

HBC and Treaties No. 1 – No. 7: People and Places

Author: [Connie Wyatt Anderson](#)

Grade Level: 5/6, 7/8, 9/10, 11/12

Subject Area: Social Studies/ History/ Geography

Themes:

- First Nations, Inuit & Métis
- Treaty Knowledge

Lesson Overview: In this lesson, students explore Treaties 1 to 7 and the direct links to Hudson's Bay Company by investigating HBC forts as treaty-making sites and the involvement of HBC employees.

Time Required: One to two lessons

Associated Resources:

HBC Sources:

- [Deed of Surrender](#)
- [HBC and Related Historic Sites](#)

Other Online Sources:

- [Mediating the Numbered Treaties: Eyewitness Accounts of Treaties](#), Sheldon Krasowski
- [Hudson's Bay Company Archives –HBC Fur Trade Post Map](#)
- [Canada's History, The Numbered Treaties](#)
- [Canadian Geographic, Treaties 1 and 2: reflecting on the 150th anniversary](#)

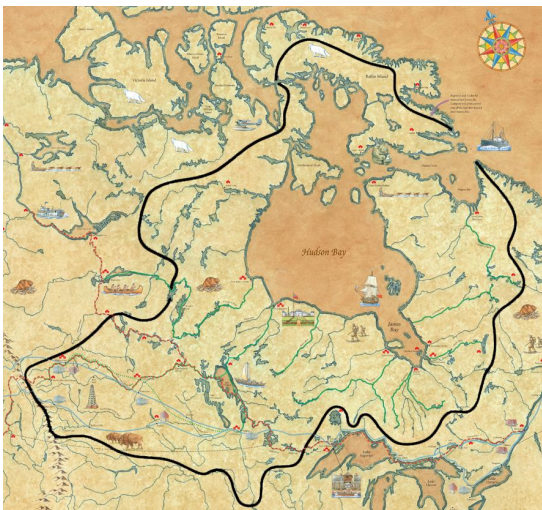
Historical Thinking Concepts:

- Establish *historical significance*
- Analyze *cause and consequence*

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Identify the role HBC had in the making of the Numbered Treaties.
- Locate and indicate HBC forts as treaty-making sites.
- Investigate treaty commemorative installations at HBC forts today.
- Appreciate the historical significance of HBC forts as treaty-making sites.



Map showing Rupert's Land.
HBC Corporate Collection.

Background Information:

The Numbered Treaties, 1871-1921, were a series of 11 treaties made between various First Nations and the Crown (Canadian government).

The protocols that were embedded in treaty negotiations from 1871 and after had existed for centuries within the workings of the fur trade. The smoking of the pipe, kinship rhetoric, feasts, and gift-giving were integral parts of the fur trade and originated from Indigenous treaty-making practices.

Historians argue that the Numbered Treaties could not have been accomplished without the assistance of Hudson's Bay Company. Treaty Commissioners were reliant on a number of HBC veterans to broker the treaty-making process, acting as hosts, interpreters, and liaisons. Treaties 1 to 7 were all negotiated at or near Hudson's Bay Company posts.

- ✓ Treaty No. 1 was made in August 1871 at Lower Fort Garry, north of Winnipeg. 'The Stone Fort' today is a National Historic Site. See: <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=4224&pid=0>
- ✓ Treaty No. 2 was made two weeks later in 1871 at Manitoba House. There is nothing to mark that spot today. See: <http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites/manitobahouse.shtml>
- ✓ Treaty No. 3's negotiations began as early as 1870, following the sale of Rupert's Land in 1869 and the Red River Resistance in 1870. Talks between the government and the Anishinaabe took place at Fort Frances. The treaty was made in October 1873 on the American side of Harrison's Creek in the Northwest Angle. The original site of the fort is unmarked. See: <https://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/plaques/lac-la-pluie-house-1818-1903>
- ✓ Treaty No. 4 took place at Fort Qu'Appelle in September 1874, Manitoba First Nations entered into treaty adhesions at Fort Ellice. Fort Qu'Appelle is a National Historic Site. There is a historic marker at Fort Ellice today, but it makes no mention of the treaty. See: <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=18988>
- ✓ Treaty No. 5 took place at various locations surrounding Lake Winnipeg in 1875 and 1876. Rather than meeting at one place, like Treaty No. 1, Treaty Commissioners travelled to the communities via the lake. Communities included Berens River, Norway House, Grand Rapids, and several more. Most treaties were negotiated at HBC forts. Today, at Norway House, the HBC Archway Warehouse, Jail, and Powder Magazine Remains are part of a National Historic Site. There is a plaque commemorating Treaty No. 5. See: <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=12041&pid=0>
- ✓ Treaty No. 6 was negotiated at Fort Carlton in August 1876 and at Fort Pitt in September. Today, Fort Carlton and Fort Pitt are both provincial parks. See: <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=4168&pid=0>; <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=3112&pid=0>

- ✓ Treaty No. 7 was signed in September 1877. The site for the treaty was originally set to be Fort Macleod, but the Siksika preferred to meet at Blackfoot Crossing, a site on their territory. Fort Macleod is a designated National Historic Site. See: <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=1140&pid=0>
Blackfoot Crossing, near Cluny, Alberta is also a designated National Historic Site: <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=1165&pid=0>

The Lesson Activity

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

- Draw the students' attention to a large wall map of Canada.
- Hand out the 9 HBC and Treaty-making Sites cards, one each to 9 students. [Don't tell the students that they are Treaty-making sites]
- Invite each student to share their card by reading it aloud.
- Ask: What do all these places have in common? [Potential responses: They are all HBC forts. They are located in the west.]
- Invite students one at a time to come to the map and locate the place on their card. Use the latitude and longitude coordinates and/or the 'nearby communities' as a guide. Mark the place on the map with a sticky note or tape the actual card on the map. Guide and assist as necessary.
- Ask again: What do all these places have in common?

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

- Explain that all of the HBC forts the students marked on the map were sites where treaty-making took place (in the form of the actual treaty signing, treaty adhesions, or treaty negotiations).
- Tell them that the red numbers on their cards correspond with the treaty made at or near the HBC fort. **2** = Treaty No. 2
- Ask: Why do you think treaties were made at or near HBC forts? What do you think the role of the HBC was in treaty-making?
- Lead a lecture on the Numbered Treaties, 1 through 7. Place emphasis on the relationship between First Nations and HBC prior to 1871, the First Nations' cultural protocols that guided the fur trade relationship, the role HBC employees had in the treaty-making process, and the nature of HBC governance in the west before 1869.
- Check for understanding. Engage the students in discussion.

Applying: *How will students demonstrate their understanding?*

- Hand out the worksheet to students. Read over it in detail.

- Guide them through Part A and Part E.
- Assign Parts B, C, and D.
- Guide and assist as necessary.
- Bring the class together as a group once they have completed the assignment. Invite students to share the questions they wrote in Part A and their responses in Part E.

Materials/Resources:

- Access to the internet for student research
- Print copy of Student Resource: HBC Forts and Treaty-making Sites (cut into cards)
- Printed copies of Student Resource: HBC and Treaty-making: People and Places – one per student
- Atlases
- Large map of Canada
- Tape or sticky notes

Extension Activities:

- Have students create a historical marker for one of the HBC forts as a historically significant treaty-making site.

Student Resource: HBC Forts and Treaty-making Sites (Page 1)

HBC Fort: Lower Fort Garry

1

Current Province: Manitoba

Latitude/Longitude: 50.10 N, 96.93 W

Communities nearby: Winnipeg, Selkirk

HBC Fort: Fort Qu'Appelle

4

Current Province: Saskatchewan

Latitude/Longitude: 50.77 N, 103.79 W

Communities nearby: Fort Qu'Appelle

HBC Fort: Manitoba House

2

Current Province: Manitoba

Latitude/Longitude: 50.92 N, 98.86 W

Communities nearby: Alonsa, Kinosota

HBC Fort: Fort Carlton

6

Current Province: Saskatchewan

Latitude/Longitude: 52.92 N, 106.53 W

Communities nearby: Duck Lake, Prince Albert

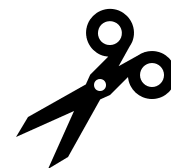
HBC Fort: Norway House

5

Current Province: Manitoba

Latitude/Longitude: 53.98 N, 97.83 W

Communities nearby: Norway House Cree Nation

Student Resource: HBC Forts and Treaty-making Sites (Page 2)

HBC Fort: Fort Frances/Harrison Creek,
Northwest Angle

3

Current Province: Ontario/USA

Latitude/Longitude: 48.63 N, 93.42 W/
49.37 N, 95.14 W

Communities nearby: Fort Frances/Angle Inlet,
Minnesota

HBC Fort: Fort Ellice

4

Current Province: Manitoba

Latitude/Longitude: 50.55 N, 101.21 W

Communities nearby: St. Lazare

HBC Fort: Fort Pitt

6

Current Province: Saskatchewan

Latitude/Longitude: 53.57 N, 109.79 W

Communities nearby: Frenchman Butte, Lloydminster

HBC Fort: Fort Macleod/Blackfoot Crossing

7

Current Province: Alberta

Latitude/Longitude: 49.72 N, 113.40 W/
50.78 N, 112.84 W

Communities nearby: Macleod, Lethbridge/Cluny

Student Resource: HBC and Treaty-making: People and Places

*** Access to the internet for research and an atlas is required to complete the assignment.*

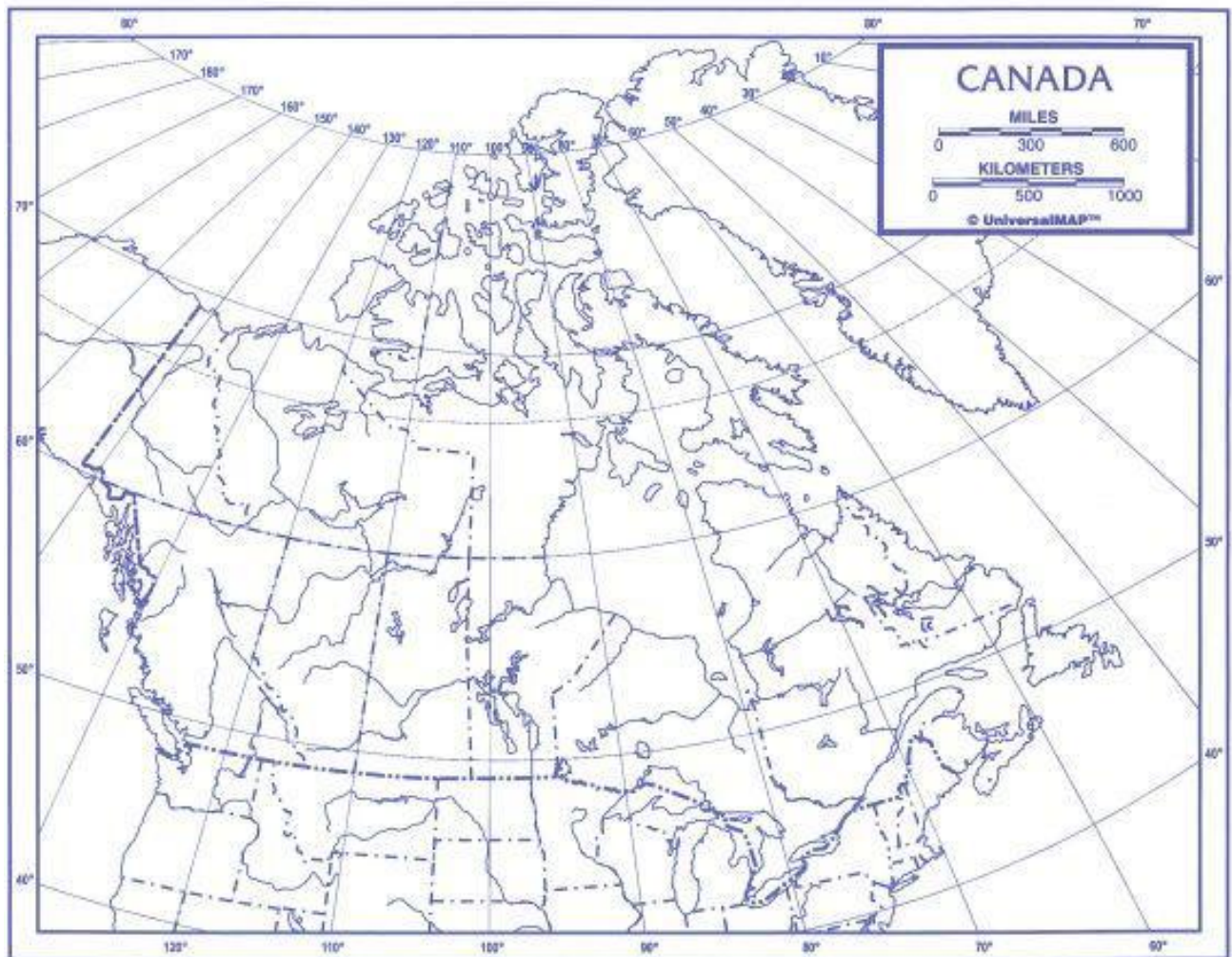
Part A: Inquiry

Based on what you learned about Hudson's Bay Company and the making of Numbered Treaties, 1 – 7, write one open-ended question (that means it cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').

PART B: Sites

Using an atlas, locate and indicate the following HBC forts on the map. Write which Treaty (1 to 7) was made at or near the site.

HBC Fort	Location	Nearby Communities
Lower Fort Garry	50.10 N, 96.93 W	Winnipeg, Selkirk, MB
Manitoba House	50.92 N, 98.86 W	Alonsa, Kinosota, MB
Fort Frances	48.63 N, 93.42 W	Fort Frances, ON
Fort Qu'Appelle	50.77 N, 103.79 W	Fort Qu'Appelle, SK
Fort Ellice	50.55 N, 101.21 W	St. Lazare, MB
Norway House	53.98 N, 97.83 W	Norway House, MB
Fort Carlton	52.92 N, 106.53 W	Duck Lake, Prince Albert, SK
Fort Pitt	53.57 N, 109.79 W	Frenchman Butte, Lloydminster, SK
Fort Macleod	49.72 N, 113.40 W	Macleod, Lethbridge, AB

PART B: Sites – Map

Part C: Situations

Using the internet, research each of the HBC forts. Complete the table below.

HBC Fort	Does the fort still exist?	If 'YES', what is there now? [national historic site? provincial park? museum?] If 'NO', draw a line through the row.	Based on your research, does the site have a cairn or marker that commemorates a Treaty?	Is there text that accompanies the marker? How does it explain the site's history or significance?
Lower Fort	YES / NO		YES / NO	
Garry			/UNSURE	
Manitoba	YES / NO		YES / NO	
House			/UNSURE	
Fort Frances	YES / NO		YES / NO	
			/UNSURE	
Fort	YES / NO		YES / NO	
Qu'Appelle			/UNSURE	
Fort Ellice	YES / NO		YES / NO	
			/UNSURE	

Norway	YES / NO		YES / NO	
House			/UNSURE	
Fort Carlton	YES / NO		YES / NO	
			/UNSURE	
Fort Pitt	YES / NO		YES / NO	
			/UNSURE	
Fort Macleod	YES / NO		YES / NO	
			/UNSURE	

Part D: People

Each of the following HBC employees were involved in the making of the Numbered Treaties. Use the internet for research and match the person with their involvement.

James McKay ____

A. Worked for HBC for 24 years, 8 as a Chief Factor. Cousin of the Company governor, George Simpson. He was a Commissioner at Treaty 1 and 2 in 1871.

William J. Christie ____

B. Métis leader who held positions as a HBC clerk and postmaster, he was fluent in various Indigenous languages and acted as an interpreter at Treaties 1, 2, and 3 and as a Commissioner at Treaties 5 and 6.

Wemyss M. Simpson ____

C. Joined HBC in 1854, serving as an apprentice at various locations before being appointed clerk. He was appointed Chief Trader at Fort Qu'Appelle in 1869 and oversaw the signing of Treaty 4 in 1874.

Archibald McDonald ____

D. A prominent Métis HBC employee who held various positions and was appointed Inspecting Chief Factor in 1872. He served as Commissioner at Treaty 4 in Fort Qu'Appelle, and Treaty 6 at Fort Carlton and Fort Pitt.

What was the name of the HBC steamboat that transported Treaty Commissioners to the First Nations communities around Lake Winnipeg to negotiate Treaty 5 in 1875 and 1876?

- a. S.S. Colville
- b. S.S. Anson Northup
- c. S.S. Beaver

Part E: Inquiry – Second Round

Based on your research about Hudson's Bay Company and the making of Numbered Treaties, 1 – 7, answer the question you wrote in Part A.
