

## CLB 8 – August Question

Name:

Date:

### CLB 8 – Aboriginal Peoples

The ancestors of Aboriginal peoples are believed to have migrated from Asia many thousands of years ago. They were well established here long before explorers from Europe first came to North America. Diverse, vibrant First Nations cultures were rooted in religious beliefs about their relationship to the Creator, the natural environment and each other.

Aboriginal and treaty rights are in the Canadian Constitution. Territorial rights were first guaranteed through the Royal Proclamation of 1763 by King George III, and established the basis for negotiating treaties with the newcomers - treaties that were not always fully respected.



From the 1800s until the 1980s, the federal government placed many Aboriginal children in residential schools to educate and assimilate them into mainstream Canadian culture. The schools were poorly funded and inflicted hardship on the students; some were physically abused. Aboriginal languages and cultural practices were mostly prohibited. In 2008, Ottawa formally apologized to the former students.

In today's Canada, Aboriginal peoples enjoy renewed pride and confidence, and have made significant achievements in agriculture, the environment, business and the arts.

Today, the term **Aboriginal peoples** refers to three distinct groups:

**Indian** refers to all Aboriginal people who are not Inuit or Métis. In the 1970s, the term First Nations began to be used. Today, about half of First Nations people live on reserve land in about 600 communities while the other half live off-reserve, mainly in urban centres.

The **Inuit**, which means “the people” in the Inuktitut language, live in small, scattered communities across the Arctic. Their knowledge of the land, sea and wildlife enabled them to adapt to one of the harshest environments on earth.

The **Métis** are a distinct people of mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry, the majority of whom live in the Prairie provinces. They come from both French- and English-speaking backgrounds and speak their own dialect, Michif.

About 65% of the Aboriginal people are First Nations, while 30% are Métis and 4% Inuit.

### Review Question:

Many First Nations peoples live on reserve land. What is reserve land?

- Land set aside by the Crown for First Nations peoples
- The traditional land of First Nations peoples
- Land that is part of First Nations land claims
- Anywhere that large numbers of First Nations people live