

THE  
CANADIAN HISTORY  
*Report Card*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

ABOUT THIS REPORT	3
OVERVIEW	4
METHODOLOGY	5
OVERVIEW OF FINAL GRADES	7
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	8
FINAL THOUGHTS	9
PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL REPORT CARDS	
Alberta	10
British Columbia	11
Manitoba	12
New Brunswick	13
Newfoundland and Labrador	14
Northwest Territories	15
Nova Scotia	16
Nunavut	17
Ontario	18
Prince Edward Island	19
Québec	20
Saskatchewan	21
Yukon	22
CONCLUSION	23

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

---

This report is presented by Historica Canada, the country's largest organization dedicated to enhancing awareness of Canada's history and citizenship. For more information, visit [www.historicacanada.ca](http://www.historicacanada.ca).

This project was made possible by the generous sponsorship of the Wilson Foundation. The Wilson Foundation supports charitable projects and initiatives which will strengthen and enrich Canada in the areas of education leadership, community, history and heritage.



# OVERVIEW

Since the first Canadian History Report Card was released in 2009 by the Dominion Institute (one of the two founding partners of Historica Canada) there have been significant changes to history curricula in Canada. Inspired by Dr. Peter Seixas and the Historical Thinking Project, many provinces and territories have better incorporated historical thinking skills and diverse perspectives into their curricula. Ontario, Manitoba and Nunavut, for example, have all made curriculum revisions in recent years. Other provinces and territories, including Nova Scotia, Quebec, Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan, are currently re-evaluating their curricula. As a result of these planned and/or implemented changes, Historica Canada decided to re-evaluate the state of Canadian history education.

This report explores history education in Canada today. It focuses on the significant changes in direction that history education has taken in recent years, including pedagogical approaches, course content and the development of historical thinking skills. Historica Canada's analyses of the history programs of each province and territory are based solely on their respective curriculum documents. We recognize the gap between the theoretical nature of a curriculum document and the practical implications of delivering that material to students. Great teachers add more content and utilize more sources and activities than curricula prescribe.

In Québec, grade levels are called Secondary I, II, III, IV and V, which correspond with grades 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 in other provinces and territories. For simplicity, when we refer to 'grades 7 to 12' in our report, this also includes Québec.

Provinces and territories have various names for the subject known as social studies or social sciences. We have tried to remain faithful to the original terminology used in each province or territory, and we have used 'social studies' as the general term to describe the subject area.

History teachers, not curricula, make Canadian history come alive in the classroom. This report is, therefore, not an evaluation of teachers; rather, it evaluates what education ministries require of teachers and students. Historica Canada's analysis provides a snapshot of Canadian history curricula in 2015.

While this report focuses specifically on curriculum documents, it also incorporates teachers' perspectives. Teacher feedback from Historica Canada's nationwide teacher survey and from teacher focus groups grounded our analysis of curricula. Feedback from the survey and focus groups is not representative of every teacher, but this input is nonetheless useful, as it provides a clearer understanding of the realities of teaching Canadian history in different provinces and territories.

*"History education is experiencing a revival in this country . . . [a] little more than a decade ago there was pervasive despair about its very existence as a school subject, inside or outside social studies."*

— Penney Clark, ed., *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 11.

In response to teacher feedback following the first iteration of the History Report Card, this report evaluated curricula at the junior, intermediate and senior levels, from grades 7 to 12. The Dominion Institute's 2009 report focused on grades 9 to 12 in particular, and exclusively on Canadian history courses. By contrast, this report takes into consideration social studies, civics, humanities, social sciences and other courses with Canadian history content. A broader scope allows for a more thorough investigation of the state of history education in Canada.

Historica Canada's analysis of these various curriculum documents includes recommendations for improvement for each province and territory.

These recommendations are meant to be constructive and to foster discussion about these issues. Many recommendations were created based on strong teacher feedback about certain issues. Again, this feedback is not representative of every teacher in the country, but it helps to create recommendations that are realistic and relevant. As a means of balancing this criticism, each report card has a section that highlights examples of particularly innovative and interesting aspects of the curricula of each province and territory. The intent is to show that while every province and territory can make curricula improvements, they also offer unique and creative ways of delivering Canadian content.

The primary goal of this report is to foster discussion about Canadian history education and to influence policy changes as a result of those discussions. This snapshot of the current state of Canadian history education will provide teachers, parents, education ministers and the general public with a better understanding of which elements in various curricula need to change and which work well. Historica Canada hopes to ignite passionate discussion about Canadian history education.

## METHODOLOGY

Grades 7 to 12 social studies and history curricula were evaluated on three main factors: curriculum content, development of critical and creative thinking skills as outlined in curriculum documents, and the amount of mandatory Canadian history content offered at the junior, intermediate and senior levels.

Grades 7, 8 and 9 were evaluated separately from grades 10, 11 and 12 because in most provinces and territories there is some form of mandatory Canadian content from grades 7 to 9; this is not the case from grades 10 to 12. Beyond grade 10, provinces and territories have different Canadian history course options and graduation requirements. As a result, grades 7 to 9 were evaluated as the "junior/intermediate" group, and grades 10 to 12 were evaluated as the "intermediate/senior" group. Each group accounts for 50 per cent of the final grade for each province and territory.

The grading scheme is as follows:

JUNIOR / INTERMEDIATE			
CONTENT	SKILLS	REQUIREMENTS	GRADE
Scope and Chronology	Historical Thinking Concepts	Integration	
Perspectives	Research and Writing		
Issues and Themes	Communication		
<b>15%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>25%</b>	
INTERMEDIATE / SENIOR			
CONTENT	SKILLS	REQUIREMENTS	GRADE
Scope and Chronology	Historical Thinking Concepts	Mandatory Courses	
Perspectives	Research and Writing	Optional Courses	
Issues and Themes	Communication		
<b>15%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>25%</b>	
<b>FINAL GRADE</b>			<b>/100%</b>

**CONTENT** takes into consideration the following factors:

**Scope and Chronology:** While thematic approaches to teaching history are interesting, a clear sense of chronology is important, especially for younger students who need a firm understanding of historical contexts before exploring specific themes. This section of the report evaluates the level of clarity – or absence of the same – in various courses, as well as which historical periods are explored from grades 7 to 12. It seeks to understand whether students are given the opportunity to explore a wide range of historical issues.

**Perspectives:** Changes to curricula in recent years have demonstrated the need to better incorporate diverse perspectives. The report explores how well the following five perspectives are integrated into curriculum documents: national, provincial/local/regional, global, interdisciplinary and social/cultural perspectives.

**Issues and Themes:** The list below, compiled in consultation with history teachers and historians, reflects Historica Canada's beliefs on which topics students should, at minimum, learn in a Canadian history course:

- Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Inuit, Métis)
- Interdependence (Canada and the world)
- Politics and governance (constitutional history, democracy)
- Social responsibility (ethics, civics, roles and responsibilities)
- Economic history (industry, finance, trade)
- Military history (colonial wars, the world wars, Korean War, Cold War, recent conflicts)
- Diversity (multiculturalism, immigration)
- Gender (women's history, conceptions of masculinity, sexuality studies)
- French-English relations (from colonial era to the present)
- Identity (national, provincial, personal)

The section on **SKILLS** takes into consideration the following factors:

**Historical Thinking Concepts:** In 2006, Dr. Peter Seixas and the Historical Thinking Project outlined six concepts that help to develop students' critical and creative thinking skills. This report evaluates how well the following concepts are incorporated into social studies and history curricula: historical significance, historical perspective, cause and consequence, change and continuity, ethical dimensions and primary sources.

**Research and Writing:** The ability to gather, record and interpret information from multiple sources is an essential skill for a history student. This section examines how well the curriculum supports written communication, including independent studies and research, critical writing, collecting and presenting evidence and essay assignments.

**Communication:** Presenting historical arguments and engaging with other history students are important skills for students to develop. Curriculum documents were evaluated based on how well they support the development of students' visual and oral communication skills.

The **INTEGRATION/REQUIREMENTS** section evaluates the following criteria:

### **Integration**

**(FOR THE JUNIOR/INTERMEDIATE GROUP ONLY):**

Most Canadian history content from grades 7 to 9 is delivered in social studies courses. Accordingly, our report evaluates how well Canadian history is integrated into these courses, as well as other programs, including the humanities, social sciences and civics.

### **Mandatory and Optional Courses**

**(FOR THE INTERMEDIATE/SENIOR GROUP ONLY):**

This section evaluates how many optional and mandatory Canadian history courses are offered at the high school level in each province and territory. Top grades were given to provinces and territories that had at least one mandatory Canadian history course and more than one optional course in Canadian history.

# OVERVIEW OF FINAL GRADES

RANK	PROVINCE	GRADE	PERCENTAGE
1	Ontario	<b>A-</b>	82%
2	British Columbia	<b>A-</b>	81%
3 (Tie)	Québec	<b>A-</b>	80%
3 (Tie)	Manitoba	<b>A-</b>	80%
5	Newfoundland and Labrador	<b>B</b> <b>B</b>	Anglophone: 75% Francophone: 74%
6	Nova Scotia	<b>B-</b> <b>B-</b>	Anglophone: 73% Francophone: 72%
7	New Brunswick	<b>B-</b> <b>B-</b>	Anglophone: 71% Francophone: 71%
8	Prince Edward Island	<b>B-</b> <b>B-</b>	Anglophone: 71% Francophone: 70%
9	Saskatchewan	<b>C+</b>	69%
10	Alberta	<b>C-</b>	62%

RANK	TERRITORY	GRADE	PERCENTAGE
1	Yukon	<b>A-</b>	81%
2 (Tie)	Northwest Territories	<b>B-</b>	72%
2 (Tie)	Nunavut	<b>B-</b>	72%

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

---

After consideration of the data collected for this report, Historica Canada has the following recommendations to improve history curricula in Canada:

## 1. Each province and territory should mandate at least one Canadian history credit as a high school graduation requirement.

*“Students live in Canada and our Canadian history is not always what students end up learning. Canadian history is rich and hearty, which can make for some great learning in and outside of the classroom.”*

—Middle school social studies teacher from British Columbia

Understanding Canada’s history is intrinsically tied to students’ future ability to act as informed and engaged Canadian citizens. Moreover, instruction in history encourages students to develop critical and creative thinking skills, as well as written, oral and visual communication skills. As a result, there should be at least one mandatory Canadian history course in each province and territory. This Canadian history credit can be met in a multitude of ways, such as through courses in social studies, humanities, Indigenous studies, and the like. However, the mandatory course should in some way deliver important information about Canada’s past and clearly demonstrate how Canadian history influences present-day Canada.

## 2. A clear balance between national and provincial/regional history is required.

*“As Canadians know too well . . . sharing a national narrative is challenging. People may share institutions or a common territory but inhabit different historical realities. The challenge for 21st-century democracy is precisely to devise structures that allow for the development and dialogue between multiple narrative accounts of the nation without undermining unity and solidarity.”*

—Stéphane Lévesque, “The Challenges of Teaching National History in the Canadian Multicultural Context,” *Canadian Issues/Thèmes canadiens* (Spring 2011): 44–5.

National and regional perspectives are both important components of Canadian history curricula. Some provinces, such as Prince Edward Island and British Columbia, offer both national and provincial histories in their social studies and history courses in effective ways. Other provinces and territories pay more attention to one perspective than the other. Achieving a good balance between these perspectives is not easy, given the linguistic, cultural and regional differences among provinces and territories in Canada. It is nevertheless important to present students with a balanced view of the history of their country and province or territory.

## 3. Curricula should recognize and thoroughly integrate diverse perspectives.

*“When communities of people cannot recognize themselves in public institutions . . . [they] feel that they are strangers in society, that the society is not their society.”*

—Raymond Breton, “Multiculturalism and Canadian Nation-Building,” in *The Politics of Gender, Ethnicity and Language in Canada*, eds. A. Cairns and C. Williams (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 31.

In a country as diverse as Canada, it is important for students to understand the historical and contemporary perspectives of various societies and cultures. The perspectives of Aboriginal peoples are significantly lacking in the curricula of many provinces. Often, they are discussed only when their history fits the traditional grand narrative. This is not enough; students need to be aware of Aboriginal views and perspectives on various issues throughout Canadian history. They also need to learn about contemporary issues affecting Indigenous communities, and how those issues relate to a history of colonialism. The curricula must enhance the perspectives of ethnic minorities, women and immigrants. Curricula should acknowledge that Canadian history is made up of diverse voices. All students, regardless of their ethnicity or gender, should be able to “see themselves” in the history curricula of their province or territory.

*"[The Historical Thinking Concepts] tie 'historical thinking' to competencies in 'historical literacy.' In this case, 'historical literacy' means gaining a deep understanding of historical events and processes through active engagement with historical texts. . . . These concepts are not abstract 'skills.' Rather, they provide the structure that shapes the practice of history."*

— The Historical Thinking Project, <http://historicalthinking.ca/> (2006).

4. Social studies and history curricula should clearly and effectively support the development of students' historical consciousness.

In recent years, many provinces and territories have revised their respective curricula, or plan to make revisions, as a means of incorporating the **Historical Thinking Concepts**. Developed by Dr. Peter Seixas and the Historical Thinking Project, these six concepts help students to develop critical and creative thinking skills. As noted, curricula should establish **historical significance** and strive to incorporate **historical perspectives**. Identifying **continuity and change** and **cause and consequence** is also important, and is best understood in courses with a clear sense of chronology. An understanding of **ethical dimensions** of historical interpretations is lacking in most curricula, but students should be made aware of these issues. Finally, the use and analysis of **primary source** materials are key teaching strategies. A clearer and more thorough integration of the six Historical Thinking Concepts is required in Canadian curricula.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

---

This report assesses the current state of history education in Canada, in light of various changes to curricula since the last report was released in 2009. It does not attempt to evaluate every element related to the teaching of Canadian history, fully recognizing that teachers can bring even the worst curriculum to life. The final grades for each province and territory, as well as the recommendations for curricula improvement, are not meant as an indictment of history teachers, nor do they prescribe clear and easy solutions to education ministries. Rather, the goal of this report is to launch a passionate and lively discussion about Canadian history education. Teachers, parents, education ministers and the general public need to address what they see as shortcomings in the curricula, and seek their own provincially or territorially designed resolutions. Working together, Canadians can influence curriculum changes in their region as they strive to improve the state of Canadian history education.

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 64% | C

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 60% | C-

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies 30-1: Perspectives on Ideology and 30-2: Understandings of Ideology (social studies, grade 12, either 30-1 or 30-2 is **mandatory**), Social Studies 10-1 and 10-2 (social studies, grade 10, optional), Social Studies 20-1 and 20-2 (social studies, grade 11, optional), Western Canadian History 20 (history, grade 11, optional), Canadian History 20 (history, grade 11, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- While grades 7 and 9 focus on Canada, the grade 8 course asks students to explore past societies that they might not have otherwise been familiar with, including Japan, Renaissance Europe, and the Spanish and the Aztecs.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Students explore themes of globalization, nationalism, and ideology in their high school years. However, there is no clear Canadian perspective in any of these courses.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- Social studies courses in high school are not strictly history courses. Restructuring these courses to add Canadian history content would be beneficial. Alternatively, Canadian History 20 could provide students with this content, if it were updated and made mandatory.

### Scope and Chronology:

- A clear sense of chronology is lacking in the mandatory social studies courses in grades 7, 8, 9 and 12. A better balance between thematic and chronological approaches is required.

### Knowledge and Skills:

- The Historical Thinking Concepts are not explicitly mentioned in the curriculum documents. Teachers and students would benefit from a clearer and more thorough discussion about the development of historical consciousness in the curricula.

## STRENGTHS OF THE ALBERTA CURRICULA:

- Social studies curricula in Alberta pay close attention to Canada's contemporary and historical political, economic, and cultural relationships with its neighbours. This provides students with a better understanding about various world views and about Canada's place on the international stage.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 80% | A-

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 81% | A-

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies 10 (social studies, grade 10, **mandatory**), Social Studies 11 (social studies, grade 11, optional), BC First Nations Studies 12 (social studies, grade 11, optional), Civics Studies 12 (social studies, grade 11, optional), History 12 (history, grade 12, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- Social studies courses in grades 7 to 9 offer students a good balance of global, provincial, interdisciplinary and national perspectives.
- Grade 9 social studies prepares students for a deeper investigation of Canadian history in high school by exploring Canada's historical relationship with Britain and France.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Grade 10 social studies explores Canada during the years from 1815–1914. It focuses on the themes of identity, society and culture; governance; economy and technology; and environment.
- In order to graduate, students must take one of the following three courses: Social Studies 11, BC First Nations Studies 12 or Civics Studies 12.
- Students can take History 12, a course that explores Canadian history from 1919 to 1991.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- Social Studies 11 should become mandatory, because it is the only course that adequately covers a range of Canadian history. Without it, there is no guarantee that students will learn about important post-1914 events and issues in Canadian history at the high school level.

## STRENGTHS OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA CURRICULA:

- British Columbia does an excellent job of exploring historical perspectives and including the historical views of those who are often overlooked, including women and Indigenous peoples.
- The social studies curriculum documents offer great assessment strategies that encourage creative and critical thinking.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 78% | B+

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 81% | A-

**Courses evaluated:** History of Canada 30 (history, grade 11, **mandatory**),  
Current Topics in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies (social studies, grade 12, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- In grades 7 and 8, respectively, students learn about what life is like for those living in other countries and about what life was like for people of various societies and cultures in the past. World history perspectives are strongly emphasized in these courses.
- In grade 9, students explore Canada's place on the world stage. Some themes covered include diversity and pluralism, democracy and governance, and Canada's future.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- History of Canada 30 is a well-balanced course that explores contact history to the present day. It was remodelled in 2014, and now fully incorporates the Historical Thinking Concepts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- There should be more Canadian history content in the social studies courses in grades 7 to 9. Even though students learn about pre- and post-Confederation history in grades 5 and 6, it is still important to learn about Canadian history in junior high school.
- More optional Canadian history courses should be offered in senior high school.

### Scope and Chronology:

- The grade 11 Canadian history course attempts to cover a large historical period in a limited time frame. Teachers from Manitoba have noted the difficulty in covering this much content in one course. Offering the same content over two or three years instead of one might be a good solution.

### Perspectives:

- The global perspective is very strong in social studies 7 to 9. While understanding Canada's place in the world is important, it is equally valuable to learn about historically significant domestic issues. A better balance between national, global and regional perspectives is required.

## STRENGTHS OF THE MANITOBA CURRICULA:

- Social studies courses in Manitoba have a very strong grounding in Indigenous history.
- The Historical Thinking Concepts are thoroughly incorporated in the social studies curricula.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

# New Brunswick

New Brunswick has Anglophone and Francophone school districts that act independently of each other. They have been allotted separate grades.

ANGLOPHONE

FINAL GRADE: 71% | B-

FRANCOPHONE

FINAL GRADE: 71% | B-

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 71% | B- (Anglophone district); 68% | C+ (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies / Sciences humaines (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 70% | B- (Anglophone district); 74% | B (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Anglophone district: Canadian History 122 (history, grade 12, optional), Native Studies 120 (social studies, grade 12, optional); Francophone district: Histoire du Canada (Canadian History, grade 11, **mandatory**), Histoire de l'Acadie (Acadian History, grade 12, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- In grade 7 and 8, students in the Anglophone district focus on Canadian studies, while students in the Francophone district learn about societies of the past. In grade 9, students in the Anglophone sector learn about factors affecting Canadian identity over time, while students in the Francophone sector learn about geography.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- In the Anglophone sector, the mandatory social studies course in grade 10 (Ancient and Medieval History) and the mandatory history course in grade 11 (Modern History) have no Canadian content.
- In the Francophone sector, students must take Histoire du monde (world history) in grade 10 and Histoire du Canada (Canadian history) in grade 11. Both explore the time period from the 17th century to the present.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- In the Francophone sector, social studies courses in grades 7 and 8 provide students with important historical information about civilizations that have preceded and, in some cases, influenced the Canadian nation. However, Canadian history content is missing from the junior high school curricula and should be worked in.
- At the secondary level in the Anglophone sector, Canadian History 122 should become a mandatory course. Without this course there is very little, if any, Canadian history content at the high school level.

### Perspectives:

- In both language districts, the social studies curricula in New Brunswick attempt to incorporate diverse perspectives, but they require more content on Aboriginal history.

## STRENGTHS OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK CURRICULA:

- New Brunswick does an excellent job of incorporating the Historical Thinking Concepts into its social studies and history courses from grades 7 to 12.
- New Brunswick incorporates important regional history and heritage into its social studies and history curricula.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

# Newfoundland and Labrador

ANGLOPHONE

FINAL GRADE: 75% | B

FRANCOPHONE

FINAL GRADE: 74% | B

Newfoundland and Labrador has Anglophone and Francophone school districts that act independently of each other. They have been allotted separate grades.

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 79% | B+ (Anglophone district); 79% | B+ (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies / Sciences humaines (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 70% | B- (Anglophone district); 68% | C+ (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Anglophone district: Canadian History 1201 (history, grade 10, optional), Newfoundland and Labrador Studies 2205 (social studies, grade 11, optional); Francophone district: Histoire du Canada 1231 (Canadian History, grade 10, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- The social studies program offers plenty of Canadian history content, exploring various issues from 1850 to the First World War in grade 7, regional history during the 19th and 20th centuries in grade 8, and Canada since 1920 in grade 9.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Canadian History 1201/Histoire du Canada 1231 is a well-balanced course that explores Canadian history since 1900.
- There is only one other course option in the Anglophone sector with Canadian content, grade 11 Newfoundland and Labrador Studies 2205, but it is not strictly a history course.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- Canadian History 1201/Histoire du Canada 1231 should become mandatory, because without it students will not learn about Canadian history in high school.
- There should be more optional courses in Canadian history available at the high school level, especially in the Francophone district.

### Perspectives:

- There is a strong regional focus in the curricula, which has its benefits, but which can also limit perspectives outside the region. A better balance is required between regional and national perspectives at the secondary level.

## STRENGTHS OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR CURRICULA:

- Independent study and research are strongly encouraged in the social studies curricula. The critical thinking and communication skills that students will acquire as a result of this work will better prepare them for post-secondary education and the workforce.
- Balanced by Canadian history content provided in grades 7 and 9, Newfoundland and Labrador Studies in grade 8 is an interesting course that provides students with the opportunity to explore local art, music, heritage, history and culture. Secondary-level courses would benefit from adopting this balance between regional and national perspectives.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

# Northwest Territories

FINAL GRADE: 72% | B-

Please note that the Northwest Territories uses Manitoba's social studies curricula for grades 7 to 9 and Alberta's social studies curricula for grades 10 to 12.

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 68% | C+

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 75% | B

**Courses evaluated:** Northern Studies 10 (social studies, grade 10, **mandatory**)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- Though the Northwest Territories uses Manitoba's social studies curricula for grades 7 to 9, it incorporates local history, heritage and culture, which makes the Northwest Territories' curricula different than Manitoba's and thus more relevant to students in the North.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Northern Studies 10 takes a deep look at northern communities, exploring the history of colonization, the North, and the North's relationship to Canadian and colonial powers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- Social studies courses in grades 7 to 9 have little Canadian content, especially in grades 7 and 8. A better balance of regional, global and national perspectives is required.
- The curriculum documents for social studies in grades 7 to 9 are fairly outdated and need to be revised.

### Perspectives:

- The historical perspectives of women and Francophone Canadians could be better incorporated into the social studies curricula.

## STRENGTHS OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CURRICULA:

- The Northwest Territories incorporates regional history, heritage and culture into all of its social studies and history courses.
- Oral history approaches are especially supported in the social studies curricula, which is uncommon in the curricula of most provinces and territories.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 71% | B- (Anglophone district); 70% | B- (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies / Sciences humaines (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 74% | B (Anglophone district); 73% | B- (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Anglophone and Francophone districts: Canadian History/Histoire du Canada (history, grade 11, optional), Études acadiennes (social studies, grade 11, optional); Anglophone district: African Canadian Studies (social studies, grade 11, optional), Mi'kmaq Studies (social studies, grade 10, optional); Francophone district: Perspectives canadiennes 10 (Canadian Perspectives, grade 10, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- In grade 7 and 8, students in the Anglophone district focus on Canadian studies, while students in the Francophone district learn about societies of the past. In grade 9, all students learn about Atlantic Canada in the global context.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Students must take a Canadian history credit in grade 11 in order to graduate. To satisfy this requirement, students can choose from a variety of courses that explore different social and cultural perspectives, including Canadian History 11, Gaelic Studies 11, Mi'kmaq Studies 10, Études acadiennes 11, and African Canadian Studies 11.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- The course options in grade 11 are diverse, but only Canadian History/Histoire du Canada 11 truly provides students with a review of national history. The other courses include some Canadian content, but their respective focuses are narrow and do not always incorporate national perspectives. As a result, the Canadian history course should become mandatory.

### Perspectives:

- In general, social studies and Canadian history courses offered by the Anglophone and Francophone districts overlook perspectives from outside the Atlantic region. A better balance between regional, national and global perspectives is required.

## STRENGTHS OF THE NOVA SCOTIA CURRICULA:

- In grade 10, the Francophone sector offers Perspectives canadiennes, a course that explores various issues in Canadian studies through the lenses of anthropology, sociology, psychology, politics and economics. The course would only be enhanced by including the Historical Thinking Concepts as a method of analysis.
- Citizenship 10 is a new course in the developmental stage in the Anglophone sector that will become mandatory for every student in grade 10. Combined with the mandatory Canadian history credit in grade 11, the link between history and citizenship will be made clear.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

Please note that Nunavut uses the Northwest Territories' social studies curricula for grades 7 to 9 and Alberta's social studies curricula for grades 10 to 12.

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 68% | C+

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 75% | B

**Courses evaluated:** Northern Studies 10 (social studies, grade 10, **mandatory**)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- Nunavut's social studies curricula for grades 7 to 9 strongly support local history, heritage and culture.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Northern Studies 10 takes a deep look at northern communities, exploring the history of colonization, the North, and the North's relationship to Canadian and colonial powers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- Social studies courses in grades 7 to 9 have little Canadian content, especially in grades 7 and 8. A better balance of regional, global and national perspectives is required.
- The curriculum documents for social studies in grades 7 to 9 are fairly outdated and need to be revised.

### Perspectives:

- The historical perspectives of women and Francophone Canadians could be better incorporated into the social studies curricula.

## STRENGTHS OF THE NUNAVUT CURRICULA:

- Nunavut incorporates regional history, heritage and culture into all of its social studies and history courses.
- Oral history approaches are especially supported in the social studies curricula, which is uncommon in the curricula of most provinces and territories.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](https://www.historyreportcard.ca)

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 81% | A-

**Courses evaluated:** History and Geography 7 and 8 (both **mandatory**).

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 82% | A-

**Courses evaluated:** Canadian History since World War I (history, grade 10, **mandatory**), Civics (social studies, grade 10, **mandatory**), Canada: History, Identity and Culture (history, grade 12, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- The grade 7 and 8 courses have an excellent sense of chronology, and thoroughly incorporate the Historical Thinking Concepts.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Students have to take Canadian History since World War I in grade 10, as well as a mandatory civics course that is worth half a credit.
- The grade 12 optional Canadian history course does an excellent job of exploring Canadian history from various social and cultural perspectives.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Scope and Chronology:

- The grade 10 course attempts to cover roughly 95 years of Canadian history in one course. Ontario should spread this material over the course of two years instead of one, either adding history content in grade 9 or creating an additional course in grade 11.

### Perspectives:

- While Ontario attempts to include diverse perspectives into its social studies curricula, it neglects regional history. Students should have a greater opportunity to learn about Ontario's past and its connection to the country, as well as to the world.

## STRENGTHS OF THE ONTARIO CURRICULA:

- The Historical Thinking Concepts are clearly and effectively built into the social studies and history curricula.
- Social studies and history courses in Ontario have a great sense of chronology and cover important themes and issues in Canadian history.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

# Prince Edward Island

ANGLOPHONE

FINAL GRADE: 71% | B-

FRANCOPHONE

FINAL GRADE: 70% | B-

Prince Edward Island has Anglophone and Francophone school districts that act independently of each other. They have been allotted separate grades.

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 71% | B- (Anglophone district); 70% | B- (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies / Sciences humaines (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 70% | B- (Anglophone district); 70% | B- (Francophone district)

**Courses evaluated:** Anglophone district: Canadian Studies 401A (social studies, grade 10, optional), Canadian History 621A (history, grade 12, optional), PEI History 621B (history, grade 12, optional); Francophone district: Le Canada dans le monde (Canada and the World, history, grade 10, **mandatory**)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- In grades 7 and 8, students in the Anglophone district focus on Canadian studies, while students in the Francophone district learn about societies of the past. In grade 9, all students learn about Atlantic Canada in the global context.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- In order to graduate in the Anglophone sector, students must take two social studies credits, one of which must focus on Canadian studies.
- In the Francophone school board, all students take Le Canada dans le monde in grade 10.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- History 621A should become a mandatory course in the Anglophone district. If students opt to take a different social studies course in order to meet graduation requirements, they will not learn about Canadian history as extensively as they would in History 621A.
- The Francophone district would benefit from having more Canadian history options for students at the secondary level.

## STRENGTHS OF THE PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND CURRICULA:

- History 621B in the Anglophone sector takes an interesting look at Islander history and identity. It encourages students to become aware of local resources, histories and peoples in their historical studies.
- Social studies and history curricula in the Francophone sector support the development of creative and historical thinking skills. Students will be well prepared upon graduation to think critically and communicate effectively in post-secondary studies or the workforce.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

Since Québec does not have junior high school, secondary I and II (grades 7 and 8) were evaluated in the junior/intermediate section, and secondary III, IV and V (grades 9, 10 and 11) were evaluated in intermediate/senior section. CEGEPs were not evaluated in this report.

Please note that Québec uses the same content for both French and English curricula. Some teachers in our focus groups note that English language textbooks are poorly translated from the original French, citing funding difficulties as the chief cause.

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 75% | B

**Courses evaluated:** History and Citizenship Education/Histoire et éducation à la citoyenneté (history, secondary I and II, **both mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 84% | A

**Courses evaluated:** History and Citizenship Education/Histoire et éducation à la citoyenneté (history, secondary III and IV, **both mandatory**), History of the 20th Century/Histoire du 20e siècle (history, secondary V, optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- Secondary I and II cover 30,000 years of history, exploring a number of historical events and issues including democracy, ancient civilizations, Christianization of the West, the American Revolution, industrialization, imperialism and civil rights.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- In secondary III and IV, students learn about Québec-Canada history from European contact with Aboriginal peoples to the present. At the end of secondary IV, students must pass a ministry exam in order to receive their diploma.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- Secondary III and IV are mainly Québec-focused. The curricula would benefit from adding content about the historical experiences of Canadians in other parts of the country.

### Perspectives:

- While secondary III and IV make an effort to explore various social and cultural perspectives, they should better incorporate the contemporary and historical views of Aboriginal peoples, Black Canadians and other diverse perspectives.

## STRENGTHS OF THE QUÉBEC CURRICULA:

- Québec strongly demonstrates how intricately citizenship and history are interwoven.
- While the mandatory history courses have a strong regional focus, they also provide insight about national and world history, and ensure that students are developing critical and creative thinking skills.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 72% | B-

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 66% | C

**Courses evaluated:** Canadian History 30 (history, grade 12, optional), Social Studies 10, 20 and 30 (all optional), History 10, 20 and 30 (all optional), Native Studies 10, 20 and 30 (all optional)

## COMMENTS:

### Junior/Intermediate:

- The social studies 7 to 9 program does a thorough job of incorporating Aboriginal history and perspectives into the curriculum. It also provides a good balance of national, global and regional perspectives.

### Intermediate/Senior:

- Saskatchewan makes students take at least one social studies course during their high school years, including a Canadian studies credit in grade 12. Students can satisfy this credit by taking social studies, history, or Native studies courses.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Canadian Content:

- Social studies courses in grades 7 to 9 focus more on contemporary issues than on historical ones. There should be a clear connection between past events and their influences on modern-day Canada.
- History 30 is a good course that should become mandatory. Without it, there is no guarantee that students will learn about important issues and events in twentieth-century Canadian history.

### Scope and Chronology:

- There are many thematically structured courses in Saskatchewan's social studies programs. While this is an interesting approach that older students might be able to understand and appreciate, younger students might have more difficulty grasping concepts such as continuity and change and cause and consequence. Especially in grades 7 to 9, a clear sense of chronology would be beneficial to students.

### Knowledge and Skills:

- All senior-level social studies curriculum documents are outdated, as they were last updated in the 1990s. It is primarily for this reason that Saskatchewan's intermediate/senior curricula received a lower grade than the junior/intermediate group. Future revisions to the curriculum should integrate inquiry-based learning, classroom dialogue, and the development of historical consciousness.

## STRENGTHS OF THE SASKATCHEWAN CURRICULA:

- Social studies courses in grades 7 to 9 successfully incorporate Aboriginal history and perspectives.
- Students have to take social studies courses throughout high school. This provides them with the opportunity to learn about Canadian and world history from various perspectives and sources. A strong grounding in social studies will prepare students well for the future.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

**Junior/Intermediate Grade:** 80% | A-

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies (grades 7 to 9, **all mandatory**)

**Intermediate/Senior Grade:** 81% | A-

**Courses evaluated:** Social Studies 10 (social studies, grade 10, **mandatory**), Social Studies 11 (social studies, grade 11, optional), BC First Nations Studies (social studies, grade 11, optional), Civics Studies (social studies, grade 11, optional), History 12 (history, grade 12, optional)

## **COMMENTS:**

### **Junior/Intermediate:**

- Social studies courses in grades 7 to 9 offer students a good balance of global, provincial, interdisciplinary, cultural and national perspectives.
- In grade 9, students are prepared for a deeper investigation of Canadian history in high school by exploring colonial Canada and its historical relationship with Britain and France.

### **Intermediate/Senior:**

- Social Studies 10 explores Canada during the years 1815–1914, focusing on the themes of identity, society and culture; governance; economy and technology; and environment.
- In order to graduate, students must take one of the following three courses: Social Studies 11, BC First Nations Studies or Civics Studies.
- Students can take History 12, a course that explores Canadian history from 1919 to 1991.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **Canadian Content:**

- Social Studies 11 should become mandatory because it is the only course that adequately covers a range of Canadian history. Without it, there is no guarantee that students will learn about important post-1914 events and issues in Canadian history at the high school level.

### **Perspectives:**

- Although the Yukon uses British Columbia's social studies curricula, the government component in Social Studies 11 should focus on the Yukon, not British Columbia. In general, more content about the Yukon is necessary throughout the social studies curricula to ensure that students have an opportunity to explore local/territorial history and perspectives.
- The Yukon would benefit from adopting a history course in grade 10 or 11 similar to those in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories, which explore regional history, culture and heritage.

## **STRENGTHS OF THE YUKON CURRICULA:**

- The Yukon does an excellent job of exploring diverse perspectives and of emphasizing connections between past societies and modern-day Canada.
- The Yukon's social studies curriculum documents offer strong assessment strategies that encourage creative and critical thinking.

For the detailed report, please visit [HistoryReportCard.ca](http://HistoryReportCard.ca)

# CONCLUSION

---

Since the last Canadian History Report Card was released in 2009, significant changes have been made to social studies and history curricula. Most notably, provinces and territories have increasingly incorporated the Historical Thinking Concepts into their curricula. Where curriculum documents are outdated, some teachers have incorporated the Historical Thinking Concepts into classroom discussions and activities on their own. As a result, students are developing a historical consciousness and sharpening analytical skills that are valuable inside and outside of a history classroom. Another great advance is the increasing awareness and inclusion of minority perspectives, both historical and contemporary, in various curricula. All curriculum documents highlight diverse views in some regard, providing students with a complex and more representative understanding of Canadian history.

There is always room for improvement. One longstanding struggle in Canadian history education is the ability to successfully balance national and local views. This is difficult in a nation with various linguistic, ethnic, and regional differences, to name a few. However, students require a well-rounded understanding of the past in order to truly understand how historical issues have affected, and continue to influence, the present. Similarly, social and cultural views could be better incorporated in curricula. While there have been improvements in this area, more attention to the history of Aboriginal peoples and immigrants, in particular, is needed. Updating curricula to include these views would provide more students with the opportunity to relate to the material they learn in the classroom. Finally, and related to this point, making clear connections between the past and the present is especially important at a time in which history is not always considered as relevant as other school subjects, such as science and mathematics. Students must understand why studying the past is important and how it continues to influence modern-day Canada.

Overall, the changes made to date to social studies and history curricula across Canada are impressive and demonstrate that the state of Canadian history education is not in jeopardy. This is happily contrary to concerns a decade ago, when the first Canadian History Report Card was released. While it is true that history as a discipline has been subsumed by social studies in most provinces and territories, especially at the elementary and junior high levels, this does not mean that history has been rendered irrelevant. Rather, it means that history is taught differently, from new and interesting perspectives. This approach is not problematic so long as students still receive, at minimum, pre- and post-Confederation Canadian history education.

*“We need to understand what has led us to today in order to make good choices for the future.”*

— Anonymous Québec teacher (Secondary I, grade 7)

The final grades of all provinces and territories demonstrate that the state of Canadian history education is in good standing. No province or territory received a failing grade, reflecting the fact that Canadian history education is in some way taught at the junior, intermediate, and senior high school levels. At the same time, no province or territory received an A+ because no curriculum is perfect. The curricula of all provinces and territories have strengths and weaknesses. This report aims to ignite discussion among teachers, education ministers, parents and students about these issues, in the hopes of fostering necessary changes to Canadian history education.