

Module: Canadian History – Immigration
Competency: Reading CLB 3.4 Comprehending Information
Task: Read the story and write in or choose the correct answer.

The First Chinese Immigrants in Canada

In the 1800s, it was very difficult to travel west because there was no railway. Sir John A. Macdonald, prime minister of Canada, promised to build a railway across the country.

The government had a problem. British Columbia had many mountains. It was very difficult and dangerous to build a railway here. There were not enough Canada workers. Many Canadians did not want to do dangerous work.

The government said it was okay to get workers from China. Between 1881 and 1885, 17,000 Chinese workers came to work in Canada. Their boat trip from China to Canada was 50 days long.

Their work was not safe, and many workers died. Many workers also died from being sick because they were very tired.

Life was very difficult for these people. They came to Canada without their families. They got half the white people's pay. Four thousand Chinese workers died before the railway was finished.

Write in or choose the correct answer.

1. From which country are these immigrants? _____
2. When did this story take place?
a. 1981-1985 b. 1881-1885 c. 1891-1895 d. 1818-1858
3. Who was the prime minister when this story happened? _____
4. Why did they come to Canada?
a. For freedom c. To learn English
b. For work building a railway d. To see their family
5. Why did some of the workers die? (two answers)
a. Someone killed them.
b. Their work was dangerous.
c. They got sick because they worked so hard and were tired.
6. Why was their life in Canada difficult? (three answers)
a. Their work was dangerous.
b. They didn't have their families with them.
c. They didn't like the food here.
d. They didn't like the weather.
e. They got low pay.
7. How many Chinese workers survived? (clue: the answer is not in the story)
a. 17,000 b. 4,000 c. 13,000