historical Significance is a measure of what makes someone or something important in a historical narrative. People and events in the past are historically significant if they created change that affected many people over time, or if they reveal something about larger issues in history or the present day. However, historical significance is subjective: what is significant to one group may not be to another.

Historical Significance Criteria:

- **Prominence:** Was the person or event recognized as significant at the time? Why or why not? What did it mean to be “significant”?
- **Consequences:** What effect(s) did the person or event have?
- **Impact:** How widespread and long-lasting was the person or event’s impact?
- **Revealing:** What does the person or event reveal about the larger historical context or current issues? How do they inform our understanding of a historical issue or period?¹

- Seven Years War and the Treaty of Paris (Battle of the Plains of Abraham)
- Royal Proclamation 1763
- Treaty of Utrecht
- Quebec Act 1774
- Treaty of Versailles (Peace of Paris) – American Revolution
- Constitutional Act, 1791
- Acadian Expulsion
- French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars

- Industrial Revolution (Immigration from the UK)
- 1837–38 Rebellions (Parti Patriote and the rise of French-Canadian nationalism)
- Durham Report and the Act of Union
- Confederation (British North America Act)
- Settlement of the West
- Red River Resistance
- Northwest Resistance
- South African War (Boer War)
- Ontario Schools Question
- Manitoba Schools Question

- New Brunswick Schools Question
- First World War (Conscription)
- Wilfrid Laurier – First Francophone prime minister
- Second World War (Conscription)
- Quiet Revolution
- 1971 Multiculturalism Policy
- New Brunswick Bilingual Acts
- Bill 22 and Bill 101
- 1982 Constitution Act
- Québec Referendum (1980)
- Québec Referendum (1995)

Section 1:

LANGUAGE RIGHTS AND POLICY IN CANADIAN HISTORY

In this section we will explore the historical context of language rights and policies in Canada in the context of the Official Languages Act.

ACTIVITY 1:

HISTORICAL LANGUAGE RELATIONS

Language rights have been at the core of Canadian history and have long been significant in shaping this land. Our linguistic and cultural history is entwined with the fight for minority rights, and many pivotal events in Canadian history are intrinsically linked to that struggle. Today, Canada is officially bilingual, but how did we get to where we are today? Which events, ideas, and developments have been the most instrumental in shaping Canada as we know it? What were the most significant events in the evolution of our current language policy? In this activity, we will investigate events in Canadian history and assess the significance of these events in terms of French-English language rights.

1. Each student in the class will investigate a different point from the timeline on pages 3-5, or select a topic from the list below.
2. To give yourself a grounding in the topic, read **Language Policy** as well as the article about your selected topic on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Be sure to take notes on the larger historical context of the event, and how it fits into the bigger picture of Canada’s history. This may help you understand why an event affected language rights and policies.
3. Using your research, complete the **Historical Significance: Language Rights Chart**, available on the **Education Portal**. Use the **Historical Significance Criteria** (see left) to assess the event’s significance in terms of French-English language rights.
4. If you are continuing to Activity 2, skip this step. If not, present your event to the class in a one- to two-minute presentation, making sure to explain context, what happened, and why the event is historically significant for language rights or policy.

Modification: Choose a specific event from the timeline and prepare a version of that text (e.g., reduced format, chunked, highlighted) for language learner students. Provide a partially completed 5Ws chart and give students alternative ways of sharing their knowledge.

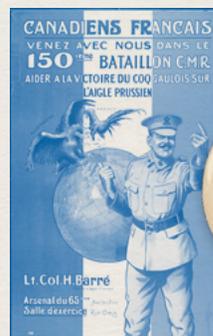


POSTER ADVERTISING MANITOBA TO DUTCH IMMIGRANTS [COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/E00000739].

MAP OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA, ENGRAVED FOR THE CANADIAN ALMANAC, 1867 [COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/E007913930].



FIRST WORLD WAR RECRUITMENT POSTER FOR FRENCH CANADIANS, A.G.R., CA, 1914-1918 [COURTESY RARE BOOKS & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS/MCGILL LIBRARY/WP1.R40.F7].



POLITICAL BUTTON FROM 1980 QUEBEC REFERENDUM [COURTESY CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY/981.10.142/IMG2015-0272-0037-DM].



¹ Adapted from “Considering Significance,” TC2, https://tc2.ca/pdf/T3_pdfs/EHT_TheGreatestHits.pdf

ACTIVITY 2 : PROGRESS AND DECLINE

In this activity, you will use the events you investigated in Activity 1 to build a Progress and Decline timeline and explore change and continuity in French-English language rights.

1. As a class, use the events you investigated in Activity 1 to build a human timeline.
2. Individually, write the details of your event on a cue card (be sure to include the date!), and line up with your classmates to form a chronological timeline.
3. In order, you will explain your event to your classmates, making sure to suggest causes, explain historical context, what happened, and why the event is historically significant for language rights or policy.
4. Once everyone has presented, work together as a class to rank each event in terms of whether it indicated progress or decline toward language equality in Canada by assigning each event positive or negative point values. Rank the events on a scale from -3 to +3 by assigning them values based on whether they led to more language equality (progress, +) or inequality (decline, -).
5. Next, create a visual Progress and Decline timeline by taping your cue cards in chronological order along a timeline (on a blackboard or a wall). Events with higher progress ratings will be placed above the time axis, and those with decline ratings below. When you're finished, your timeline will look like a graph, with highs and lows representing the most and least progressive moments.

Modification: Prepare a partially completed cue card in advance. Ask students to report on only one or two key ideas relating to their event. Provide support to help students understand the ranking scale and interpret the final human timeline.

FRONT PAGE OF THE FIRST EDITION OF L'OUEST CANADIEN, THE FIRST FRENCH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER IN ALBERTA, 14 FEBRUARY 1889 [COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA LIBRARIES DIGITAL COLLECTIONS/HDL. HANDLE.NET/10719/2745333].



6. Once you have a visual representation of your timeline, look through the events for similarities and continuities across time, as well as events that marked big changes (turning points).
 - Together, identify key patterns and trends along the timeline, as well as moments that mark a big change.
 - Which of the presented events and developments could be considered turning points in terms of language equality or inequality in Canada's history?
 - Identify the three most important continuities and three most important changes over time in terms of language policy in Canada.
 - Identify the three most significant developments for language minorities. Are they progress or decline events? What does this tell you about the history of Canada's language policy?
 - Which events were most important in bringing about change in language policy?
7. Have a class discussion to analyze the importance of the events and how they influenced language rights in Canada. Does the class agree on which events represent progress, and which represent decline?

COUNCILLORS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF THE MÉTIS NATION [COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/PA-012854].



EXTENSION ACTIVITY: PERIODIZATION

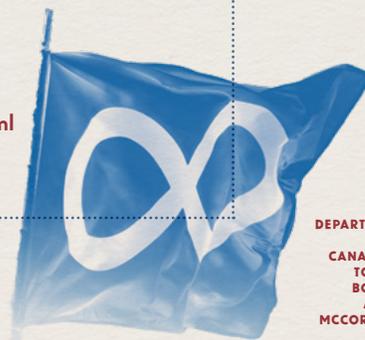
Periodization is the process of dividing the past into distinct categories of time. Your visual timeline will show trends and change over time. Using your analysis of change and continuity from step 6, identify turning points that mark the start of a new period, and divide the events on your timeline into eras. Can the history of language policy be easily divided into historical periods? Do trends continue for long periods of time, or is change the greater constant?

DID YOU KNOW? MICHIF

The Métis people are descendants of European and Indigenous peoples and are one of the legally recognized Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The development of a distinct Métis identity, including Métis dialects and languages, and the subsequent struggle to preserve their identity, rights, and land helped shape the history of Western Canada. Métis people have spoken many languages and dialects, including French, English, Cree, Bungi, Brayet, Ojibwa, and Michif. Bungi, Brayet, and Michif blended Indigenous languages with European languages. Michif is an endangered language, though revitalization efforts are underway. Learn more about Michif by reading the articles below. Is the language protected today? What is the current state of the language?

thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/michif
ameriquefrancaise.org/en/article-532/The_Heritage_of_Métis_Language_in_Western_Canada.html
collectionscanada.gc.ca/stories/020020-2000-e.html

MÉTIS FLAG [DREAMSTIME.COM/MANON & RINGUETTE/95119749].



CHARLES HUOT, LE DÉBAT SUR LES LANGUES, CA. 1910-1913. OIL ON CANVAS [COURTESY MUSÉE NATIONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS DU QUÉBEC/1957.23/ PHOTOGRAPHE MNBAQ/JEAN-GUY KÉROUAC].



DEPARTURE FROM QUÉBEC CITY OF THE FIRST CANADIAN CONTINGENT TO EMBARK FOR THE BOER WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA [COURTESY MCCORD MUSEUM/M627].



ACTIVITY 3 :

SPOTLIGHT ON THE “SCHOOLS QUESTIONS”: ONTARIO, MANITOBA, AND NEW BRUNSWICK

The *British North America Act* of 1867 and the subsequent creation of new provinces and territories formed the Canada we know today. The linguistic balance set out at Confederation soon deteriorated, leaving francophones outside of Québec (and other minority-language populations) under threat. Not only did these communities face discrimination, but threats to their continued survival abounded. Cuts to language education were the weapon of choice: New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Ontario all saw the restriction — or even complete erasure — of French-language education in their respective school systems. These controversial laws disallowing French in schools lasted for decades and had disastrous effects on francophone communities.

Ontario’s 1912 Regulation 17 severely restricted the use of French as a language of instruction and communication in schools. By 1916, Franco-Ontarians in Ottawa had had enough, and decided to resist. Learn more about the Battle of the Hatpins by watching the video, available on [youtube.com/playlist?list=PLiE7YBxN9zmL42B1Gx6m07rl-ivaj7P3j](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLiE7YBxN9zmL42B1Gx6m07rl-ivaj7P3j).

In 1871, New Brunswick restricted access to separate schools used by Acadians. In 1890, Manitoba abolished funding for Catholic schools as well as the legislative and judicial bilingualism negotiated by Louis Riel. The Act that created Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905 restricted public funding for separate schools. Ontario’s Regulation 17 severely restricted the use of French as a language of instruction. The beleaguered francophone communities were under attack from an active and vocal English-speaking Canadian society trying to create a homogeneous state, but they were determined not to give in.

Modification: Pair language learners with stronger readers and rephrase the discussion questions using simpler wording. Provide a handout with sentence starters that match key words in the article. Give students the option to share their results orally, using a slideshow tool, or visually.

“GARDIENNES DE GUIGUES,” INCLUDING THE DESLOGES SISTERS, 1916 (COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA/CRCCE/FONDS ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE DE L’ONTARIO/C002 PH2-954).



1. Divide the classroom into three groups. Each group will be assigned one of the three “Schools Questions.” Read *The Canadian Encyclopedia* article that your group is assigned:
 - New Brunswick Schools Question: [thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/new-brunswick-school-question](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/new-brunswick-school-question)
 - Manitoba Schools Question: [thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/manitoba-schools-question](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/manitoba-schools-question)
 - Ontario Schools Question: [thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ontario-schools-question](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ontario-schools-question)
2. Together, complete the **Schools Questions 5Ws Chart**, available on the **Education Portal**, for the crisis you studied.
3. In your group, discuss the following:
 - What did these measures mean for the French-speaking communities they affected? What was the significance for language rights in Canada?
 - What happened? What led to the crisis, and what was the result?
 - Why was it important to people on both sides of the equation to fight for the removal or the preservation of minority language instruction?
 - Why do you think having access to education in one’s language is essential for the survival of that language?
 - What did the crisis reveal about attitudes toward and values about language in Canada at the time?
4. Together, write a news exposé on the crisis. Choose one person to act as newscaster, and record the exposé to share with your class.

Section 2:

TOWARD BILINGUALISM – THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM AND THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

In this section, we will examine the Official Languages Act, how it came to be, and why it happened when it did.

ACTIVITY 4 :

ANALYZING LANGUAGE RELATIONS THROUGH CARTOONS

By the early 20th century, hundreds of years of tensions between French- and English-Canadian communities led to divided public opinion. The interests of the groups were often portrayed as competing, and national bilingualism remained controversial. Unrest grew in French communities as they advocated for the protection of their language and more opportunities in federal institutions.

The linguistic tensions in the decades preceding the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (the B&B Commission) inspired many political cartoons, which often poked fun at cultural and linguistic divisions. These cartoons are useful illustrations of the perspectives of both English and French Canadians in their respective contexts at the time. They are especially good at showcasing the tensions that led to the B&B Commission.

1. Working in pairs, analyze one French and one English cartoon. Find the cartoons with the **Cartoon Analysis Chart**, available on the **Education Portal**, and explore them in depth and assess perceptions about language minorities at the time.



GEORGE SHIELDS, ► THE EVENING TELEGRAM, TORONTO, 26 APRIL 1934 (COURTESY BEGBIE CONTEST SOCIETY).

2. Political cartoons from the past are taken out of their original context, making it important to put a cartoon back into context so we can interpret it correctly. Before you analyze the cartoons, do some research: When was it created? Where was it created? What was happening at the time that this cartoon was produced? Why do you think this cartoon was created?

Discussion Question: These cartoons show only one person’s perspective on a topic, but in some cases it can be representative of a wider, shared opinion. Can we take these cartoons as representative of how the different groups perceived each other?

ACTIVITY 4 : CONTINUED

Modification: Pre-teach the elements of political cartoons prior to this activity (e.g., caption, labels, symbols, stereotypes, caricatures, etc.). Choose a specific cartoon that is easier to interpret to practise the skills required in this activity.

Extension Activity: As a primary source, political cartoons are evidence of beliefs and views of the past. Have a class discussion about the value of political cartoons as primary sources. What can political cartoons reveal about people and events in the past? What value do political cartoons offer for helping us understand how different world views are represented? What value do these cartoons have in helping us understand the political climate in Canada at the time?

ACTIVITY 5 : ROYAL COMMISSION ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM: CAUSES

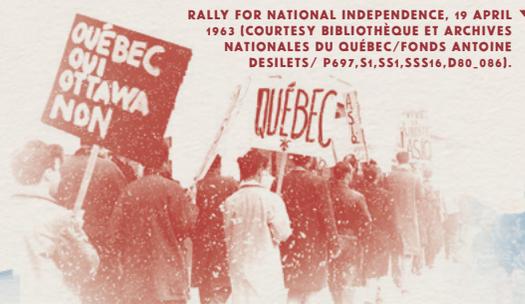
In the wake of the Quiet Revolution and the discontent of francophone communities across the country, the B&B Commission was called to address the cultural, academic, and economic gap between English- and French-Canadian communities. Two commissioners were appointed to lead the commission: André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton. As the Commission put it, their work was the result of “the greatest crisis in Canadian history.”

Modification: Allow Special Education and new language learner students to pre-read this article using FluentU, Read & Write, or another similar digital reading and decoding tool.

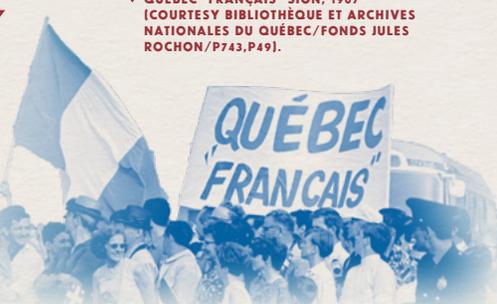
1. As a class, read the **Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism** article on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. You can also refer back to your research in Section 1. Using the information from the article, list the factors that led to the creation of the commission.
2. Break the class into three groups, and have each group investigate one of the immediate causes of the B&B Commission.
3. With your group, evaluate the historical significance of the cause you are investigating. How important was this cause? Was it a short-term or a long-term cause?
4. Form new groups of three, with each member coming from a different home group. Take turns presenting your cause to your new group. Once you have all presented, compare your causes. How do they relate to each other? Which was the most influential? Which were immediate causes, and which were long-term causes? How did one influence the other?



▶ **ANDRÉ LAURENDEAU AND DAVIDSON DUNTON, DEC. 1967** (COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/DUNCAN CAMERON FONDS/A209871).



▼ **RALLY FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, 19 APRIL 1963** (COURTESY BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ARCHIVES NATIONALES DU QUÉBEC/FONDS ANTOINE DESILETS/P697,S1,S51,S5516,D80_086).



▼ **QUÉBEC “FRANÇAIS” SIGN, 1967** (COURTESY BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ARCHIVES NATIONALES DU QUÉBEC/FONDS JULES ROCHON/P743,P49).

ACTIVITY 6 : ROYAL COMMISSION ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM: VIDEO ACTIVITY

It's important to look at perspectives and perceptions about the commission to provide us with more context about what language relations looked like in Canada at the time. The commission emerged as a reply to longstanding issues and the relationships Canadians have had with language. The commissioners were tasked with evaluating why French Canadians were at a disadvantage. They did so by evaluating bilingualism in the federal government; exploring the role of organizations in promoting French-English relations; and assessing opportunities for Canadians to become bilingual.

1. Watch the **B&B Commission video**, available on YouTube at [youtube.com/playlist?list=PLiE7YBxN9zmL42B1Gx6m07rl-ivaj7P3j](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLiE7YBxN9zmL42B1Gx6m07rl-ivaj7P3j), taking notes on the perspectives you see in the video.
2. Beginning with *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, and continuing with research online, gather evidence to corroborate or refute the perspectives presented in the video.
 - What did people think of the commission? Were these perspectives unified along linguistic fronts? Did these perspectives change over the course of the commission?
3. Individually or in small groups, create an advertisement for or against the B&B Commission from one perspective you encountered. Your advertisement could take the form of a radio ad, a newspaper ad, a magazine ad, a TV ad, etc. Get creative, and use both visuals and words to get your ideas across.
4. Choose the perspective you want to represent in your advertisement, as well as the audience you would target (e.g., French-speaking minority in Ontario). Make sure that your ad is a believable representation of this voice, and try to capture the values and beliefs that influence this view. Why would they have thought this way? In your advertisement, include why you think the commission is important (or not), and why it was relevant (or not) in the Canadian context at the time.

Modification: Provide a list of items to look for before watching the video, as well as a list of criteria for success related to the final advertisement activity.



▶ **ROYAL COMMISSION ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM PRESS CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 1969** (COURTESY LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/DUNCAN CAMERON FONDS/E01130326).

ACTIVITY 7:

THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT: PERSPECTIVES

The B&B Commission found massive social, economic, and educational inequalities for francophone Canadians. This led to a new mission of bringing sweeping change to language policy at federal and provincial levels, changes to French education across the country, the creation of a federal Department of Multiculturalism, and the *Official Languages Act* (OLA). The passage of the Act in 1969 meant that federal institutions were required to offer services in both English and French. The Act also put in place the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages to oversee application of the Act and investigate complaints from citizens about linguistic parity. If the Act aimed to put in place a national standard for bilingualism, it affected diverse communities differently and had varying reception across the country. Minority French and English communities acquired new tools and resources to preserve language and culture, and access to new opportunities. However, communities that spoke languages other than French and English were excluded. Many Indigenous and European communities across the country (particularly the large Ukrainian population in the Prairies) felt they deserved linguistic recognition as well.

1. Start your research by reading the “Changes Following the Commission” section of the **Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism** article on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, and the **Legacy of the Official Languages Act Worksheet**, available on the **Education Portal**.
2. Next, examine the infographics and data in the **OLA Perspectives Worksheet**, available on the **Education Portal**. You may also want to read the text of the *Official Languages Act*, available at laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/O-3.01/page-1.html.
3. Examine the different perspectives on the OLA. What do the data say about perception of the OLA? Is opinion across the country the same, or does it vary depending on the community? How did people react to the Act? Why might they react that way?
4. Meet in small groups and discuss why examining different perspectives is important in helping us understand reactions to the OLA. Answer the following questions, taking notes you can use in Step 5.
 - How do you think different communities might have reacted to the OLA? Consider the various types of official language communities as well as minority language communities that did not speak French or English. How did the Act affect day-to-day life in these communities?
 - Why might people have such differing views? What consequences might have led to a negative perspective (e.g., someone lost their job in the federal public service because they didn't speak French)? What result might have led to a positive view (e.g., education in French became easier to access in New Brunswick)?
5. Individually, write a letter to the editor of a newspaper defending or criticizing the OLA from the perspective of someone from a particular community (e.g., from the perspective of a minority language group in Québec, from an Indigenous community, etc.). Be specific in the arguments you make! Use the **Writing an Effective Letter to the Editor Worksheet** to craft your letter, available on the **Education Portal**.

Modification: Provide a modified or reduced text copy of the required reading.

ACTIVITY 8:

WAS THE B&B COMMISSION SUCCESSFUL?

The B&B Commission initially set out to look over three main areas of linguistic policy in Canada, and to “inquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership...”² A half-century later, we can assess if the commission was able to bring about meaningful change and if the resulting *Official Languages Act* accomplished what the commission intended it to.

PART A:

1. As a class, read the “Evolution of English-French bilingualism in Canada from 1961 to 2011” study, available here: www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2013001/article/11795-eng.htm
2. Together, look at the statistics on bilingualism in Canada and in each province and territory in 2016:
 - Canada: clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/statistics/canada
 - By province and territory: clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/statistics/province-territory
3. What do these statistics tell you about the state of bilingualism in Canada? Is it higher or lower than you expected? What has changed since 1961? What continues to change?

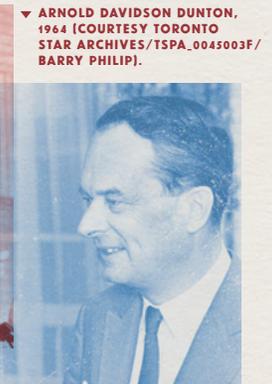
INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

About 70 Indigenous languages are spoken in Canada today, grouped into roughly 12 language families. These languages have a much longer history in this land than English or French. Indigenous languages were harshly suppressed by settlers in the past, resulting in a steep decline in the number of speakers and in language transmission from generation to generation. Much knowledge was lost with the erasure of these languages. However, Indigenous people across the country are working hard to revitalize and share these languages today.

When the *Official Languages Act* was developed in the late 1960s, it did not include these languages or their history. Did the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism recommend including Indigenous languages in the *Official Languages Act*? What does the Act include about Indigenous languages? Was there an Indigenous commissioner appointed to the B&B Commission?



ANDRE LAURENDEAU, 1964
(COURTESY TORONTO STAR ARCHIVES/TSPA_0061834F/
FRANK GRANT).



ARNOLD DAVIDSON DUNTON,
1964 (COURTESY TORONTO
STAR ARCHIVES/TSPA_0045003F/
BARRY PHILIP).

BILINGUAL STOP SIGN ON PARLIAMENT
HILL (DREAMSTIME.COM/VLADIMIR
BONDARENCO/151788179).



LANGUAGE PROTEST IN
OTTAWA, 1981 (COURTESY
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA/TED GRANT FONDS/
E010934556).

² <http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pco-bcp/commissions-ef/dunton1967-1970-ef/dunton1967-70-vol-eng/dunton1967-70-vol-part2-eng.pdf>, Page 173-174 (pages 82-83 of PDF)

PART B:

1. Divide the class into small groups. Each group will be assigned one of the three target areas of the B&B Commission:
 - The extent of bilingualism in the federal government
 - The role of public and private organizations in promoting better cultural relations
 - The opportunities for Canadians to become bilingual in English and French
2. Using the **Royal Commission Worksheet**, available on the **Education Portal**, in your group, develop criteria to determine if the target was successful. For example, were more jobs created for francophone workers in the federal government? Were Canadians given more opportunities to learn French?
3. Once you've determined your criteria, start your research by reading the **Legacy of the Official Languages Act Worksheet**, available on the **Education Portal**. Continue your research online, looking at what and how change came about, or if the situation has remained unchanged. You can look at both federal and provincial levels.
4. After compiling your research and analyzing the success of your target area, form new groups of three, with each member from a different home group. Together, discuss the findings of your respective research.
5. After you've discussed your conclusions, write a short group report highlighting what you think were the biggest successes of the commission and what areas might be improved.

Modification: Provide a reduced or partially completed set of criteria in the worksheet, taking specifics from the **Legacy of the Official Languages Act Worksheet**. Pair new language learner students with stronger speakers to help them in the fourth step of Part B.

ACTIVITY 9 :

THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT: RELEVANCE TODAY

In the 50 years since the *Official Languages Act* was enacted, Canada has grown and changed. Discussions around the relevance of the Act have come to the forefront: Canada is a different country than it was just a few decades ago. Issues such as reconciliation and multiculturalism that weren't addressed in the Act are now prominent in our national discourse. Does the Act still represent Canada's linguistic landscape?

STREET SIGN IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE IN
TORONTO'S CHINATOWN (DREAMSTIME.COM/
JEROME CID/113402039).



Option 1: Discussing the Official Languages Act

Have a U-shaped discussion about the *Official Languages Act*: Is it relevant in its current form? Should the OLA be kept as is, or revised?

1. Individually, conduct research, beginning with *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (and expanding your research to the library, online, and elsewhere), on languages, language policy, and demographics in Canada today. Compile your research and take notes. Make sure to write down your sources! Consider:
 - How current issues and perceptions of bilingualism, multiculturalism, Canadian identity, and multiple language rights might shape the OLA. What about Indigenous language rights?
 - Whether you would argue for or against changing the Act. If you are in support of the Act, you must have evidence to defend its relevance; if you are arguing for change, you must have evidence to show why it is no longer relevant.
2. Once you have done your research, decide where you stand on the issue.
3. Arrange the desks in your classroom (or clear a space to sit on the floor) in a U-shape. One end of the U will represent "Keep the OLA as it is," and the other side "Change the OLA."
4. Take a seat according to your view on the proposition: if you agree strongly with one view, take a seat at the tip of the U; if you have mixed views, take a seat along the rounded part.
5. Students at each tip of the U will state their position, explaining why they have chosen to support or change the OLA.
6. Alternate from side to side, so everyone has a chance to share their position. However, you may choose to move up or down the U as you hear arguments from your classmates that cause you to want to shift your position on the issue.

Teacher Tip: If there is an imbalance in strong support for one side or the other, put yourself in one of the polar positions to get the discussion going.

Modification: Consider having a practice U-shaped debate using a familiar topic before students debate the OLA in class.

Option 2: Creating a New Languages Policy

From waves of immigration to Indigenous language revitalization, Canada is home to a growing number of linguistic groups. And the English-French debate is not settled: recent provincial issues have revealed that the two languages are still not given equal consideration in many places. How should we recognize these many traditions? What should language rights in Canada look like in the future?

1. As a group, conduct research, beginning with *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (start with the **Languages Policy** article and timeline) and expanding your research to the library, online, and elsewhere. Include languages, language policy, and demographics in Canada today. You may want to read the *Official Languages Act*, available at laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/O-3.01.
2. Compile your research and take notes. Make sure to write down your sources! Consider:
 - How current issues and perceptions of bilingualism, multiculturalism, Canadian identity, Indigenous populations, immigrants, and multiple language rights might shape the new Act. What about Indigenous language rights?
 - What do recent issues (from Bill 101 in Québec to the recent defunding of a French-language university in Ontario) tell you about the nature of minority language rights?
3. Based on your research, draft five significant revisions or changes to the OLA with your group.
4. Individually, write a paper justifying your revisions to language policy, and explain why they would improve the OLA.

Modification: Provide a short, simple set of questions; include sentence starters that match the big ideas and vocabulary in the readings.

EXPANDING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE POLICIES

In 1971, a policy of official multiculturalism was adopted in Canada. The federal government formalized a policy to protect and promote diversity, recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples, and support the use of Canada's two official languages.

In February 2019, the federal government tabled new legislation for an *Indigenous Languages Act*, which received royal assent on Indigenous Peoples Day (21 June 2019). Read about it at canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/celebrate-indigenous-languages/legislation.html.



▲ STOP SIGN IN ABENAKI, FRENCH, AND ENGLISH IN ODANAK, QUÉBEC (DREAMSTIME.COM / MICHEL BUSSIERES / 134260581).

ACTIVITY 10:

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN THE POPULAR CONSCIOUSNESS

While we are an officially bilingual nation, not all Canadians speak both official languages. Our population does not mirror the duality of the OLA: many Canadians are unilingual, and many speak multiple languages from around the world. What story would you tell about Canada's bilingualism?

1. In the activities prior to this, you have considered the past, present, and future of this land's language policies. What story can and should be told about the history of English and French language rights in Canada?
2. Individually, or in pairs, select what you think are the five most significant events in Canadian history in terms of English-French language rights. You can use your work from Activity 2 to select these events.

3. What story should be told about the history of language policy in Canada? Using the five events you decide are the most significant, create a photo essay that captures the story of these events. Your photo essay should include photos (or drawings) and captions explaining what the photo is, how it is relevant, and the context that ties it to the other photos in the series.

Modification: Allow students to create a cartoon strip, poster, or slideshow to demonstrate what they have learned. Provide a graphic organizer (e.g., a fishbone chart) to help them organize their opinions.



1984 ACADIA POSTAGE STAMP (DREAMSTIME.COM/SERGEI NEZHINSKII/113965021).



◀ L'ÉCOLE GUIGUES AND REGULATION 17 PLAQUE, OTTAWA (COURTESY ONTARIOPLAQUES.COM).

ACTIVITY 11:

COMMEMORATING THE OLA

How should we remember and share the complex history of language relations in Canada? As we mark 50 years since the *Official Languages Act*, we must reflect on how and why we commemorate what we do. Should we be celebrating the OLA? How should we remember the Act within the historical context?

In groups of four, research and plan a virtual museum exhibit on the history and legacy of the *Official Languages Act*. Keep in mind that you are not going to actually create the exhibit, so you can dream big.

1. Begin by brainstorming with your group, making sure to take notes. Think about what makes an effective exhibit. How can a museum exhibit best share information? How can it move us, make us think, or successfully preserve a memory? What understanding do you want visitors to walk away with? Will there be an overall message? How does understanding the past help us plan for the future?
2. Begin your research. It is important to recognize that there are many different interpretations of the OLA, including those who criticize it and those who support it.
3. Discuss with your group members what features you would like your exhibit to have. Using the **Commemorating the Official Languages Act Worksheet**, create a plan for your virtual exhibit. How will you present the stories? Will you organize the exhibit thematically or chronologically? How will you organize images and text to communicate the overall story of your exhibit?
4. What story do you want your exhibit to tell?
 - Who are the main historical figures to be included? Which events will be featured? Why are these people and places significant to the story you are telling?
 - What should be said about the Act? What should be included about Canada's many other languages, and specifically about the rich history of Indigenous languages and culture?
 - Will you choose to focus on the OLA itself, or will you place emphasis on the history of languages, rights, policies, and issues?
 - Who would you consult in the creation of this exhibit (e.g., academics, community members, teachers, etc.)? Which voices and perspectives would you include in your exhibit? How would you include them?
 - What key images or written pieces would you use and why? What visual representations of artifacts would you want to include in your exhibit?
5. Once you have created your exhibit plan, each group member will write a one-paragraph personal reflection on why you feel your exhibit accurately tells the story of Canada's languages.

Modification: Familiarize your students with the idea of a virtual exhibit by visiting an existing online exhibit. Create a checklist of features to include, leaving spaces to add extras. Reduce the number of items or ideas that Special Education or new language learner students are responsible for in their group. Allow them to use an alternative format to share their reflection.

SUMMATIVE RESEARCH ACTIVITY

What is the state of bilingualism in your province or territory today? Investigate the state of bilingualism in your home province or territory. You can start by visiting the website of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and exploring its resources (visit the "Tools & resources," "Statistics," and "Publications" tabs on the website at clo-ocol.gc.ca/en). Do an internet search for news relating to language issues in your home province (for example, separatism in Quebec; multiple official languages in the Northwest Territories). How has bilingualism evolved in Canada? What challenges do we still face today?

THE FUTURE OF LANGUAGES IN CANADA

Canada's two official languages do not represent everyone who lives here; our official policy of multiculturalism recognizes our country's diverse population. Have a class discussion about what you think the future of languages and language policy should look like in Canada. How can we reconcile Canada's policy of official bilingualism with our growing immigrant population? How can we recognize and support the revitalization of Indigenous languages?