

The fur trade in Canada

Read about the fur trade. Then sort, think and answer.

1 Read about the fur trade.

For thousands of years, First Nations traded goods with one another across North America. In the 1600s, traders from France and then England came looking for furs, especially beaver. In Europe, beaver fur was made into felt for warm, waterproof hats.

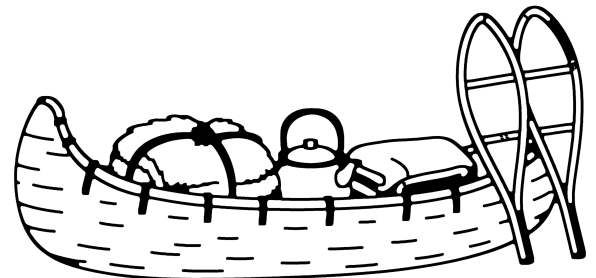
First Nations peoples, such as the Wendat, Anishinaabe and Cree, were expert trappers, guides and traders. They traded furs for European goods such as metal kettles, axes, wool blankets and glass beads.

The Hudson's Bay Company was founded in 1670, and voyageurs paddled canoes loaded with goods and furs. Traders depended on Indigenous knowledge: birchbark canoes, snowshoes, routes along rivers and lakes, and pemmican, a food made of dried meat, fat and berries. Some traders married First Nations women, and their descendants became a new people, the Métis.

The trade also brought hard changes. New diseases from Europe spread, and many Indigenous people died. So many beavers were trapped that they disappeared from some areas.

2 Who brought it to the trade? Sort the cards.

A beaver furs	B metal kettles
C birchbark canoes	D wool blankets
E snowshoes	F iron axes
G pemmican	H glass beads
I river route guides	



First Nations and Métis peoples

European traders

3 Answer in full sentences.

1. Why did people in Europe want beaver fur?

3. Why did European traders depend on First Nations peoples? Give two reasons.

2. What company was founded in 1670?

4. Name one hard change the fur trade brought.

