

52 Weekly Stories About Canada

— Grades 5-6 —

Written by Ruth Solski

The 52 non-fiction stories in this book have been designed to familiarize and develop student awareness of The First Nation People of Canada; Early Explorers of Canada; Famous Canadian Disasters; Famous Canadian Inventors and Inventions; Famous Canadian Foods; Famous Canadian Mysteries and Ghost Stories; Famous Historical Women; Famous Historical First Nation Men; Famous Canadian Tourist Attractions; and Famous Canadian Festivals.



RUTH SOLSKI was an educator for 30 years. She has written many educational resources and is the founder of S&S Learning Materials. As a writer, her main goal is to provide teachers with a useful tool that they can implement in their classrooms to bring the joy of learning to children.

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At A Glance

Learning Intentions

	First Nation People of Canada	Early Explorers of Canada	Famous Canadian Disasters	Famous Canadian Games/Sports	Famous Inventors/Inventions	Famous Canadian Food	Canadian Mysteries/ Ghost Stories	Canada's Historical Women	Famous Historical First Nations Leaders	Famous Canadian Places	Famous Canadian Festivals
Reading Skills:											
Recalling Details	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Classifying / Noting Details	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	
Locating / Classifying Information	•	•			•	•				•	•
Finding Proof	•				•		•		•		
Recalling Events		•					•	•	•	•	
Sequencing Events		•			•		•				
Drawing Conclusions		•					•				
Classifying Events			•								
Cause and Effect				•							
Locating Main Idea						•					
Using Context Clues											•
Language Skills:											
Subject / Predicate / Nouns / Verbs	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•
Types of Sentences	•				•				•		
Modifiers / Adverbs / Adjectives	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•
Types of Nouns		•									
Writing Paragraphs / Stories		•	•				•				
Pronouns / Objects			•	•							
Prepositions / Phrases				•						•	
Conjunctions / Clauses					•	•	•	•			
Analysing Sentence Structure						•					
Word Study Skills:											
Compound Words	•	•								•	
Root Words	•	•	•					•	•	•	
Antonyms / Homonyms / Synonyms	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	
Alphabetical Order	•										
Word Meanings	•	•	•		•		•	•		•	•
Syllabication	•	•		•		•		•	•	•	•
Single Vowels / Vowel Combinations		•				•				•	
Double Consonants			•							•	
Prefixes / Suffixes						•					
Singular / Plural Words								•			

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TEACHING OBJECTIVES

STUDENTS WILL:

- read and become more knowledgeable with different aspects of their country such as the History of the First Nations of Canada; Early Explorers of Canada; Famous Canadian Disasters; Famous Canadian Inventions; Famous Canadian Inventors; Famous Canadian Foods; Famous Canadian Mysteries and Ghost Stories; Famous Historical Women; Famous Historical First Nations Men; Famous Canadian Tourist Attractions; Famous Canadian Celebrations.
- practise and review reading, language, and word study skills during an informal learning experience.
- use previously learned word attack skills to unlock new vocabulary.
- practise reading and discussing information in a group situation.
- strengthen research skills using non-fiction materials.
- work independently while reading a non-fiction story and completing a follow-up activity worksheet.

TEACHING STRATEGIES:

The nonfiction stories and follow-up worksheets may be used in any of the following situations:

1. Independent Reading with Follow-up Activity: Reproduce the story sheet(s) and worksheet for the students to practise their reading skills at school or for home study.
2. Reproduce each story and worksheet. Mount the information story on one side of stiff cardboard and the worksheet on the back of the same card. Laminate the cards for longer usage. The cards could be placed in boxes labelled with the name of each section. Example: History of the First Nations of Canada; Early Explorers of Canada; Famous Canadian Disasters; Famous Canadian Inventions; Famous Canadian Foods; Famous Canadian Mysteries and Ghost Stories; Famous Historical Women; Famous Historical Native Men; Famous Canadian Tourist Attractions; Famous Canadian Celebrations. Students could work on these topics in a research/reading period.
3. Each story could be used as a teaching tool for the entire class or for small groups. Make an overhead of the story or show it on a white board. The students could read the story silently. Any new words in the story could be discussed and word attack skills should be applied by the students to figure them out. Discuss the story's content and have the students locate and read the sentences that answer the questions while applying research and comprehension skills.
4. Display the worksheet for the story on the overhead or on a white board. The students could record the answers in a notebook, record the answers on the white board, or discuss them orally.



5. While the story is displayed, practise students' oral reading. This could be done with a group or the entire class. Direct the students' fluency and speed with your hand or a pointer. Practise reading the story several times. Reading orally is like singing. It has its own rhythm, speed, and expression.
6. If you feel that your students will have difficulty with any of the words in the story, record them on a chart, white board, or chalkboard and discuss them prior to the reading of the story. Encourage the usage of word attack skills. Ask any of the following questions:
 - How does the word begin and end?
 - Are there any vowels or vowel combinations inside the word?
 - Is it a compound word?
 - Does it look like another word that you know?
 - Do the words in the rest of the sentence give you any clues?
7. Some of the stories could be used during history and geography lessons
8. Many of the stories about Canada could be used during indoor recess as an oral activity for fun.
9. The stories could also be used with students who are experiencing reading difficulties and who are placed in higher grade levels.
10. The stories could also be used with students or adults learning to read English.
11. Any story and its follow-up activity can be reproduced and sent home as homework to strengthen the reading ability of a student.
12. The information cards could be mounted and laminated and used to develop various teacher-directed research skills.
13. Stories in one section could be reproduced with their follow-up sheets to make individual books for students to practise their reading skills.
14. The stories could be used in conjunction with social studies or history topics.

Pacific Coast First Nations

Location: The Pacific Coast First Nations lived along the west coast of British Columbia near the Pacific Ocean in Canada.

Name of Tribes: The tribes that lived along the coast were Tlingit, Tsimshian, Haida, Bella Coola, Kwatuitl, Nootka, and Coast Salish.

Environment: The Pacific Coast People did not ride horses, live in tepees, or hunt buffalo. The Pacific Ocean and the cedar tree was the centre of their lifestyle. They were isolated from other First Nations due to the Rocky Mountains to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The coast's climate was mild and wet and received a great deal of rain. The rain produced huge amounts of plants, shrubs, berry bushes, and all kinds of tall cedar trees with thick, rough bark.

Homes: Pacific Coast People could not live in tepees made of skins because the climate was too wet. The skins would become hard and brittle and would crack in the warm sun. Coast People built their homes from wood as it was plentiful. Each home was one very large room and housed 30 to 40 people. The four corner posts were made of large tree trunks which were set into four deep corner holes in the ground. It took many men pulling on strong ropes to place the posts into the holes. The walls were made of cedar planks. The roof was made of cedar bark and planks overlapping one another, which were held down with rocks. There were no windows, and it only had one small opening for an entrance, which helped to keep the house warm. Sometimes a carved pole called a house-frontal pole was placed at the front, and an opening was made in it.



Inside the house, each family had their own living quarters, which was separated with cedar or bulrush mats hung for walls. Each family had a space the size of a stall in a barn, with a woven mat on the floor. Down the centre of each house were fires that were kept burning all the time for light, heat, and cooking. An opening in the centre of the roof allowed smoke to leave and light to enter. Each family had its own cooking fire, wove their own baskets, and made their own clothing.



Food: The Pacific Ocean provided the Pacific Coast People with plenty of food. Salmon was their main source of food and it was smoked or dried to preserve it. Food was often cooked in “bent boxes” that were filled with water and very hot rocks. It was also roasted over an open fire, or cooked in a large pit dug in the ground which looked like an oven. Very hot rocks were placed in the hole, and meat wrapped in leaves was placed on them. Then, more hot rocks and earth covered the hole until the food was cooked. Sometimes meat was steamed by sprinkling water on the hot rocks.

The Pacific Coast People ate halibut, herring, cod, crabs, oysters, clams, mussels, seaweed, and fish eggs found in the ocean. Berries were picked, dried, and often cooked to a thick mass, and then dried in boxes to make cakes. Whales were hunted mainly by the people living on Vancouver Island. They used special whaling canoes, 18 metres long, that were made out of the trunks of huge cedar and redwood trees. Some canoes could hold up to 60 men. The canoes often had designs and carvings on them. Each canoe had men that did all the paddling, a steersman, and the chief who was the harpooner. The canoe with the chief paddled close to the whale so he could harpoon it while standing on the bow. Hunters in boats close by plunged more harpoons into it to slow the whale down. When the whale was dead, its mouth was tied shut so it couldn't fill up with water and sink to the bottom. Then the boats had to tow the heavy load back to their village.

Clothing: Pacific Coast People made clothing from the soft, thin bark found under the thick outer bark. A section of the hard bark was carefully removed from the trunk. Then the soft, inner, yellow bark was cut into long strips, rolled, and taken back to the village. The bark was soaked in cold and then hot water to soften it. Then it was beaten with a “bark beater” until it became soft shreds. The shreds were rolled between the palms of the hands until it became the right thickness for weaving.

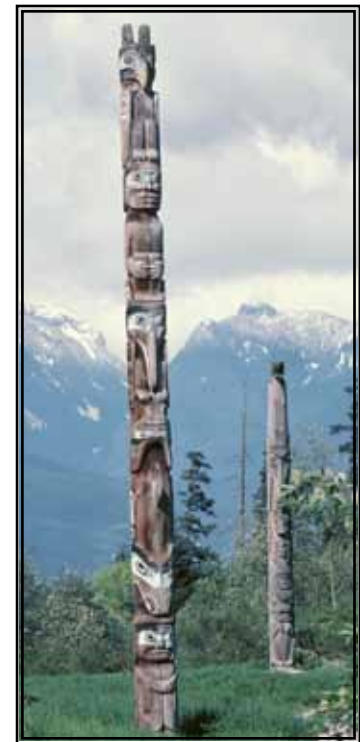
Pacific Coast First Nations wore little clothing. When they travelled, the men wore breech clouts, fibre rain capes, and robes made from skins. Fur hats or basketry hats were also worn. Men often tattooed their arms and hands. The women wore basketry hats, rain capes, sleeveless jackets, and skin robes. Some wore an apron that hung from the waist in the front and back. Most of the time the people went barefoot.



Traditions: A “potlatch” was an important tradition celebrated by the Pacific Coast Native People. It was held to announce an important event, to honour a new chief, to announce the marriage of a person of high rank, to celebrate a new house, or for the raising of a totem pole. The people of the village spent months preparing for one. Food had to be found and prepared, and gifts had to be made to be given away. Personal songs and dances were performed at the potlatch by people wearing family masks. They told stories about family history. The food was served in large bowls the size of a canoe, and the ladles or spoons were the size of footballs. The Pacific Coast People believed that displaying and passing on wealth made other people respect them.

Carved poles were erected for many reasons. They were erected to honour a chief or an important person, as a grave marker for someone who had died, or for a house-frontal pole with a door.

Pacific Coast First Nations People made good use of all the natural things found in their living environment.



Pacific Coast First Nations

A **READING**
What information does each sentence give about the Pacific Coast First Nations?

Is it about their:

Environment, Homes, Food, Hunting Methods, Cooking Methods, Clothing, Traditions, or Location?

Classify each sentence to the correct category. Record the category's name on the line.

1. Salmon was placed in a bent box filled with water and very hot rocks. _____
2. Each family had a small area divided by mats made from cedar or bulrushes and hung from the ceiling.

3. The mild, wet climate, and the rain provided the Pacific Coast People with many edible plants and tall cedar trees. _____
4. Special canoes were built to capture whales in the Pacific Ocean. _____
5. The Pacific Coast First Nations People made things to wear by weaving the soft, thin bark found under the thick, dark bark of the cedar tree into a material. _____
6. A party called a "potlatch" was a way to celebrate one of their important events.

7. The Pacific Coast First Nations never knew about other First Nations because of the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. _____
8. The chief of a Pacific Coast First Nation stood on the bow of the boat to harpoon the whale first.

B **LANGUAGE**
Divide the bare subject and the bare predicate in each sentence with a line. Place a single line under the subject and a double line under the predicate. Circle the modifiers of the subject and bracket the modifiers of the predicate.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. The tall trees waved gently. | 4. Brave hunters toiled ceaselessly. |
| 2. Strong winds blew continually. | 5. Steamed fish smelled delicious. |
| 3. Busy women picked quickly. | 6. The yellow bark stripped easily. |

C **WORD STUDY**
Arrange each group of words in the correct alphabetical order.

- | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------|---------|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1. coast | cedar | climate | corner | carved | centre |
| _____ | | | | | |
| 2. potlatch | prepared | people | preserve | planks | palms |
| _____ | | | | | |
| 3. burning | beaten | bark | berries | basket | basketry |
| _____ | | | | | |
| 4. sprinkling | smoke | steamed | salmon | special | shrubs |
| _____ | | | | | |
| 5. trunks | thick | tribes | tattooed | tradition | totem |
| _____ | | | | | |



Crokinole, Trivial Pursuit, Rummoli

Canadian Board Games



Many Canadian families love to play games in their homes during special occasions or for entertainment on a cold, snowy night. Games such as Crokinole, Trivial Pursuit, and Rummoli are popular Canadian board games.

The game of **Crokinole** was developed in rural Canada in the 1860's. It is a blend of several older English, French, German, and East Indian games. It has been a family favourite for over 140 years and was designed by Eckhardt Elton Wettlaufer. The game is played on a round polished wood or laminate surface about 42 cm (26 inches) in diameter. On its surface are three concentric rings worth 5, 10, and 15 points as you move from the outside to the middle of the board. In the centre lies a shallow hole worth 20 points. The inner ring is guarded with 8 small bumpers or posts. The outer ring is divided into four sections. The outer edge of the board is raised a bit to keep wandering shots from flying out, and it also has a gutter between the playing surface and edge to keep discarded playing pieces. The Crokinole board is usually octagonal or round in shape. The playing discs are about the same size as checkers. Two to four players can play at one time. Each player will have 12 discs of the same colour to shoot. When four players are playing, each player will have six discs to shoot. The players sitting opposite to one another will be partners.

Trivial Pursuit is a game developed by two Canadians - Chris Haney and Scott Abbott. They were very surprised when their game became an instant success. It became the most popular commercial board game since the game of Monopoly and Scrabble had been invented. It was designed for people 18 years and older and was based on fascinating little facts about something, called 'trivia.'

The early version of the game contained six categories of questions in the subjects of Geography, Entertainment, History, Arts and Literature, Science and Nature, and Sports and Leisure. The box contained 1 000 cards and each one had six questions on it. The answers were found on the back of the cards. Each player had a token that moved on the playing board with a roll of a die. If a player answered the trivia question correctly, the player could move towards the finish line.

Rummoli is a family card game in which 2 to 8 people can be involved. It was first marketed by Copp Clark Publishing Company of Toronto. In order to play the game, you need a deck of 52 playing cards without the jokers, and plastic chips or coins to play with. It is played for fun or for small stakes using pennies.

The Rummoli Board is octagonal in shape and is usually printed on a piece of heavy paper. The centre of the board is called Rummoli and is surrounded by eight pots. They are called the Poker Pot, Ten of Spades, Jack of Diamonds, Queen of Clubs, King of Hearts, Ace of Spades, Ace and King of Diamonds, and Sequence of 7-8-9 of any suit. The pots are used to store chips. While playing the game, each player puts a chip or coin in each pot. The cards are dealt to each player, plus one extra hand called the Widow Hand. The dealer can sell it to the highest bidder or swap it with his own hand. The game begins with the player who has the lowest card. Players follow in sequence and pick up any pots they have cards for. The player who has an empty hand wins the Rummoli pot.

Playing games with family and friends creates an entertaining experience, stimulates the brain, and provides us with wonderful memories.

Crokinole, Trivial Pursuit, Rummoli

Canadian Board Games

READING

A

Which game is each sentence describing?

Is it Crokinole, Trivial Pursuit, or Rummoli?

1. It contains one thousand cards that have six questions on one side and the answers on the other side.

2. The game board is on polished wood and on its surface are three rings worth 5, 10, and 15 points.

3. A deck of cards without the jokers is needed for this game. _____
4. Its board has pots in which plastic chips or coins are stored. _____
5. This game was invented many years ago and is a blend of games from different countries.

6. Its game board is octagonal in shape and is usually made of heavy paper. _____
7. This game became an instant success once it was published. _____
8. Twelve disks of the same colour are used to shoot for the shallow hole guarded by eight small posts.

LANGUAGE

B

The object of a verb is often a noun. Example: The man raised his hand. The object is often the receiver of a verb. In each sentence, underline the verb and its object.

1. The player slid the checker on the Crokinole board.
2. No one could guess the answer to the trivia question.
3. Everyone dropped coins in the pots on the playing board.
4. In the centre of the board lies a shallow hole.
5. Two men created this game.

WORD STUDY

C

Match the word with a pair of double consonants from the story to each meaning.

1. a kind of game played with a deck of cards _____
2. in the centre of something _____
3. something that is not deep _____
4. not very big _____
5. an other word for ditch _____
6. to turn over and over _____
7. a kind of coin _____
8. to go all around _____

