

Cobblestone™

NORTH AMERICAN BEAVER FUR TRADE

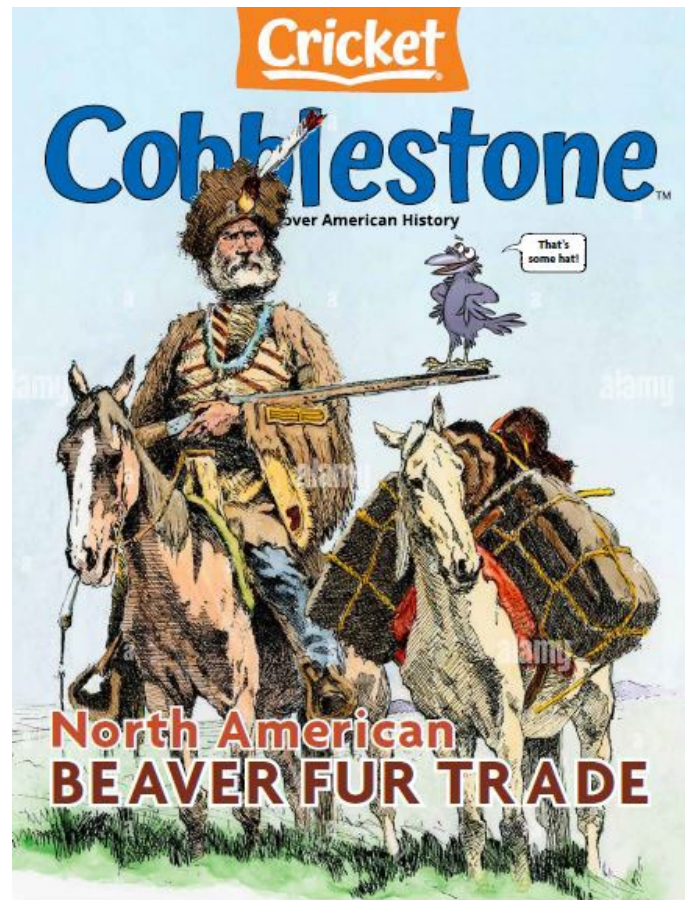
Use the articles, lessons, and activities in this Teacher Guide to help students understand the North American beaver fur trade.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How did the beaver fur trade affect the settlement of Canada and the northern United States?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the beaver fur trade.
- Students will explain how the beaver trade changed settlement patterns.
- Students will explain how environmental characteristics of an area affect world trade and settlement.
- Students will analyze the ways that the availability of beaver influenced the locations of trading posts.
- Students will conduct research.
- Students will create a map.
- Students will participate in a debate.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

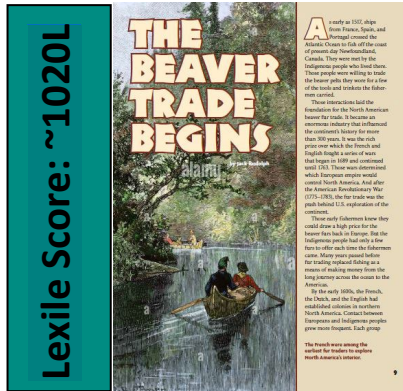
SELECTIONS

- **The Beaver Trade Begins**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1020L
- **Big Business on the Frontier**
Expository Nonfiction, ~960L
- **Dramatic Changes**
Expository Nonfiction, ~990L

The Beaver Trade Begins

pp. 9–11, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article to learn about the beginning of the beaver fur trade and how it affected North American settlement.



RESOURCES

Sequence of Events

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction text.
- Students will learn about the beginning of the North American trade in beaver fur.
- Students will create and use a chronological sequence of events.
- Students will conduct research.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **indigenous (p. 9)** the people who originally lived in a place, rather than people who moved there from somewhere else
- **pelt (p. 10)** the skin of an animal, especially one with fur or wool
- **haggle (p. 11)** to bargain or argue over the price of something

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How did the beaver fur trade affect the settlement of Canada and the northern United States? Ask students if they have ever traded something they had for something a friend or sibling had. Why did they choose to trade that particular object? Was it something they had a lot of or didn't value? Did they think they were getting something more valuable in return? Discuss how the North American environment, the availability of beaver, and its importance to each group led to bartering between the indigenous people and the Europeans, in addition to starting the beaver trade.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Define each word with students. Then arrange students in small groups and have them practice using two or even three of the words in a single sentence. Finally, tell students to look for these words as they read the story.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article. Then use these questions for discussion:

1. How did the indigenous peoples' knowledge of the environment help create the beaver trade?
2. Why did trading between the indigenous peoples and the Europeans work so well for each group?
3. Why did the Europeans begin to establish trading posts in Canada?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Sequence of Events

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that this article describes the sequence of events from the first interactions between European fishermen and indigenous people, to the establishment of trading posts in North America. Working in pairs, have students identify the events of the article and then fill in the *Sequence of Events* graphic organizer as a chronological timeline of those events.

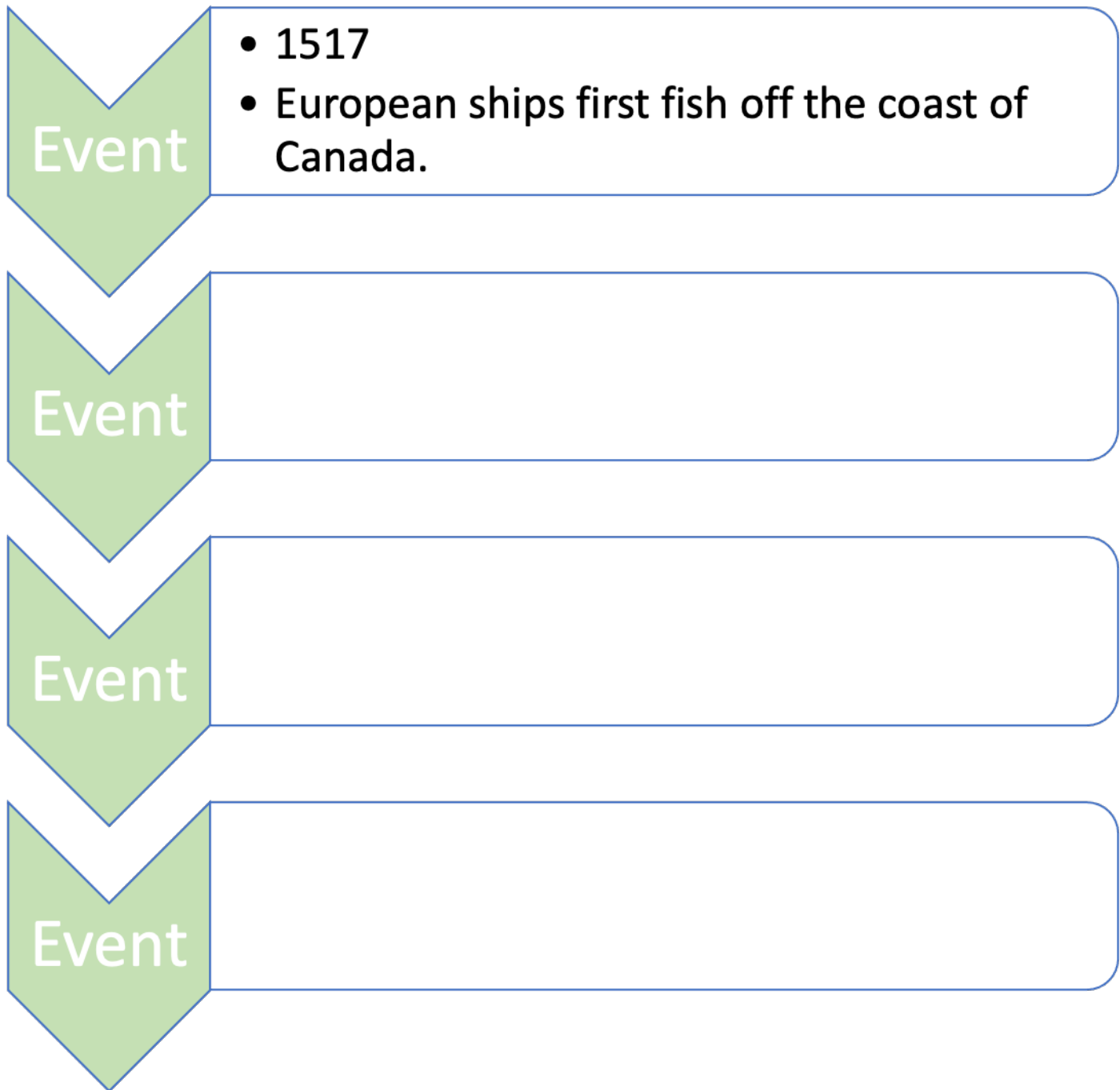
ASSESS: Have students compare their timelines with the rest of the class and discuss any differences, especially what each student chose to include.

EXTEND

English Invite students to write a fictional letter home from a European trader in Canada to their family, describing what they saw and the indigenous people they met.

Sequence of Events

Understanding the sequence of events helps us see how a historical event often develops from a single incident or circumstance. The North American beaver fur trade began with interactions between European fishermen and indigenous peoples. Look at the chart below. Starting with the first meetings of fishermen and natives, create a timeline of important events through the establishment of European trading posts.

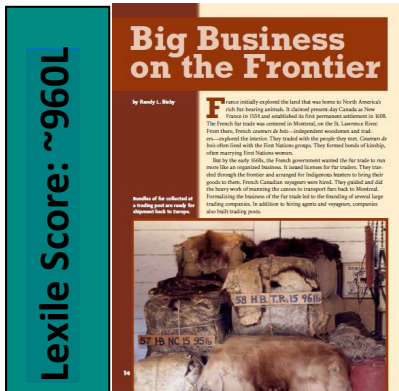


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Big Business on the Frontier

pp. 14–17, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about how beaver fur trading became big business to give students an opportunity to analyze how the availability of beaver influenced the establishment of the fur industry.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the creation of trading posts in North America.
- Students will analyze the ways that the availability of beaver influenced the locations of those trading posts.
- Students will explore cause and effect.
- Students will create a map.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **kinship** (p. 14) a relationship between members of the same family
- **voyagers** (p. 14) boatmen in Canada employed by the fur companies to transfer goods and passengers to and from trading posts
- **rebuffed** (p. 15) rejected someone or something in an abrupt or rude manner

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How did the beaver fur trade affect the settlement of Canada and the northern United States?

Ask students what they know about how places in North America were first settled. What kinds of things would someone look for when deciding where to live and create a settlement? What would they need to survive? Then discuss how people often settled in places where they could perform a certain trade for money. How would that affect their choice of a place to settle?

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Read the vocabulary words and definitions. Then display the sentences below and have students use the vocabulary words to complete them. Finally, remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read.

1. French traders often created bonds of _____ with First Nations people.
2. _____ were needed to transport furs by canoe.
3. The leaders of New France _____ the French traders who wanted their help to set up a trading post.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students answer these questions after reading the article.

1. Why would the French government want to make fur trading into more of a business?
2. What was the reason for building trading posts?
3. How did companies decide where to build their trading posts?
4. What happened when more and more new trading companies started? Did they all survive?

SKILL FOCUS: Explore Cause and Effect

INSTRUCT: Explain that the beaver fur trade depended on the supply of beaver in a particular area. How did the exploration of North America and the constant discovery of places where beaver and other fur animals were plentiful affect the creation of new trading companies? How did it affect whether these companies survived? Have students work in pairs to review the article and list the causes (locations) that had the effect of creating companies and trading posts and why those places were chosen.

ASSESS: Have students gather in groups to share and discuss their lists.

EXTEND

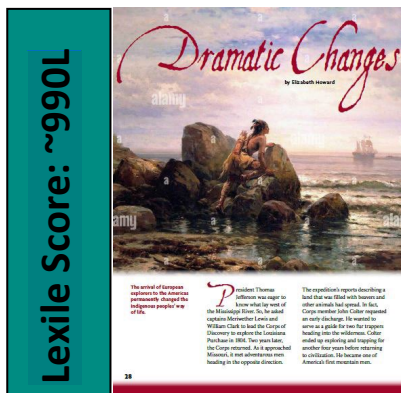
Social Studies Have students use digital and print sources to research the locations of trading posts mentioned in the article. Instruct them to create a map showing these locations.

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Dramatic Changes

pp. 28–31, Expository Nonfiction

Use this article about how the beaver fur trade changed life for both indigenous peoples and European settlers to give students an opportunity to analyze how the trade changed the settlement patterns of both groups.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the end of the beaver fur trade.
- Students will analyze how the beaver trade changed the settlement patterns of indigenous and European people.
- Students will conduct research.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **corps** (p. 28) a group of people who are all engaged in the same activity
- **sustainable** (p. 29) a way of using a resource so that it is not depleted or permanently damaged
- **contagious** (p. 30) a disease that spreads from one person to another by contact

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How did the beaver fur trade affect the settlement of Canada and the northern United States?

Ask students what they know about the history of indigenous peoples in North America. Do they know any of the reasons why those peoples often changed where and how they lived? Do they think that the indigenous peoples involved in the beaver fur trade might have changed their way of life and where they lived after the Europeans arrived? Why or why not?

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Display and read aloud the vocabulary words and definitions. For each word, have students write a sentence that uses it correctly. Have students share their sentences with a partner. Then remind students to look for the vocabulary words as they read the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students answer these questions after reading the article.

1. What happened to the indigenous peoples once they started hunting mostly for beaver?
2. What were some of the negative things that happened to the indigenous peoples because of the fur trade?
3. How did the beaver fur trade help with creating new settlements in North America?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Cultural Characteristics

INSTRUCT: Explain that cultural characteristics include beliefs, customs, lifestyles, and ideas. The article describes how life for the indigenous peoples changed because of the fur trade. It also describes how the search for new areas where beaver could be hunted helped to create new settlements for non-indigenous peoples, often displacing the indigenous populations. Have students work in pairs to review the article and create two columns. In the first column, list some of the customs and lifestyles of the indigenous peoples before the beginning of the fur trade. In the second column, for each item in the first column, list how they changed because of the fur trade and the presence of Europeans.

ASSESS: Have students gather in groups to share and discuss how the fur trade greatly affected the indigenous peoples.

EXTEND

Science Research and compare the near extinction of beaver to what happened to the American bison in the 19th century when they were hunted for their hides. Write two paragraphs about the similarities and differences.