

Below are a series of lesson ideas for use with the *Canada in the Making* Web site. Some may require the use of outside sources.

Act it Out

Students can create a drama depicting the changes in Canada's governance from conquest to Confederation (or later, if desired).

Students could play key figures in Canadian history. The play should show the tensions that arose in each period, how they were or were not resolved, and how a new set of tensions arose as a result. The periods could be broken up as follows:

- Conquest until the *Royal Proclamation* of 1763
- *Royal Proclamation* of 1763 until the *Quebec Act* of 1774
- The *Quebec Act* of 1774 until the *Constitutional Act* of 1791
- The *Constitutional Act* of 1791 until the *Union Act* of 1840
- The *Union Act* of 1840 until Confederation

Each portion of the play should be no longer than 5-7 minutes long. Students may develop their portion of the play in groups, then come together to co-ordinate the play. See the source list below for possible sources.

Biographies

Using information and sources available from the biographies page, students can prepare a short biography for one prominent figure in Canadian constitutional history. They should determine the ideological perspective of that individual, and write an opinion piece on what that person would have thought of the *Act of Union* of 1840 and the *Durham Report* with background support.

The *Royal Proclamation* of 1763

Students should read the *Royal Proclamation* and its summary. They should try to discover which elements still affect our lives today, and which elements have been superseded by changes in society and law since then.

Responsible Government

Students should write a short definition of responsible government and how it was applied in Canada during the mid-19th century. Debate whether that term can still be applied to government today. What has changed since then? What has remained the same?

Negotiating the BNA Act

Break the students into groups. Each group represents a British province in North America in the 1860s: Quebec, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland. Each group must research that province as it was at the time, including:

1. The economy
 - a. What was it based on?
 - b. Was it strong or weak?
 - c. Who were their trading partners?
2. The social structure
 - a. Who was ruling class in each province?
 - b. Was there responsible government?
3. What that province wanted to gain out of Confederation (make a list and put it in chronological order)
4. What it would not accept (make a list and put it in chronological order)

When this research is complete, groups could select a leader and stage negotiations to draft their own constitution.

Groups should look at the *British North America Act, 1867* (renamed *Constitution Act, 1867*) and decide how many of their concerns were met. Was the Act a good or a bad compromise?

Possible Sources

Canada in the Making: Canada's Constitutional History

URL: http://www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/constitution1_e.html

The Canadian Encyclopedia

URL: <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com>

National Archives of Canada: *Canada's Constitutional Evolution*

URL: http://www.archives.ca/05/051103_f.html (French)

URL: http://www.archives.ca/05/051103_e.html (English)

National Library of Canada: *Canadian Confederation:*

URL: <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/2/18/index-e.html>

Solon Law Archives: *Canadian Constitutional Documents*

URL: <http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Canada/>