

O Canada: Our Home and Naïve Land

Ipsos Reid/Dominion Institute History Quiz Reveals Canadians Know More about American History Than They do about Canadian History

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Ipsos Reid/Dominion Institute History Quiz Reveals

Canadians Know More about American History (4.7 correct answers)

Than They do about Canadian History (4.2 correct answers)

6:00 AM, July 1, 2008 – Toronto, ON – It appears that Canadians know more about the history and politics of their neighbours to the south than they do about their own country. According to a new poll conducted in the format of a twenty-question quiz by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the Dominion Institute, Canadians have a higher average percentage of correct scores on questions about America (47%) than they do on questions about Canada (42%).

The quiz featured ten questions about each country, asking questions ranging from questions about the founding of our two respective nations to the decade that woman's suffrage was granted in both countries.

Questions about Canada were paired with similar questions about American history, so that knowledge about the two countries could be compared. The largest discrepancy in knowledge had to do with heads of state. While three in four Canadians (75%) know that George W. Bush, the president, is the American head of state, only two in ten (21%) know that the Canadian head of state is Queen Elizabeth II. On the other hand, Canadians are much more likely to know the first line of their own national anthem (53%) than the first line of the American anthem (25%).

The best-answered Canadian questions dealt with John A. Macdonald being the first prime minister of Canada (61% correct answers) and the year of confederation being 1867 (61%).

Interestingly, the best-answered question dealing with America involved picking Norman Rockwell as the only American visual artist in a group of three choices (76%).

Canadians score better on American questions than on Canadian questions...

Canadians averaged 4.2 correct answers overall on the Canadian questions, and 4.7 correct answers overall on the American questions.

On the **Canadian** questions:

- Men (4.4 correct answers) did better, on average, than did women (4.1 correct answers).
- Older Canadians (4.6 correct answers) performed better on the test than did middle-aged (4.0 correct answers) and younger (4.2 correct answers) Canadians.
- Canadians living in Ontario (4.7 correct answers) performed best on the Canadian questions, followed by residents of British Columbia (4.6 correct answers), Atlantic Canada (4.6 correct answers), Alberta (4.5 correct answers), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (4.0 correct answers) and Quebec (3.2 correct answers).

On the **American** questions:

- Men (5.0 correct answers) performed better on the test than did women (4.5 correct answers).
- Older Canadians (5.2 correct answers) did better on the questions than did middle-aged (4.6 correct answers) and younger (4.4 correct answers) Canadians.



- Canadians living in British Columbia (5.6 correct answers) did the best on the American questions, followed by residents of Alberta (5.3 correct answers), Ontario (5.1 correct answers), Atlantic Canada (4.7 correct answers), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (4.6 correct answers) and Quebec (3.4 correct answers).

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Dominion Institute from 06/10 to 06/13, 2008. This online survey of 1024 Canadian adults was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Who was the first prime minister of Canada?... (61%)

Six in ten Canadians (61%) know that the first prime minister of Canada was John A. Macdonald. One in four (25%) gave an incorrect response, and two in ten (15%) did not know.

- Men (65%) are more likely than women (57%) to possess this knowledge.
- Older Canadians (67%) are more likely than middle-aged (57%) or younger (59%) Canadians to know the correct answer.
- Canadians living in Ontario (74%) and Atlantic Canada (74%) are most likely to know the answer, followed by those living in British Columbia (73%), Alberta (71%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (59%), and Quebec (25%).

Who was the first president of the United States?... (50%)

Half (50%) of Canadians know that the first president of the United States was George Washington. Three in ten (32%) offered incorrect responses, while two in ten (19%) couldn't give any answer.

- Men (58%) are more likely than women (42%) to know who the first president of the United States was.
- Canadians living in British Columbia (59%) are most likely to possess this knowledge, followed by residents of Ontario (57%), Atlantic Canada (56%), Alberta (55%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (49%), and Quebec (25%).

What part of the Canadian constitution protects Canadians' rights and freedoms?... (44%)

Four in ten (44%) Canadians know that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects Canadians' rights and freedoms. Two in ten (22%) gave a wrong answer, and nearly four in ten (35%) couldn't offer any answer.

- Younger Canadians (50%) were more likely than middle-aged (44%) or older (39%) Canadians to give the right answer.

What part of the American constitution guarantees Americans' rights and freedoms?... (13%)

One in ten Canadians (13%) know that the Bill of Rights guarantees Americans' rights and freedoms. One in three (35%) gave a wrong answer, while half (51%) could not give any answer.

- Men (16%) were more likely than women (11%) to give a correct response.
- Younger Canadians (19%) are more likely than middle-aged (12%) or older (10%) Canadians to have this knowledge.

Which of the following slogans is associated with Canada's constitution?... (49%)

Half (49%) of Canadians know that the slogan, "Peace, order and good government" is associated with Canada's constitution. Two in ten (17%) thought the correct answer was, "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness", while three in ten (34%) believed it to be, "Liberty, equality, fraternity".

- Canadians living in Ontario (62%) are most likely to have this knowledge, followed by residents of Atlantic Canada (55%), Alberta (53%), British Columbia (52%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (49%), and Quebec (22%).

Which of the following slogans is associated with America's constitution?... (66%)

Two thirds of Canadians (66%) know that the slogan, "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is associated with America's constitution. One in ten (12%) gave the response, "Peace, order and good government", and two in ten (22%) answered, "Liberty, equality, fraternity".

- Canadians living in Alberta (88%) are most likely to possess this knowledge, followed by residents of British Columbia (80%), Ontario (78%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (73%), Atlantic Canada (72%), and Quebec (27%).

What is the first line of Canada's national anthem?... (53%)

Half (53%) of Canadians know that the first line of Canada's national anthem is, "O Canada! Our home and native land..." Four in ten (44%) gave an incorrect response, while 4% could not give an answer.

- Women (58%) are more likely than men (47%) to know the first line of the anthem.

What is the first line of the U.S. national anthem?... (25%)

One in four Canadians (25%) know that the first line of the U.S. national anthem is, "O! say can you see by the dawn's early light..." Four in ten (44%) gave an incorrect response, while three in ten (31%) couldn't offer an answer.

- Women (28%) were more likely than men (21%) to know the answer.
- Canadians living in British Columbia (32%) are most likely to possess this knowledge, followed closely by residents of Alberta (31%), Ontario (30%), Atlantic Canada (28%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (27%), and Quebec (9%).

In what year did confederation occur in Canada?... (61%)

Six in ten (61%) Canadians know that confederation occurred in Canada in 1867. One in four (25%) gave an answer after 1867, while 14% gave an answer before that year.

- Men (69%) were more likely than women (53%) to give the right answer.
- Older Canadians (73%) are more likely than middle-aged (57%) or younger (52%) Canadians to have this knowledge.

In what year was the Declaration of Independence issued in America?... (39%)

Four in ten Canadians (39%) know the Declaration of Independence was issued in America in 1776. Two in ten (18%) gave an answer before 1776, while four in ten (42%) gave an answer after 1776.

- Men (44%) were more likely than women (35%) to give the right response.
- Canadians living in British Columbia (50%) are most likely to have this knowledge, followed by residents of Ontario (47%), Alberta (43%), Atlantic Canada (41%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (27%), and Quebec (23%).

The government of Canada is best described as... (58%)

Six in ten Canadians (58%) know that the government of Canada is best described as a constitutional monarchy. Two in ten (17%) chose the answer, “a representative republic”, while one in four (25%) thought the correct response was, “a cooperative assembly”.

- Older Canadians (70%) are more likely than middle-aged (55%) or younger (46%) Canadians to have this knowledge.

The government of the United States is best described as... (75%)

Three in four Canadians (75%) know that the government of the United States is best described as a representative republic. The remaining responses were split between, “a constitutional monarchy” (13%) and “a cooperative assembly” (12%).

- Men (79%) are more likely than women (71%) to know this to be the case.

- Older Canadians (80%) were more likely than middle-aged (76%) or younger (66%) Canadians to give the right answer.

Who is the head of state of Canada?... (21%)

Two in ten (21%) Canadians know that Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state of Canada. Six in ten (59%) gave an incorrect response, while two in ten (19%) didn't have any answer.

- Younger Canadians (28%) are more likely than middle-aged (18%) and older (19%) Canadians to have this knowledge.
- Canadians living in British Columbia (27%) are most likely to have this knowledge, followed by residents of Alberta (25%), Atlantic Canada (24%), Ontario (23%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (20%), and Quebec (13%).

Who is the head of state of the United States?... (75%)

Three in four (75%) Canadians know that George W. Bush is the head of state of the United States. While two in ten (21%) didn't know, only 4% gave an incorrect response.

- Men (79%) were more likely than women (70%) to give the right answer.
- Older Canadians (84%) are more likely than middle-aged (72%) and younger (67%) Canadians to possess this knowledge.

Which of these authors is Canadian?... (39%)

Given a list of three authors, four in ten (39%) were able to pick out Susanna Moodie as the Canadian. One in three (34%) chose Jane Austen, while three in ten (29%) thought the answer was Harriet Beecher Stowe.

- Older Canadians (46%) were more likely than middle-aged (33%) and younger (39%) Canadians to pick the right answer.

Which of these visual artists is American?... (76%)

Given a list of three visual artists, three in four (76%) were able to pick out Norman Rockwell as the American in the group. Nearly two in ten (15%) chose A.Y. Jackson, while 9% chose David Hockney.

- Older Canadians (81%) were more likely than middle-aged (76%) and younger (70%) Canadians to choose Norman Rockwell.

Who was Canada's longest-serving prime minister?... (23%)

Two in three (23%) Canadians know that William Lyon Mackenzie King was Canada's longest-serving prime minister. Six in ten (60%) gave incorrect responses, while two in ten (17%) didn't offer any response.

- Men (26%) were more likely than women (20%) to provide the correct response.
- Canadians living in Alberta (29%) and Atlantic Canada (29%) are most likely to possess this knowledge, followed by residents of Ontario (28%), British Columbia (27%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (14%), and Quebec (11%).

Which president was elected four times and was the longest-serving president in the United States?... (28%)

Three in ten (28%) know that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the longest-serving president of the United States. Equal proportions either gave a wrong answer (36%) or didn't know at all (36%).

- Men (32%) were more likely than women (25%) to give the correct response.
- Canadians living in British Columbia (38%) are most likely to have this knowledge, followed by residents of Ontario (31%), Alberta (30%), Atlantic Canada (26%), Quebec (21%), and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (15%).

In what decade of the 20th century were Canadian women first given the right to vote in elections?... (16%)

Two in ten Canadians (16%) know that Canadian women were first given the right to vote in elections in the 1910's. Eight in ten (84%) gave an incorrect response, the most frequent of which was the 1920's (24%).

- Canadians aged 18 to 34 (23%) were more likely to know the answer than those over the age of 34 (14%).
- Canadians living in Ontario (23%) are most likely to possess this knowledge, followed by residents of British Columbia (16%), Alberta (16%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (14%), Atlantic Canada (10%), and Quebec (9%).

In what decade of the 20th century were American women first given the right to vote in elections?... (26%)

One in four Canadians (26%) know that American women were first given the right to vote in elections in the 1920's. Three in four (74%) gave incorrect responses, the most frequent of which was the 1930's (19%).

- Older Canadians (34%) were more likely than middle-aged (23%) and younger (21%) Canadians to have the correct response.



Comparison with 2001 American results ...

In 2001, a similar quiz was conducted on American citizens, regarding their own history. At that time, the poll was carried out over telephone, while the new poll was conducted online.

Nine in ten (90%) Americans knew that their first president was George Washington, compared to half (50%) of Canadians who know that, and six in ten (61%) Canadians who know who their first prime minister was.

One in three (32%) Americans knew their rights and freedoms are guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, compared to one in ten (13%) Canadians who know that, and four in ten (44%) Canadians who know their own rights and freedoms are protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Nine in ten (87%) Americans knew the slogan associated with their constitution was, "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness", compared to two in three (66%) Canadians who know that, and half (49%) of Canadians who know the slogan associated with their own constitution is, "Peace, order, and good government".

Eight in ten (79%) Americans knew the first line of their national anthem, compared to one in four (25%) Canadians who know that, and half (53%) of Canadians who know the first line of their own national anthem.

Seven in ten (72%) Americans knew their government was best described as a representative republic, compared to three in four (75%) Canadians who know that, and six in ten (58%) Canadians who know their government is best described as a constitutional monarchy.



Six in ten (61%) Americans knew the Declaration of Independence was issued in America in 1776, compared to four in ten (39%) Canadians who know that, and six in ten (61%) Canadians who know their own confederation took place in 1867.

Four in ten (36%) Americans knew that American women were first given the right to vote in elections in the 1920's, compared to one in four (26%) Canadians who know that, and two in ten (16%) Canadians who know their own female population was given the right to vote in elections in the 1910's.

For more information on this news release, please contact:

*Marc Chalifoux
Exec. Director
Dominion Institute
416.602.9721
marc@dominion.ca*

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