

Canada is the second largest country in the world, but much of it is almost empty of people. Northern Canada is a vast land of snow and ice. The Rocky Mountains rise to the west. Wide grasslands (prairies) stretch across the centre.

Many Canadians are descendent from French and British settlers who first arrived in the 16th century. Today there are about half a million Native Americans in Canada.



LAKE LOUISE, ALBERTA

PHOTO: LDs

Canada is known for its many lakes. There are about three million lakes in Canada. Canada houses more lakes than all countries in the world combined!

The capital of Canada is Ottawa. Toronto is the largest city. Other large cities include Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Quebec City, Winnipeg and Hamilton. About four fifths of Canada's 37 million people live in urban areas near the southern border with the US.

Canada's remote north and extensive forests are home to lots of wonderful wildlife, from bears, wolves, deer, mountain lions, beavers, and bighorn sheep, to smaller animals such as raccoons, otters and rabbits. The country's lakes and rivers are full of fish such as trout and salmon.

In 1537 the French started a colony. The British Empire soon followed. The two empires fought several wars and only British North America remained. It became independent in 1867. Canada today is a federal parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy, with King Charles III of the United Kingdom as its head of state. The country has two official languages: English and French. Almost half of the population can speak both languages. The majority of Canadians speak English as first language, but French is the main language in the Quebec province.

vast: big, large
to rise: to stand up
descendent: child
settler: immigrant
include: be part of it
urban: living in a city
remote: distant
extensive: wide-ranging
to remain: to stay
independent: free
majority: larger part
main: most important
to rely: to trust
resources: means
trade: commerce
impact: effect

The economy relies mainly on natural resources and well-developed international trade networks. Canada's neighbour, the U.S.A., is its biggest trading partner. It has a big impact on its economy and culture.

In each line, one of the words does not go with the others. Cross it out:

French	Finish	English	Spanish	German
Ottawa	Canberra	New York	Paris	London
descendent	grandson	daughter	queen	successor
Vancouver	Edmonton	Winnipeg	Montreal	Dublin
bear	apple	wolf	lion	beaver
Texas	Alberta	Yukon	Manitoba	Ontario
land	country	area	territory	democracy
vast	huge	big	large	tiny
rest	last	disappear	stay	remain
excuse	influence	effect	power	impact
head	boss	leader	partner	commander