



# BUILDING FUTURES IN MANITOBA

## TEACHING UNIT

General Topic:	<b>The Economy: The Basics – and Key Issues</b>
Unit Title:	<b>Resources and Production</b>
Grade Level:	Grade 5
Recommended Curriculum Area:	Social Studies
Other Relevant Curriculum Area(s):	Language Arts



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## Possible Curriculum Integration Points

### Grade 5 Social Studies Recommended

#### Outcomes

##### First Peoples and their connection to the environment

- The study of the Fur Trade.
- Describe daily life and challenges for various groups involved in the fur trade.
- Appreciate the contributions of First Peoples to the development of Canada.
- Appreciate the significance of the land and natural resources in the development of Canada.
- Describe how the fur trade was dependent on the men and women of the First Nations and Métis Nation.

### Other Relevant Curriculum Area(s)

#### Grade 5 Language Arts

#### Outcomes

- **Respond to Text** – Compare the challenges and situations encountered in daily life with those experienced by people in other times, places, and cultures as portrayed in oral, literary, and media texts
- **Clarify and Extend** – Use prior knowledge and experiences selectively to make sense of new information in a variety of contexts.
- **Comprehension Strategies** – Use a variety of comprehension strategies (including setting a purpose, asking questions, inferring, and confirming or rejecting predictions and conclusions; confirm understanding and self-correct when necessary.
- **Create and Follow a Plan** – Gather and record information and ideas using a plan.
- **Develop New Understanding** – Assess knowledge gained through the inquiry or research process; form personal conclusions and generate new questions for further research or inquiry.
- **Appreciate Diversity** – Compare individuals and situations portrayed in oral, literary, and media texts to those encountered in real life; recognize personal participation and responsibility in communities.
- **Express Ideas** – Use personal experiences as a basis for exploring, predicting, and expressing opinions and understanding.
- **Consider Others' Ideas** – Seek others' viewpoints to build on personal responses and understanding.

## Relevant Economic Learning Topics and Activities

- An economy's role is to use available resources to produce and distribute products and services needed and wanted by consumers
- Features of Canada's early economy
- Difference between needs and wants
- Specialization helps societies produce more and better things
- Businesses that produce well, and what consumers will buy, can make a profit and succeed
- Identify key resources used in Canada and their community
- Describe how resources in their community are used to produce products and services

## Background Information

Students need a basic understanding of how an economy works. By learning about the features of Canada's early economy, students will see how resources were used to supply the basic needs of the First Peoples, European traders and settlers.

First Peoples could use the resources from their surroundings to provide food, shelter and clothing. As the French and English settled in the New World, the needs and wants of the First Peoples changed. They had access to resources, (beaver pelts) which could now be used to trade for other supplies that they wanted. The women wanted pots, silverware, blankets, shoes, etc. to make their lives easier. The men wanted guns, ammunition and tools so that they could hunt and work more efficiently. Students should appreciate the interactions of the French and English, and the difficulties that they had. Students need to understand the daily life and challenges it brought for various groups involved in the fur trade (e.g., the Coureurs de Bois, (the French traders), and the trappers). They will see how supply and demand makes an economy work. This also leads to interdependence among people and communities.

The Coureurs de Bois started establishing trading posts. The demand in Europe for beaver pelts to make the very fashionable beaver hats created an opportunity for trade. There was no currency, so the beaver pelt became the first "money" to be used in Canada.

During the discussions the students may empathize with the First Peoples because of the struggles they endured to survive. They will appreciate how perseverance was needed in order to survive. Students will understand how cooperation contributes to successful business practices.

## Overview of the Unit

Students will learn about the fur trade and the features of the early economy in Canada. They will be asked to put a "monetary" value on various products. In groups, they will have the opportunity to try bartering at a trading post.

The First Peoples had access to many beaver pelts, so they needed to exchange them for other products. They will define and discuss the meanings of PRODUCTS, SERVICES and RESOURCES. Students will research Canada's resources and describe resources in their community and how they are used to produce products and services. By trading resources and products, the students will be able to see that specialization leads to the need for exchange. The students will learn that some resources are limited and need to be protected in order to be sustainable. Students will experience what makes a business successful by playing a game about running a business on the computer.

**Estimated Time Frame: 6 periods – 40 minutes each**

### **Suggested Implementation Strategy**

**Period 1      40 minutes - INTRODUCING THE FUR TRADE**

- Divide the class into small groups.
- Hand out a picture of the beaver hats to each group. (Handout 1)
  - Ask the question, who would want to buy a hat like this?
  - After a brief discussion about the hats, tell the students that they will be reading about how, where and why these hats became popular.
- Hand out the text entitled “The Fur Trade” (Handout 2)
- Use a guided reading approach to read and discuss the text.
- In small groups, assign the task of making a list of what products the First Peoples traded for, and how much they think these items would cost in beaver pelts.
- On large paper the groups will complete the following T-chart:

<b>ITEMS PURCHASED</b>	<b>NUMBER OF BEAVER PELTS</b>

The teacher should give an example:  
e.g. one blanket      5 beaver pelts

**Period 2      40 minutes – THE TRADING POST**

To introduce the idea of a trading post, if available, use a computer to show the short Canada Vignettes – Trading Post on YouTube. This is the link to the website.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5wiXTGY6Lc>

- Make a place in the room to look like a trading post; this could be done as a previous art lesson. The teacher may opt to dress like a Coureurs de Bois and play some French music in the background for ambience.
- The T-charts made in period one will be put up on the wall in the trading post as the price lists.
- The teacher will act as the owner of the trading post. The groups of students will pretend to be a First Nations People. First, they decide on how many pelts to trade and what they want to buy in exchange for their pelts. Then each group will come up to the trading post to trade their pelts for goods.
- The teacher will conduct trades, purposely asking for too many beaver pelts, enticing the students to barter with them.
- Sometimes the teacher will tell the buyer that she or he can't trade because they have run out of a particular item.

After this activity, the students will be asked to discuss and reflect on some of the problems that arose during the trading session. If the responses desired do not arise, the teacher will guide them by asking questions like:

- How did you feel when the owner asked for too many pelts?
- How could the trading post owner avoid running out of items?
- What do you think would happen to the cost of an item if the demand for it rose?
- Do you think the trader has a created successful business?
- Would you go there again? Why?

**Period 3      40 minutes – NEEDS VERSUS WANTS and RESOURCES, PRODUCTS and SERVICES**

- In groups, ask them to divide the list of items the First Nations people obtained into NEEDS and WANTS.
- Then ask each student to brainstorm items that they have purchased at a store recently (e.g., milk, shampoo, shoes, a video game, a chocolate bar, etc.) and organize these items into NEEDS and WANTS.
- Write on the board the words RESOURCES, PRODUCTS, and SERVICES.
- The class will individually use a dictionary or a computer to find and write a definition for each word.
- Take up the answers and discuss how resources are used to produce products and services (e.g., milk is a resource used to produce ice cream to sell at a dairy).

**Period 4**      **40 minutes**

- Start the class by taking up the assignment from period 3, making sure the class understands the meaning of RESOURCES, PRODUCTS, and SERVICES.
- In small groups, the students will use computers or the library to research and make a list of the resources in Canada.
- Three websites that can be used to access Canada’s Resources.
  - o [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy\\_of\\_Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Canada)
  - o <http://www.neok12.com/Natural-Resources.htm>
  - o <https://www.quora.com/What-are-some-natural-resources-commonly-found-in-Canada>
- Lead a discussion by asking questions.
  - o Ask the students to think about which resources in their lists are non renewable.
  - o What would happen if all the trees were cut down?
  - o How can we ensure that non renewable resources are sustainable?
  - o What can they do to help Canada maintain its resources by limiting their use of non-renewable resources?

**Period 5**      **40 minutes**

- In groups, the students will look at their research on Canada’s Resources and be creative, making a mind map showing how these resources might be used in their community. (e.g., oil is used to produce gasoline for cars, wood is used to produce lumber for building houses, and wheat is used to make bread for hamburger buns).
- Share the mind maps with each other.

**Period 6**      **40 minutes**

- Using a computer lab, the students play a game called “Motion Math: Pizza.” Kids get a chance to run a business, and see how well they can make it grow. It teaches them about making business decisions, e.g. getting supplies, funding, etc.  
<http://motionmathgames.com/motion-math-pizza/>

## Possible Evaluation Activities

- The T-charts, brainstorming and mind maps could be assessed.
- An anecdotal record could be kept during the group discussions.
- The researched lists of Canadian resources could be marked.
- Students could be given a group evaluation to complete.
- Students may be asked to write a reflective paragraph about what they learned.

## Additional Follow-up Activities

1. Play the game “Escape from Barter Islands” at:  
[http://www.clevelandfed.org/learning\\_center/online\\_activities/barter\\_island/](http://www.clevelandfed.org/learning_center/online_activities/barter_island/) sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.
2. Research a business or service in the community and write a paragraph about why you think it is successful.
3. Design a poster for a business in the community.
4. Write a dialogue that might occur between the trading post owner and a customer.
5. Make a journal entry entitled A Day in the Life of a Fur Trader.
6. Read a non-fiction book that relates to the Fur Trade. Possible books are:
  - *The Fur Trade in Canada, an Introduction to Canadian Economic History*, University of Toronto Press
  - *Making the Voyageur World*, University of Toronto Press
  - *Winner Take All, The Trans-Canada Canoe Trail*, McGraw Hill
7. The teacher may do a read-aloud of a novel or story, such as:
  - *Life in the Early West* by Mike Moore
  - *Fur Trade Sampler* by Mike Moore

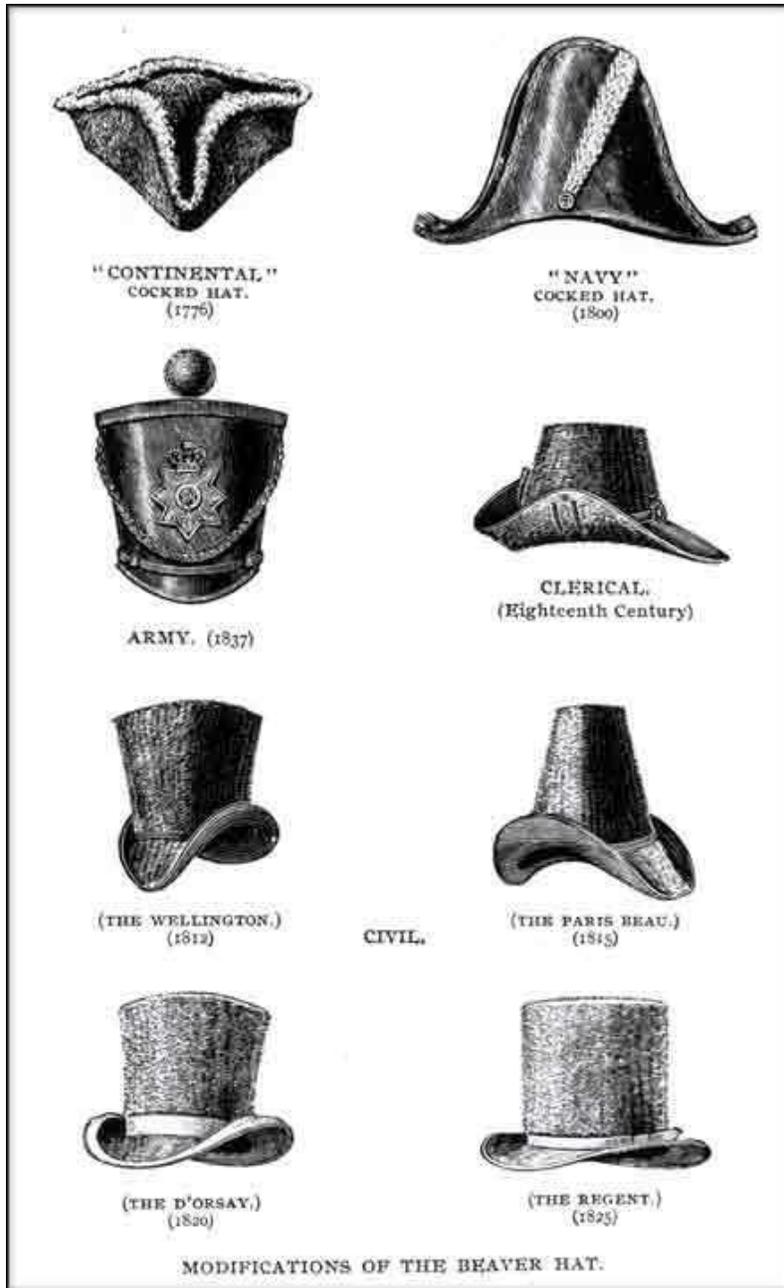
## Modifications or Suggestions for Different Learners

1. Much of the unit involves group work and activities, so all students can participate in some way using their strengths.
2. The teacher can monitor the group activities to ensure that everyone has a role.
3. New Canadian students could research information on the computer in their own language.

## Handouts

1. Pictures of Beaver Hats
2. The Fur Trade

Handout 1



## Handout 2

### The Fur Trade

The fur trade was one of the earliest and most important industries in North America. The fur trading industry played a major role in the development of the economy of Canada for more than 300 years.

The fur trade began in the 1500s as an exchange between First Peoples and Europeans. The First Peoples traded furs for such goods as tools and weapons. Beaver fur, which was used in Europe to make felt hats, became the most valuable of these furs. The fur trade prospered until the mid-1800s, when fur-bearing animals became scarce and silk hats became more popular than felt hats made with beaver. Today, almost all trappers sell their pelts. Inuit and First Nations trappers in Canada still trade their furs to fur companies for various goods.



The earliest fur traders in North America were French explorers and fishermen who arrived in Canada during the early 1500s. Trade started after the French offered the First Nations people kettles, knives, and other gifts as a means to establish friendly relations. They, in turn, gave pelts to the French. By the late 1500s, a great demand for fur had developed in Europe. This demand encouraged further exploration of North America. The demand for beaver increased rapidly in the early 1600s, when fashionable European men began to wear felt hats made from beaver fur. Such furs as fox, marten, mink, and otter also were traded.

In 1608, the French explorer Samuel de Champlain established a trading post on the site of the present-day city Quebec. The city became fur-trading center. The French expanded their trading activities into the prairies. They eventually controlled most of the early fur trade in what became Canada. The French traders were called “Coureurs de Bois.” These voyageurs were usually French Canadians, thus they were the first French-speaking people in Western Canada.

The fur trade contributed to the development of British and French empires in North America. During the 1600s, the prospect of wealth from the fur trade attracted many Europeans to the New World. Traders and trappers explored much of North America in search of fur. They built trading posts in the wilderness, and settlements grew up around many of these posts.

The fur trade depended upon the Aboriginal people, who imposed their trading practices and commercial requirements on the Europeans. To win the Aboriginals as clients, the Europeans had to manufacture goods of value to the Indian culture. Indians negotiated with merchants from the various trading posts, from New England and from the Hudson’s Bay Company. The merchants were all in strong competition with each other and so, to secure the assistance and cooperation of the Aboriginals, they offered gifts to the Indians. Smoking the ceremonial pipe and exchanging gifts before commencement of trade was an ancient Aboriginal tradition. Europeans participated in the custom as well.

In order to be successful as voyageurs and fur traders, the Europeans

- Learned to use Aboriginals' ways of travel (e.g. canoe, snowshoe)
- Used Aboriginal trade routes and knowledge of the land
- Learned medical knowledge from Aboriginals
- Learned other survival knowledge, such as food gathering and hunting from the Aboriginals

The hides and furs exported to Europe were used to make luxury items, mainly beaver hats. The Aboriginal person's goal was to trade for useful items. On average 60% of the trade goods they received were fabrics, 25% were weapons and tools, 6% alcohol, 3% trade jewelry, and 2% tobacco.

Trade Goods Included:

Alcohol  
Guns  
Gunshot  
Knives  
Measuring cups  
Needles  
Pipes  
Powder horns  
Scrapers (wood and metal)  
String  
Tobacco  
Wool blankets  
Fabric  
Armbands and headbands  
Axes  
Beads  
Beaver hats  
Blankets  
Brooches  
Cooking pots  
Gunpowder

## **Handout 2**