

**Author:** Nathan Tidridge

**Grade Level:** 7-12

**Magazine Article:**

"Ties of Kinship" by Philip Cote and Nathan Tidridge

**Theme(s):**

- First Nations, Inuit, & Metis
- Treaty Knowledge

**Subject Area(s):**

- Social Studies
- History
- Geography

**Lesson Overview:** In this lesson students explore the Treaty of Niagara as a foundational relationship in the creation of Canada. They investigate how this familial relationship, created by Treaty, was meant to be the foundation for the interactions between First Nations and non-First Nations.

**Time Required:** 1 class period.

**Historical Thinking Concept(s):**

- Establish historical significance
- Use primary source evidence
- Take historical perspectives

**Learning Outcomes: Students will...**

- Recognize that a Treaty is a relationship.
- Recognize and appreciate that the Crown is bound in family relationships with First Nations.
- Explore the historiography concerning the founding of Canada.

# 1764: An Enduring Relationship

## The Lesson Activity

### *Activating: How will students be prepared for learning?*

- Pass out copies of the lesson's BLMs to the class:
  - BLM 7.1: British North America Act, 1867
  - BLM 7.2: Indian Act
  - BLM 7.3: Replica of the Treaty of Niagara (1764) Wampum Belt
- Give the students several minutes to investigate and share the images/primary sources.
- Collect the images. Open the floor to questions.
- Place sticky tack on the back of each BLM.
- Invite a student to come to the front of the class and affix the documents in chronological order. Guide and assist as necessary. (Wampum Belt, BNA Act, Indian Act).
- Open the class to questions and discussion.
- Repeat the activity with following criteria, placing the documents in order based on students' opinion:
  - Order of national importance
  - Order of long-term or enduring importance
- Explain that history consists of facts and opinions and that historians have their own perspectives when assigning significance to an event or person.
- Affix BLM 7.1: British North America Act, 1867. Explain that historians have typically marked Confederation and the BNA Act as the point of beginning for the modern county of Canada. Explain that they will be exploring another starting point: The Treaty of Niagara, 1764.

### *Acquiring: What strategies facilitate learning for groups and individuals?*

- Pass out several copies of *the Treaties and the Treaty Relationship* issue of *Canada's History* magazine and instruct students to read the article "Ties of Kinship" (page 23-25).
- Write the word "CONTRACT" on the board at the front of the room.
- Ask students to brainstorm (individually or in groups) words that come to mind when they think of a contract. (To help them get started it helps to ask them for examples of contracts that they might be familiar with i.e. cellphone contracts).
- Invite students to write words around "CONTRACT" at the front of the room. Some common words/phrases include: signed, written, law, money, penalty, lawyers, fees, long, hard to read, legal, legal-ese, official and strict.
- Explain that Treaties were never meant to be thought of as contracts, but rather as relationships. Cross out "CONTRACT" and replace it with "RELATIONSHIP."

# 1764: An Enduring Relationship (continued)

- Ask students to think of their closest relationships (family or best friends) and see if the words they came up with to describe a contract still work?
- Brainstorm (individually or in groups) words that come to mind when they think of a strong relationship before writing them at the front of the room. Some common words/phrases include: communication, trust, support, friendship, loyalty, dependability and love (if students don't come up with love on their own, it is important that this is added to the list by the teacher).
- The love that is often understood is that felt between members of a family – allowing for disagreement and tension. Familial relationships require flexibility to exist. As new dynamics or unforeseen conflicts emerge, they have to be negotiated by the Treaty partners in order to have them incorporated into the relationship (a relatable example often given to students is their own relationships with their siblings – often chaotic, but with a foundation of love at their core).
- Explain that since Treaties are made between the Queen/Crown and First Nation peoples, the Queen and her representatives are often seen as being in family relationships with First Nations.
- Encourage questions. Check for understanding.

## *Applying: How will students demonstrate their understanding?*

- Read the excerpt from the article on page 23:

Until recently, both Confederation and the Indian Act that flowed from it eclipsed most of the Treaty relationships in the minds of the non-Indigenous population of Canada. Today the country finds itself returning to the Treaties and rekindling the relationships that sustained the many peoples on these lands for centuries prior to 1867.

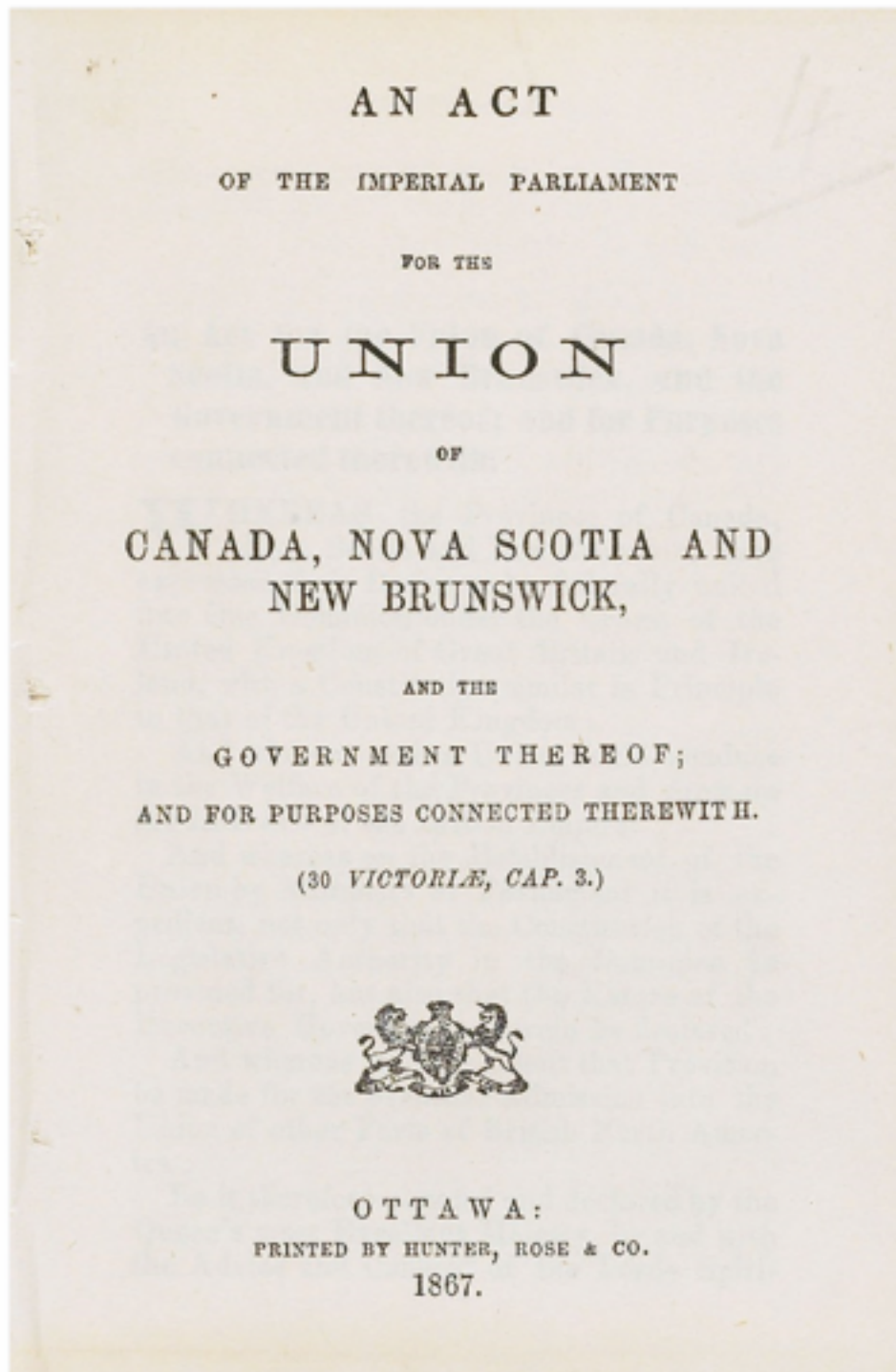
Part of this national introspection is the rediscovery by non-Indigenous peoples of the ancient and enduring relationships between First Nations and the sovereign that were enshrined in such Treaties as the 1764 Treaty of Niagara.
- Lead a guided discussion.
- Hand out copies of BLM 7.4.
- Instruct them to complete. Guide and assist as necessary.

## **Materials/Resources:**

- Copy/copies of the *Treaties and the Treaty Relationship* issue of *Canada's History* magazine (enough for students to read article).
- Printed copies of BLM 7.1, BLM 7.2, BLM 7.3 – one each
- Printed copies of BLM 7.4– one per student
- Sticky tack

## **Extension Activity:**

- Research and collect historical and modern images that reflect Treaties as relationship.





BLM 7.3 Replica of the Treaty of Niagara (1764) Wampum Belt



Source: <http://www.canadashistory.ca/explore/politics-law/ties-of-kinship>

## BLM 7.4 1764: An Enduring Relationship - Activity Sheet

Treaties are ancient and enduring relationships binding the Sovereign with Indigenous Peoples. The family relationships created by Treaties such as the 1764 Treaty of Niagara were meant to be the foundation for the interactions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. Until recently, both Confederation and the *Indian Act (1876)* that flowed from it eclipsed most of the Treaty relationships in the minds of the non-Indigenous population of Canada. However, there is a renewed interest in rekindling the relationships that sustained the many peoples on these lands prior to 1867. Part of this process includes understanding and honouring the family relationship binding the Queen and her representatives with First Nations.

**Examples of the Queen's representatives articulating the family relationship they have with First Nations:**

*The words reconciliation, Treaty and love are all verbs and therefore require ongoing action. The Vice-regal family, being connected by kinship, has the means to continuously work towards genuine reconciliation. There is no one end point to reconciliation. The vision must be of respectful relationships with ongoing responsibility to future generations. Just as the definition of the Crown remains elusive, so too the act of making Treaty holistically will differ from nation to nation. However, with trust as a foundation, honesty, communication, integrity and love will be as constant as the Crown.*

*Most would agree that real action is necessary to move reconciliation forward. Action is the way to heal injustice. The past injustices are part of our shared history, and as such the healing of these wounds will become part of the fabric which weaves us together as a stronger nation.*

The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia  
Government House, Victoria, British Columbia April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017

*As the representative of The Queen, the highest office in this province, I am privileged to fulfil my duty of kinship with Indigenous Peoples in Treaty. It is a sacred trust as relevant as my duty to ensure the province always has a functioning government.*

The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario  
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## BLM 7.4 1764: An Enduring Relationship - Activity Sheet

*The historic link between the Crown and the First Nations people is strong, and something that I hold dear to my heart.*

The Duke of Cambridge  
Haida Gwaii, British Columbia, September 30th, 2016

*It is often easy to see the Crown and our Queen as a far off and detached symbol. Yet beyond the role I play as the Sovereign's representative in Nova Scotia, there is a very special connection that exists between the Mi'kmaq Nation and Her Majesty.*

Brigadier-General The Honourable John James Grant, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia  
Government House, Halifax, Nova Scotia, November 23rd, 2016

Based on the class discussion and activity, complete the following questions. Use "Ties of Kinship" on page 23 - 25 as a reference as well:

1. When you see Treaties as relationships, how does that change your perspective of Canada's interaction with First Nations Peoples?
2. How would you describe these acts, given that they are being done by one Treaty partner to another: *British North America Act (1867)*, *Indian Act (1876)* and the Indian Residential School Program?
3. What are some things that the Queen and her Canadian representatives could do to highlight the nation-to-nation relationship created by Treaties such as the 1764 Treaty of Niagara?
4. What do the authors of the article mean by this statement: "The Treaty of Niagara is seen by some as the marking of the true founding of Canada."? Explain in detail with concrete examples.





## Adaptations for grades 3-6

### See "Living well together"

on pages 8 to 13 in the *We Are All Treaty People* issue of *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*.

### Read: Treaty of Niagara, 1764

This wampum belt was woven in 1764. It created a special family relationship between the First Nations groups, known as confederacies, from the Great Lakes region, and the British Crown. That relationship was supposed to mean that, as a family, those involved could disagree but still have respect and love for each other. The Treaty of Niagara has been described as the true founding of what was to become Canada.

### Minds on

Explore the symbolism in the wampum belt. Focus on the importance of wampum belts for ceremonial and diplomatic purposes, as well as to mark agreements such as Treaties and covenants.

### Hands on

Have students design a wampum belt on graph paper or using Lego/beads to commemorate an important event in their lives using colours symbolically. Once completed, students share the story using their wampum as a visual aid in small groups.