

Blackline Master 10

Has Colonization Ended?

Read the following timeline and complete the activity that follows.

1620-1680 Catholic clergy establish the first boarding schools for Aboriginal youth in New France.

1820s Protestants, Catholics, Anglicans, and Methodists begin to share responsibility for Aboriginal schools.

1847 Egerton Ryerson conducts a study of Aboriginal education for the Superintendent of Indian Affairs. His conclusions form the blueprint for future Indian residential schools. Ryerson recommends that Aboriginal youth be subject to a largely British, Christian curriculum with a focus on getting graduates ready to work in farming once they have completed school. The schools would be overseen by the government, with the religious denominations running the schools.

1860 Indian Affairs is transferred from Britain to the Province of Canada. The emphasis shifts from turning Aboriginals into farmers to assimilating them through education.

1879 Davin Report to Canadian government recommended churches be funded to run American style industrial boarding schools for Indian education in western Canada.

1883 Han and Gwitch'in people learned Native language literacy and English along with Christian gospel through missionaries at northern trading posts.

1892 Anglican Bishop William Bompas established Buxton Mission and a school for children at Forty Mile to counteract negative influences of the growing non-native community.

1892 First agreements by the federal government to fund churches to run Indian residential schools across Canada.

1907 Federal Medical Inspector P.H. Bryce was fired after reporting that poor conditions in residential schools were a "national crime."

1911 Yukon's first residential school, Chooutla Indian Residential School opens in Carcross.

1920 Indian Act is amended to allow enfranchisement of Indian people without their consent and making school attendance compulsory for school aged Indian children.

1920 The Anglican church opened Shingle Point School for Eskimo children and St. Paul's Hostel in Dawson City as a residence for mixed race children from remote areas who could attend public school but not Chooutla School which was restricted to status Indian children.

1931 Residential school education reaches its peak, with close to 130 schools operating across Canada.

1942 Construction of the Alaska Highway through Yukon to Alaska opens vast Aboriginal homelands to road transport, exposing northern people to epidemics and other challenges, as well as new opportunities for travel and work

1960/1961 Status Indians are given the right to vote in federal elections, without giving up their Indian status, in 1960. The following year, Aboriginal men and women are allowed to vote and run for election to Yukon Council.

1973 Elijah Smith and Yukon Chiefs met Prime Minister Trudeau on Parliament Hill to present "Together Today for our Children Tomorrow" seeking compensation for use of their lands and resources, and full participation in decisions on education, justice, health, heritage, resources and economic programs

1974 Federal and provincial governments move away from residential schooling in favour of native-run schools. Band councils take over education programming in many residential schools. Staffing shifts away from the clergy as Aboriginals eventually comprise 34 per cent of residential school employees.

1976 Yukon Native Brotherhood and Yukon Association for Non-status Indians formed the Council for Yukon Indians (CYI) to negotiate Yukon Indian Land Claim with the federal government.

1979 With only 15 residential schools still operating in Canada, the Department of Indian Affairs introduces initiatives to make the remaining schools more culturally aware of the needs of Aboriginal students.

1982 Constitution Act is amended to recognize and affirm the rights of "Indian, Inuit and Metis Peoples of Canada"

1989 Non-aboriginal orphans at Mount Cashel Orphanage in Newfoundland make allegations of sexual abuse against the Christian Brothers who ran their school. This case shines a spotlight on residential schools across Canada.

1991 Phil Fontaine, leader of the Association of Manitoba Chiefs, courageously shares his experience of physical and sexual abuse with the public. Later, he meets with representatives of the Catholic Church and demands that the church acknowledge the physical and sexual abuse suffered by students at residential schools.

1986-1998 Formal national apologies are made by various religious organizations including the United Church, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Anglican Church, Presbyterian Church, for their role in administering residential schools.

1995 The Trailblazers, a group of Yukon former residential school students, launch class action lawsuits seeking justice and restitution for abuses they suffered by school staff.

1996 The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, or RCAP, makes over 400 recommendations designed to improve the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the federal and provincial governments. One chapter of the commission's report is dedicated to residential schools. In the same year, the last federally run residential school is shut down in Saskatchewan.

1997 Phil Fontaine is elected national chief of the Assembly of First Nations.

January 7, 1998 The federal government introduces a comprehensive plan based largely on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. The Government of Canada issues an apology to students who suffered physical and sexual abuse at residential schools as well as an apology for its role in the formation and administration of the schools.

2001 The federal government negotiates with the Anglican, Catholic, United, and Presbyterian churches to design a compensation plan for Aboriginal residential school students. Eventually, the government agrees to pay 70 per cent of the settlement costs to former students who can prove their claims.

May 30, 2005 Discussions begin between the federal government and Aboriginal leaders to find a fair and lasting settlement to the residential school issue.

November 23, 2005 Ottawa announces a \$2-billion compensation package for Aboriginal Canadians who attended residential schools. Over 80 000 former residential school students find themselves eligible for a settlement payment. A month later, the compensation is approved by Canada's courts, and the first payments begin to flow to victims in September 2007.

2007 Trondek Hwech'in hold a Welcome Home ceremony, uniting former residential school students, families and community witnesses in paying tribute to the memories and supporting the healing from the legacies of residential schools.

2008 The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is launched with a mandate to study the residential school system, report on its history and commemorate former students and its victims. The TRC provides survivors with opportunities to share their experiences and establish an historical account of the events and issues.

June 11, 2008 Prime Minister Stephen Harper formally apologizes for Canada's participation in the creation and administration of a school system designed to destroy Aboriginal culture.

2012 Healing totem pole carved by young Yukon artists is carried and raised by people from all nations on the Whitehorse waterfront to recognize and honour former students, their families and communities.

Activity

Part 1: Using two different highlight markers, perform the following task:

In one colour highlight the timeline items that clearly had a negative impact on Aboriginal culture.

In a second colour highlight the timeline items that showed a positive movement away from the "kill the Indian in the child" spirit of the residential school system.

Part 2: Examine the timeline and any highlighting patterns you notice. Are there time periods of change? What are the time periods?

Part 3: Discuss as a class:

The reasons for your choice in highlight colour on selected timeline items

The events that clearly demonstrate a change in attitude and values.

Part 4: How would you answer the question - Has Colonization Ended?

Extension

Use the timeline to write a brief history of the residential school controversy

(adapted from CBC News in Review, Sept 2008)