

## 1492 - 1779: From First Contact to the Peace and Friendship Treaties

[http://www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/aboriginals/aboriginals2\\_e.html](http://www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/aboriginals/aboriginals2_e.html)

Before the discovery of North America by European explorers, [Aboriginal](#) peoples had an entire continent to themselves. They each had their own cultures and traditions, which ranged from nomadic lifestyles, such as the plains peoples who followed the buffalo, to settled farmers such as the Iroquois. The arrival of the white man would eventually change everything, and fundamentally affect the Aboriginal people's relationship with the land and its resources.

### Decision Making Among Aboriginals

Aboriginals did not have centralized, formal governments in the European sense. Aboriginal societies were largely governed by [unwritten customs and codes of conduct](#).

### Oral Treaty Making

Aboriginals had [treaties](#) with each other long before European fur traders or settlers arrived in what is now called Canada. Aboriginal nations would use oral treaties to settle land disputes and end other conflicts, including war. Trade and marriage arrangements were commonly made between tribes as well.

When the Europeans arrived, they brought with them their own methods, especially the written treaty. Particularly after the conquest, when the British gradually began to establish a strong hold on the continent, Aboriginals were not always happy with the outcomes of these written treaties - for governments of the time sometimes did not include oral promises made to the Aboriginals in the written treaty. This forms the basis of many [land claims](#) today, as Aboriginal leaders demand to be given what they were promised.

### Covenant Chain

In the early 1600s, a series of treaties were negotiated between the [Thirteen Colonies](#), which would eventually make up the United States, and the six-nation [Iroquois Confederacy](#). These agreements likely originated between the Mohawk nation and the colony of New York, and were represented by iron or silver chains that symbolized the binding of a promise.

These agreements would often be re-negotiated as more financial aid to the Aboriginals was needed, and the chains would be symbolically polished to show that revisions had taken place. Other colonies, including Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland and Rhode Island, would later join the chain as would the [Tuscarora](#) tribe.

The chain lasted until June 1753, when the [Mohawk](#) broke it, upset that Anglo-American settlers had begun occupying Confederacy lands without permission of any of the six nations in the chain. In 1754, an elaborate condolence ceremony was held in Albany, New York, which saw colonial leaders make peace with the Aboriginals by offering gifts. The chain was then restored.

### The Great Peace of 1701

One example of early treaty making between Europeans and Aboriginal peoples was the Great Peace of 1701. One 1300 delegates of more than 40 [First Nations](#) converged on Montreal. The treaty that followed the negotiations ended almost 100 years of war between the Iroquois Confederacy and New France and its allies.

The significance of the treaty lasts to this day, as it set a precedent the use of negotiation to settle disputes between First Nations peoples and European colonial representatives in what is now Canada. It also set the foundation for the expansion of the "empire" of New France to the south and west, and ensured the neutrality of the Iroquois Confederacy in case of war between the French and English in North America. At the outbreak of the [Seven Years War](#) between British and French forces in 1756, the Iroquois Confederacy was neutral.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Aboriginal-European Relations in the 1700s

By 1701, Aboriginals and Europeans had had about two centuries worth of contact. While there had been wars between the Europeans and Aboriginals, the relationship between both parties had stabilized.

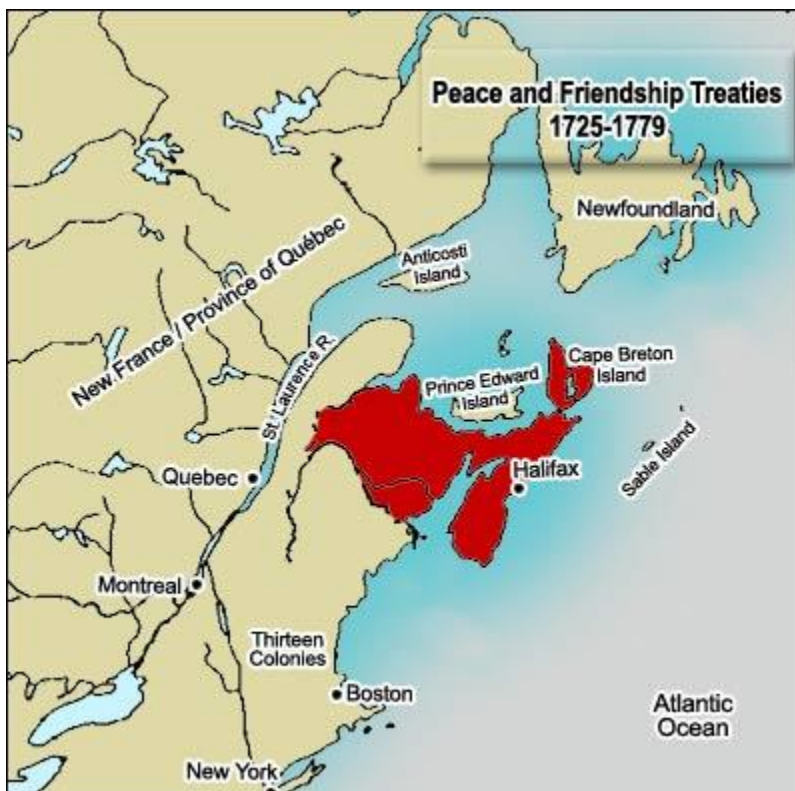
Aboriginal skills and knowledge about the harsh landscape helped many Europeans survive cold Canadian winters. These Aboriginals provided access to land to furs for trading, as well as food supplies from fishing and big game hunting.

On the other hand, European goods and technologies found their way into Aboriginal culture. The [Natives](#) now had blankets, iron kettles, guns and gunpowder as new tools. Over a period of time, the Aboriginals and Europeans slowly became more interdependent. Cultural and social aspects were borrowed from both cultures and incorporated into trading ceremonies.

A new cultural group, the [Métis](#), came out of this interaction between European and Aboriginal civilizations. Early European explorers and traders were virtually all men, and some of them decided to settle down and start new lives in Canada. Many started families by marrying Aboriginal women. The ancestors of these children form the basis of Canada's Métis population.

### Peace and Friendship Treaties

Other colonial governments in the area now covered by New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the northeastern United States began to sign peace agreements with the Aboriginals in the early 1700s. Starting with the first [Peace and Friendship Treaty](#) in 1725 and lasting until 1779, these treaties were designed to stop and prevent wars with the Aboriginal peoples so that European settlers could begin to safely live on this land and use its natural resources.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1492 – 1779: From First Contact to the Peace & Friendship Treaties

**/14 Total**

1. Who was the Covenant Chain negotiated between? Why was it broken in 1753? /2
2. What was significant about the Great Peace of 1701? (3 things) /3
3. Relations in the 1700s
  - a. What skills did Aboriginals have? /1
  - b. What did Europeans have to offer? /1
4. Who were the Métis? /1
5. What were the Peace & Friendship treaties in NB, NS and the NE United States designed to do? /1
  
6. Describe how aboriginal societies were usually governed in North America before European contact? /1
  - a. Formal with many ceremonies
  - b. With unwritten customs and codes of conduct
  - c. Informal but with many changes of leadership
  
7. The **Covenant Chain** was a series of treaties in the early 1600's between the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_: (pick two from the list) /1
  - a. Thirteen Colonies (Americans)
  - b. Iroquois Confederacy
  - c. Huron Nation
  - d. British
  - e. French
  
8. The Great Peace of 1701 ended almost 100 years of war between the Iroquois Confederacy and New France and its allies. What was **not** another significant outcome of this treaty? /1
  - a. Established a precedent of using negotiation to settle disputes between First Nations peoples and European colonial representatives.
  - b. The Iroquois Confederacy was recognized as an independent country by France.
  - c. The Iroquois Confederacy stayed neutral during the Seven Years War.
  
9. What were the most lucrative trade items for Native people in the early 1700's? /1
  - a. Iron tools
  - b. Firearms
  - c. Alcohol
  
10. Why did colonial settlers in New Brunswick & Nova Scotia sign the **Peace and Friendship Treaties** with the local First Nations? /1
  - a. So that European settlers could begin to safely live on the land and use its natural resources.
  - b. Many of the settlers were Quakers – a pacifist religious group.
  - c. They were ordered to by London.