How Canada Became a Country

From British Colonies to Confederation

Today we will read about the events that led to Confederation in 1867.



As we read, look for important dates, people and places.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. Before Confederation

Long before Canada became a country, Indigenous peoples lived on this land.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples have distinct histories, cultures, languages and communities.

Later, European explorers and settlers arrived. Britain and France established colonies in different parts of the land.



Remember: the history of this land began long before 1867.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2. British North America in the 1860s

By the 1860s, several British colonies existed in British North America.

Each colony had its own government and leaders.

The colonies faced challenges. Some leaders thought they would be stronger if they joined together.



British North America included colonies in the area that is now Canada.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3. Why did some colonies want to join together?

Some leaders believed the colonies would be stronger as one country.

They wanted to:

- build a stronger economy and increase trade
- build railways and improve transportation
- work together on defence and security
- have a stronger central government



A railway in the 1860s

LIVEWORKSHEETS

4. The Charlottetown Conference, 1864

In September 1864, political leaders met in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

They discussed the idea of creating a larger country.

This meeting was an important step toward Confederation.



Charlottetown is on Prince Edward Island.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

5. The Quebec Conference, 1864

Later in 1864, the leaders met again in Quebec City.

They discussed how the new country would be governed.

These meetings helped the leaders make plans for Confederation.



The two conferences helped develop the plan for union.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

6. July 1, 1867: Canada becomes a country

On July 1, 1867, the British North America Act came into effect.

It created the Dominion of Canada.

The four original provinces were:

Ontario
Quebec
Nova Scotia
New Brunswick



Canada became a country, but it was still part of the British Empire.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

7. Canada's first Prime Minister

Sir John A. Macdonald became Canada's first Prime Minister.

Canada was now a country, but it was still part of the British Empire.

Over time, Canada gained more control over its own affairs.



A Prime Minister is the leader of Canada's federal government.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

8. Canada Grows

More provinces joined Canada over time:

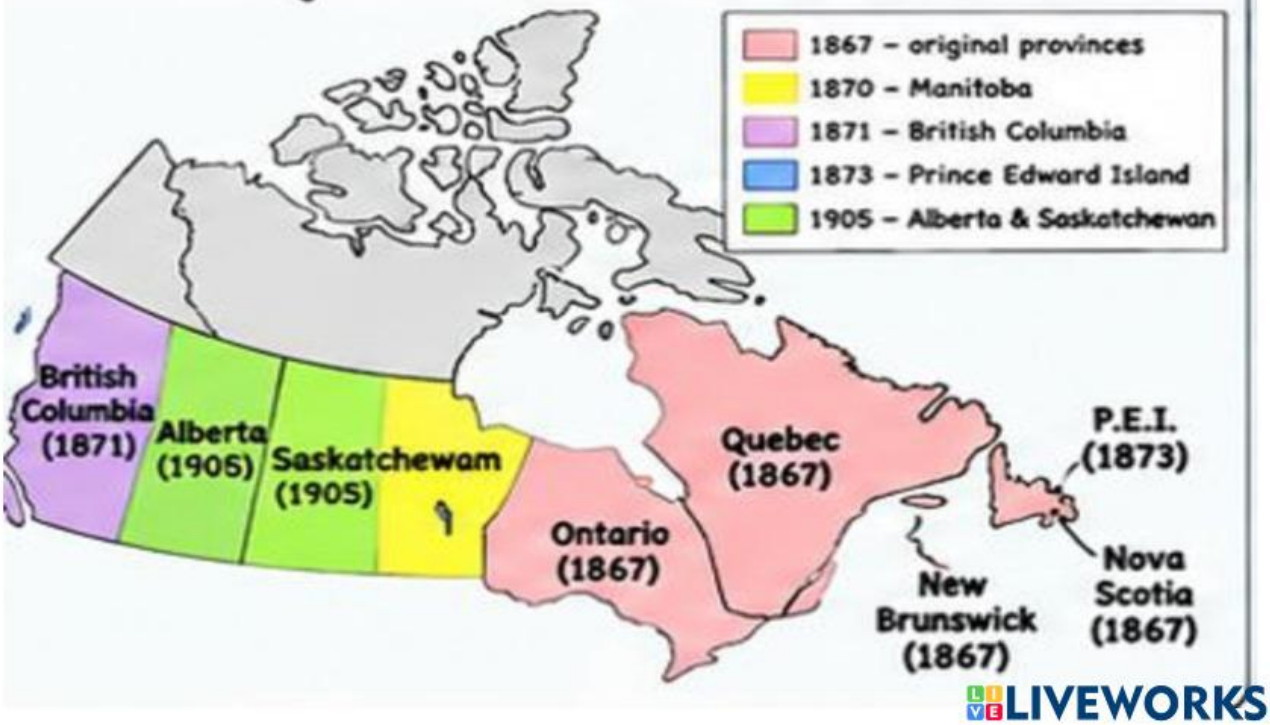
1870	Manitoba joined Canada.
1871	British Columbia joined Canada.
1873	Prince Edward Island joined Canada.
1905	Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces.

Today, Canada has 10 provinces and 3 territories.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

10

Map: Canada's Growth



LIVEWORKSHEETS

Part 2: Check your understanding



Work with a partner. Discuss the questions and write your answers.

1. What was Canada like before 1867?
2. Give two reasons why some colonies wanted to join together.
3. In what year did the leaders meet in Charlottetown and Quebec City?
4. What happened on July 1, 1867?
5. Name the four original provinces.
6. Who was Canada's first Prime Minister?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Part 4: Let's talk!



Discuss these questions with your group.

1. Why do you think the colonies wanted to become one country?
2. Why is July 1 an important date in Canada?
3. What surprised you about how Canada became a country?
4. What would you like to learn more about Canadian history?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Homework: Make a Confederation timeline

Use the PowerPoint to complete your timeline. Write 1 important event beside each date.

1864	
July 1, 1867	
1870	
1871	
1873	
1905	

LIVEWORKSHEETS