

GRADE 10

CIVICS (POLITICS)

FRAMING QUESTION:

Looking at Nahnee's mission, how did she make her voice heard despite a political process that betrayed her Treaty relationship?

DURATION:

Approximately 5 days

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS:

B2. Canadian and Indigenous Governance Systems: explain, with reference to a range of issues of civic importance, the roles and responsibilities of various institutions, structures and positions in Canadian and Indigenous governance systems, Treaty relationships and other Crown-Indigenous relations (FOCUS ON: Stability and Change; Political Perspective)

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS:

Treaty Primers, *The Indian Act* Podcast Activity (Civics), a copy of the [United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

Notes about lessons: It is important that these activities are completed in order, as they build off of one another. While they are titled as "lessons," the explorations may end up unfolding over several periods or days. They may also serve as starting points for deeper inquiry and knowledge building. Although the activities are written up as "lesson plans," it is important to be responsive to student ideas, questions, insights and misconceptions as you move through the learning. It is best to position yourself as a co-learner, but understand your power and responsibility as the educator in the classroom to disrupt racist/oppressive ideas, language and internalized biases that may arise.

Because self-identification is confidential, you may not know who the Indigenous students in your classroom are. It is important to create an environment that is mindful of, and responsive to, student well-being when learning sensitive content, which includes respecting Indigenous students' right to opt out. Informing all students and families about the upcoming subject matter can support learners in the classroom. Accommodations may need to be made in order to avoid placing racialized students in uncomfortable or traumatizing situations. For guidance as to how to navigate this respectfully, please contact your Board First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team, or review the following from Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres: [Trauma Informed Schools](#)

NOTE : These lessons simply provide a framework and ensure that Indigenous knowledge, systems of knowledge and rights are embedded when diving into the CHV2O curriculum.

Any opportunity to integrate a visit from a community member, Knowledge Keeper or Elder from your Treaty Partners would be excellent within the context of these explorations.





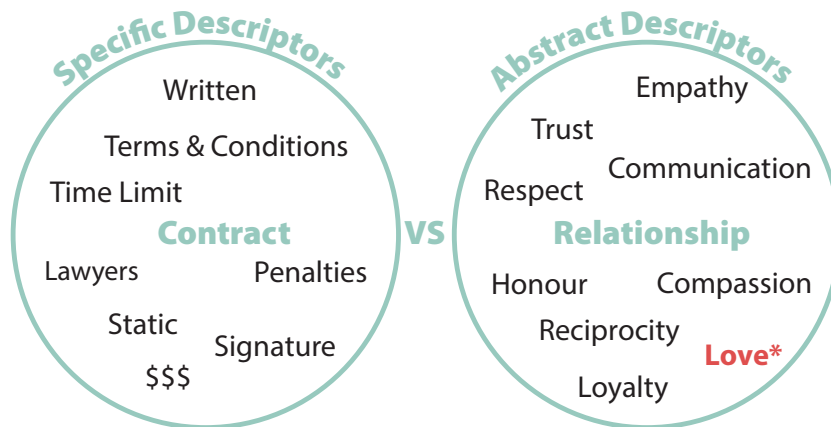
LESSON 1: CONTRACT VERSUS RELATIONSHIP: THE SILVER COVENANT CHAIN

- **Activity:** Students attempt to create a written document that perfectly outlines and concretely defines their relationship with a close friend or sibling. They can create as many sections, clauses and definitions that are needed in order to articulate their relationship in a way that allows it to be accepted and transferred to another person. The teacher should prompt students to try and define abstract words so that the person entering into this contract knows exactly what they are talking about (example: what do you mean by words like trust, love, loyalty, confidence, etc). *This activity is meant to be a provocation to reinforce the difficulty in reducing the concept of a Treaty to a written contract.*
 - **Possible questions to ask:** Why are abstract terms easier to apply to a relationship? What is it about a friendship that makes it impossible to fully define?



LESSON 2: THE SILVER COVENANT CHAIN

- Using [Treaty Primer: Treaty Relationships and the Covenant Chain](#) (including the videos hyperlinked within the resource), students review the Silver Covenant Chain relationship with specific emphasis on the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.
 - Important to note the 2023 ruling by the Superior Court of Quebec that the Covenant Chain is part of the Canadian Constitution via Section 35 of the Constitution Act (1982). Refer to [Treaty Primer: The Statute of Westminster \(1931\) and Section 35 of the Constitution Act \(1982\)](#) for more information.
 - As a class, think about yesterday's activity. How does changing the description of a Treaty from a "contract" to a "relationship" inform a different understanding? What teachings did you receive from the videos embedded in the Treaty Primer? What do you think the relationship between the Treaty Partners bound by the Covenant Chain should look like?
 - It might be helpful to reproduce this diagram (taken from the Treaty Primer) on the board:



*Often described in English as familial love

- **Activity:** What can we learn from the Silver Covenant Chain? How might the councils in our life (school, municipal, community-based, provincial, federal, etc.) benefit from some of the principles shared in the Silver Covenant Chain? What might change? What might stay the same? What would a student government – school staff relationship look like if it was modelled on the Covenant Chain? (This could be used as an exit pass activity to gauge comprehension.)



LESSON 3: NAHNEE'S MISSION TO LONDON

- Students watch the video "[Interview with Nathan Tidridge and Elder Carolyn King about Nahnee's Mission](#)" and consult the resource "[Nahnee's Mission to London.](#)" (Please see Page 5 for information). In groups, students highlight what they think are important parts of Nahnee's story, particularly how they relate to:
 - The Covenant Chain Relationship (and how Nahnee is invoking it).
 - Nahnee asserting her Nation's right to self-determination as defined by [The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.](#)
 - Nahnee as a figure of resilience.
- **Invite** students to sit in a [Knowledge Building Circle](#). As students share during this circle, be sure to document their ideas.
 - **Possible questions to get the conversation going:** How does Nahnee's mission reflect the Silver Covenant Chain relationships? Using the relationship envisioned by the Silver Covenant Chain as the measure, how was Nahnee betrayed by the Canadian and British officials? How does Tom Benner's piece featured in Carolyn King's Moccasin Identifier video reflect the relationship between Nahnee and the Crown?
 - How did the principle of Responsible Government disrupt the Covenant Chain?
- In groups, students consult the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#) and list the articles that they think Nahnee's mission touches on. (*The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* came into force in Canada on June 21, 2021.)
- **Exit Pass: Have students depict (in words or as a visual image) how colonial officials inserted themselves in the Covenant Chain to undermine Nahnee's petition to Queen Victoria.** If they are stuck, the images depicting Responsible Government in the resource "[Nahnee's Mission to London](#)" (Please see Page 4 below for more information.) should help them.



LESSON 4: THE INDIAN ACT (1876)

- **Provocation:** Students are shown the definition of a person given in the 1876 *Indian Act*:


| | |
|---------|---|
| Person. | 12. The term "person" means an individual other than an Indian, unless the context clearly requires another construction. |
|---------|---|

- Using the resource "[The Secret Life of Canada: The Indian Act \(Civics\)](#)," (Please see Page 9 for more information) students use the Ladder of Inquiry to answer the **Big Question: How was Nahneebahwequa's experience, disrupting her Nation's self-determination, foreshadowing what was going to happen to the Covenant Chain relationship following Confederation?**
 - Students' responses can be displayed on the board or chart paper.
- **(Optional) Additional Activity:** Based on the information collected during the "The Secret Life of Canada: The Indian Act (Civics)" activity, students could create a sketch note, or other visual representation, explaining what Confederation did to Treaty Relationships such as the Silver Covenant Chain (builds on the exit pass from Lesson 3).



LESSON 5: USING THE MOCCASIN IDENTIFIER TO ASSERT IDENTITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND RESILIENCE

- **Ask** students to think of a place within their school or classroom that they could mark with Nahnee's Moccasin Identifier. Surrounding the moccasin students should display words that describe the Silver Covenant Chain Relationship, as well as self-determination as defined by *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (recalling lessons 1 & 2). This piece will become an anchor chart that can be referred to for the remainder of the course as students explore the development of Canada and its impact on Treaty Relationships.
 - **Additional reading for teacher:** [Recognition](#) (Yellowhead Institute Red Paper, 35-44).

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- **Extended learning:** Using *Treaty Primer: The Statute of Westminster (1931)* and *Section 35 of the Constitution Act (1982)*, students connect the fight for Section 25 of the Constitution Act (1982), with Nahnee's mission nearly a century earlier.
 - **Additional reading for the teacher:** Manuel, Arthur and Grand Chief Ronald M. Derrickson. *Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call*. Between the Lines, 2021.

NAHNEEBAHWEQUA (CATHERINE SUTTON) GRADE 10 CIVICS (POLITICS)

Non-Indigenous Population of Upper Canada (Southern Ontario)¹:

| 1791 | 1806 | 1824 | 1851-2 | 1861-2 |
|------------|--------|---------|---------|-----------|
| 10,000 +/- | 70,718 | 150,066 | 952,004 | 1,396,091 |

The 1871 Census of Canada records approximately 8,637 Anishinaabe and 6,374 Haudenosaunee People living in Ontario.

As successive waves of settlers flooded the lands of what is now Southern Ontario during the 19th century, the protocols and councils required by the Silver Covenant Chain were abandoned by colonial administrators who no longer saw Indigenous Peoples as critical military allies, but rather, as societies in need of “civilizing” so they could be incorporated into the emerging Canadian settler-state.²

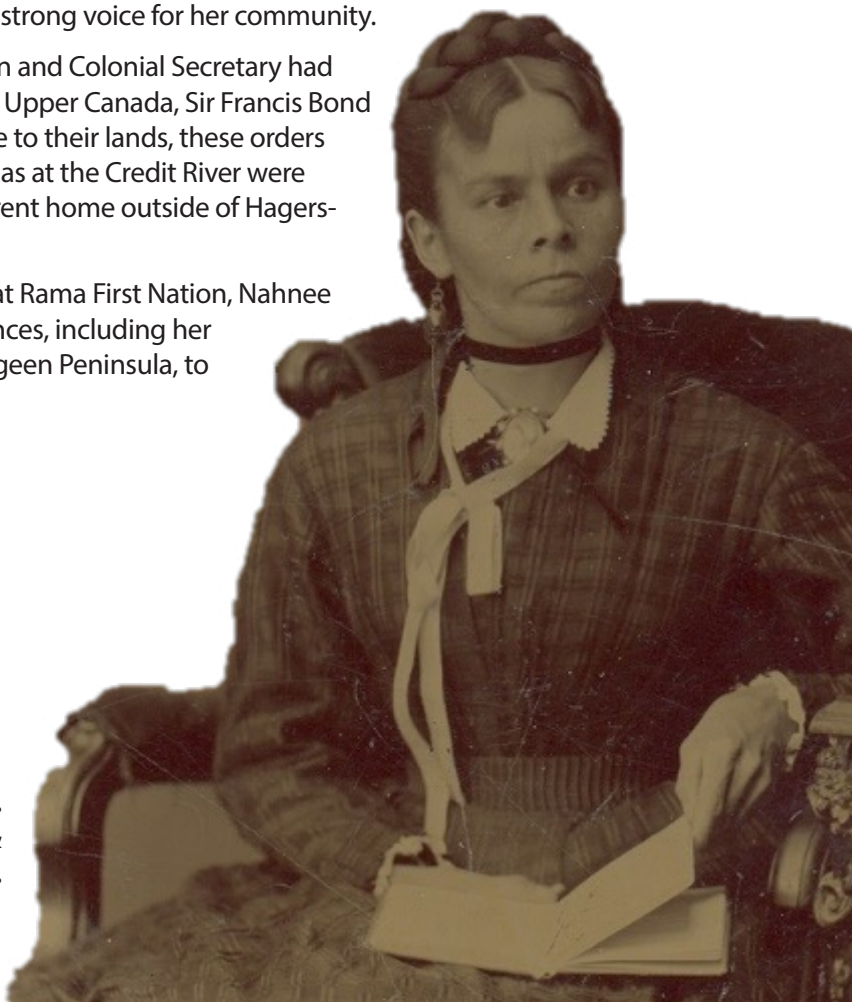
- What Canada calls the “Upper Canada Treaties” were understood by colonial officials as land surrenders, interpretations which violate the Silver Covenant Chain.
- **Kahkewaquonaby** used his audiences with King William IV and **Queen Victoria** to highlight the land rights of the Mississaugas, including the fact that they did not hold legal title to their lands in the eyes of the colonial system.

Joining Kahkewaquonaby for his second trip to England to meet with Queen Victoria was his niece Nahneebahwequa (Catherine Sutton).³

Close to her uncle, Kahkewaquonaby (Peter Jones), Nahneebahwequa (aka Nahnee) had been born at the Credit Mission in 1824, becoming a strong voice for her community.

- While Kahkewaquonaby records that the Queen and Colonial Secretary had sent instructions to the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head, for the Mississaugas to be given legal title to their lands, these orders were not carried out. Eventually, the Mississaugas at the Credit River were forced to relocate their community to their current home outside of Hagersville.
- Twenty years later, during a 1859 Council held at Rama First Nation, Nahnee was requested to take a petition of land grievances, including her own request to hold title to land along the Saugeen Peninsula, to Queen Victoria.

Nahneebahwequa (Catherine Sutton).
Courtesy of Grey Roots Museum & Archives, Owen Sound, Ontario.



Footnotes 1 Source: Statistics Canada website Censuses of Canada 1665 to 1871.

2 Until 1828, military officials or local “Indian superintendents” held leadership positions within the Indian Department, as Indigenous Nations were considered allies bound together with the Crown by the Silver Covenant Chain.

3 Nahnee was born at the Credit River Flats in 1824.

These resources are based on my knowledge as of April 2024. It is continually being updated. N. Tidridge.

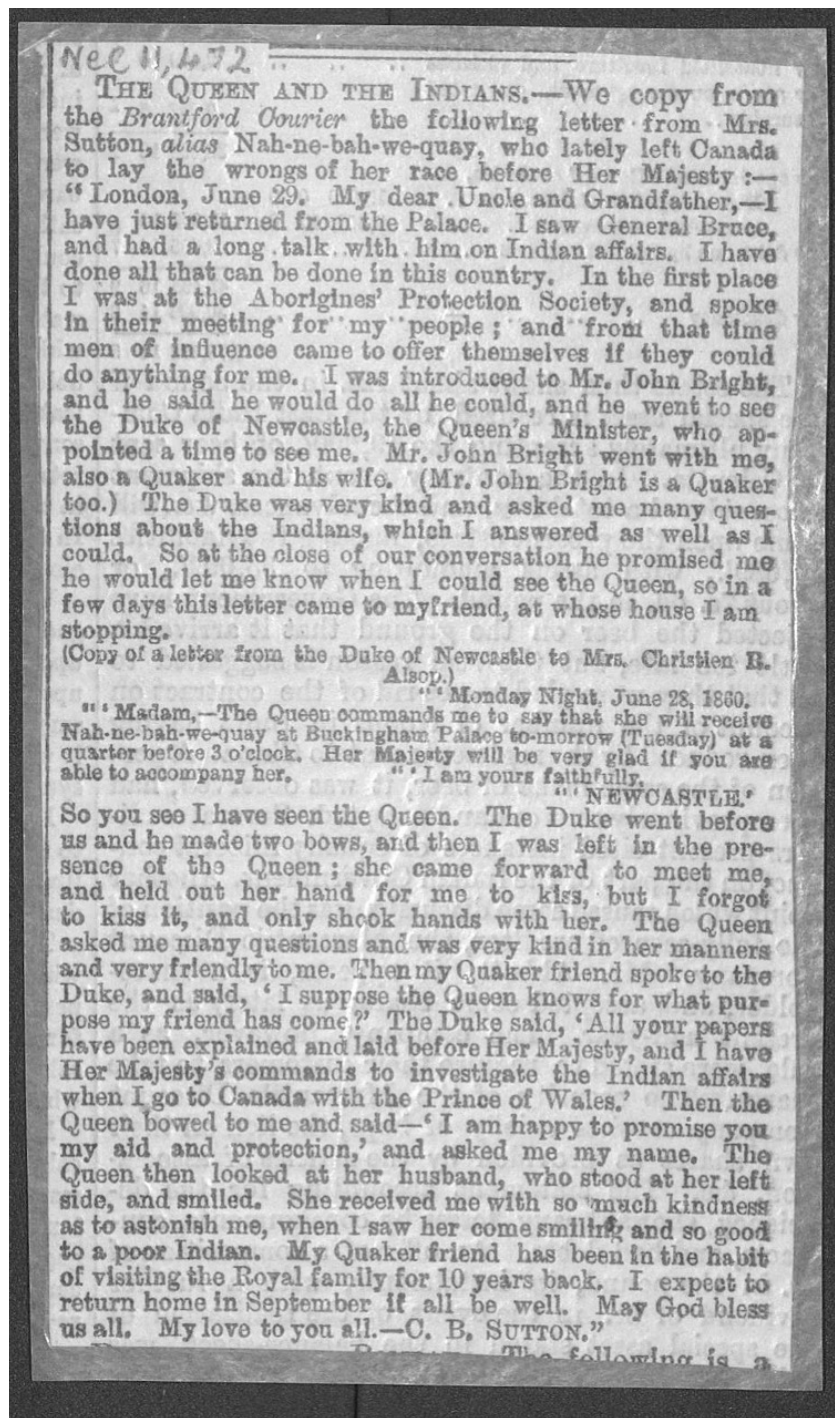
- Thanks to the support of Quakers Robert and Christine Alsop, as well as John Bright MP, Nahnee's audience with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert took place at Buckingham Palace on June 19, 1860. In a column published in the *Brantford Courier*, Nahnee described her experience:
- This audience is significant for a number of reasons, including:
 - 1 - The audience had been arranged by the Duke of Newcastle (Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1859-1864).
 - 2 - Queen Victoria was familiar with the petition. (The Duke of Newcastle had explained the petition to the Queen before the audience.)
 - 3 - Queen Victoria had commanded the Duke of Newcastle "... to investigate the Indian affairs when I go to Canada with the Prince of Wales," referring to the upcoming Royal Tour of 1860.⁴
 - 4 - Queen Victoria bowed to Nahnee saying, "I am happy to promise you my aid and protection."
- Although not mentioned in her letter, Nahnee received two gifts from the Queen during her visit:

A medallion bearing a unique effigy of Queen Victoria, her name and the year of her accession to the throne (1837). A laurel of oak leaves and Canadian maple leaves suggests that the medallion was created especially for this moment.⁵



Courtesy of Grey Roots Museum & Archives, Owen Sound, Ontario.

Two buttons from the baby coat of the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII).



Footnotes 4 Following the Crimean War (1853-1856), the colonial government of the Province of Canada extended numerous invitations for Queen Victoria to visit North America. As a result, in 1859, it was announced that Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales, would embark on a Royal Tour of North America the following year (July 24th to October 20, 1860).

5 It has been suggested that this was one of the mass-produced medals tossed to spectators during the coronation of Queen Victoria on June 28th, 1838. However, the inclusion of maples leaves suggests otherwise. As of publication, I can find no other examples of this particular design.

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- At the time of Nahnee's audience a major shift was being formalized within the colonial system that would attack the very foundation of the Silver Covenant Chain.

During the 18th and 19th centuries a fundamental principle of the British and Canadian Constitutions developed: **Responsible Government**.

Responsible Government requires that the Sovereign can no longer exercise executive power independently, rather they can only act upon the advice of an elected minister, typically the prime minister.

Translating responsible government to Treaty relationships, this meant that the Sovereign was required to take advice from the settler government (Province of Canada) rather than officials in London regarding their interactions with Indigenous Peoples.

The Covenant Chain Relationship

The impact of the Canadian Government and Responsible Government on the Covenant Chain relationship.

Under the leadership of **John A. Macdonald**, joint-premier of the Province of Canada, *An Act Respecting the Management of Indian Lands and Property* was passed by the colonial legislature on May 9, 1860. Its first section transferred the office of "Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs" (an Office tied to the British Government) to the Commissioner of Crown Lands (an official within the settler Canadian government).

1. From and after the first day of July next, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, for the time being, shall be Chief Superintendent of Indian affairs.

- During the 1860 Royal Tour of North America by the Prince of Wales, an audience was organized with the Duke of Newcastle to discuss the concerns raised by Nahnee's petition and how they would be answered. William Sutton, Nahnee's husband, wrote about the meeting held at Toronto's Government House on September 11:

[Unless indicated, Sutton's original spelling has been retained.]

Sept 11th, 1860

AUDIENCE WITH THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE

A respectable Deputation composed of eleven wite men and three [Indigenous People] waited on the Duke of new Castle at the Government house, Toronto on the above date, introduced to His Grace by the Honourable George Brown M.P. duration of the interview about five minuets, no time for discussion; Captan Keeting read over a list of the wrongs complained of, - the Duke remarked that he did not see how he could do aney thing in regard to redressing the . . . wrongs as the Power was allmost entirly in the handsof the Provincial Authority, and as to the Lands allready alineated he did not think aney thing could be done in regard to them, - Mr. Pennefather then talked verey rapidly for a few seconds to show that the subject of redressing the [Indigenous People's] wrongs was beyond the Dukes jurisdiction, - at this time a messenger came in and stated that the Prince was waiting for the Duke to come and asist in the reception of Deputations from Bellvile and Kingston,

- the Duke said he thought he should have more time at his command before he left Niagara and that he would try and examine the Paper just handed to him by Rev. C. Vandusen and see if they threw aney additional light on Mrs Suttons case. Mr. Vandusen remarked that they would at least corroboreate the former statements. The Duke said he had quiet a number of papers with him belonging to Mrs Sutton.⁶

Footnotes ⁶ William Sutton to Richard Alsop, 11 September 1860. (Originally transcribed by Melba Morris Croft)
These resources are based on my knowledge as of April 2024. It is continually being updated. N. Tidridge.

- Writing to Richard Alsop, a frustrated William Sutton remarked of his wife's meeting with the Duke:
*... the Duke had for some time been aware of the existance and intentions of the Deputation and he could have had his time so arranged as have had a few hours set apart for an interview ... but I am well aware that such an arangement would not be congenial to the wishes of the Governor General, Mr. Pennefather and others connected with the Indian Department for they were aware that, their system of whole—sale Robbery and corruption would have been exposed and proven beyond success-ful contradiction and as some of these Gentlemen had the Principal management in making the arangements while the Prince was passing through CANADA and they took good care that no opportunity should be aforded the Deputation. I do not think the Prince wood have objected to such an arrangement as I have aluded to and I am shure his nobile Mother would have been pleased with it.*⁷

- Pennefather was tasked to write the report requested by Queen Victoria. However, due to the passage of the *An Act Respecting the Management of Indian Lands and Property*, Pennefather was no longer the head of the Indian Department. (This position was now held by a family friend of John A. Macdonald, Philip VanKoughnet.)

Pennefather submitted his 82-page report to the Duke of Newcastle in November of 1860, which was dismissive of Nahnee's claims, as well as riddled with contradictions concerning Indigenous Peoples' relationships with the colonial government.

Nahnee wrote about the Duke's investigation saying, *"The Indian Department, with the Governor General at its head, are the parties complained of, and the Duke made his investigation entirely through them, not a solitary friend of the injured party was allowed to take part."*⁸

- The following year, the Duke of Newcastle wrote a private letter to Sir Edmund Head following another entreaty by the Alsops concerning Nahnee's petition. In his letter, the Duke formally articulates the effect that the Management of Indian Lands and Property Act had on the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the Sovereign, disrupting a relationship critical to the Silver Covenant Chain:

Mr. Alsop has again been with me about Mrs. Catherine Sutton. I have enclosed some papers he left with me. Will you let me have them back again with an answer. In reference to his "letter" I impressed upon him that the Canadian Government, and not "The Crown" could alone do any thing in the case.

- In an article published in *The Christian Guardian* on May 25, 1862, Nahnee lamented:

I cannot help thinking about those times, now past, when Governors and Generals used to meet our fathers in the Great Councils, and made great promises in the name of their king: promises that were never, never to be broken while grass grew and waters ran. All our fathers who did not fall in the wars remained loyal to the British throne, and their children have followed their steps in loyalty.

*But the wars have passed away and but a few of the old veterans are alive, and my people who were more numerous and powerful, and advantage has is taken of weakness and ignorance, so that our fisheries, hunting-grounds, lands and homes are taken from us whether we like it or not ... Little did those bold [Indigenous] warriors think they were listening to the fine promises made by British noblemen that the successors of these crown officials would, in a few years, rob their children of their birth-right. A shame on them, because they do it in the name of that noble lady the Queen, as though she approved of their wicked conduct ..."*⁹

- Ultimately, Nahnee and her husband were able to buy back their land on the Saugeen Peninsula. However, it was legally deeded to William Sutton, since women could not hold property in colonial society. The remainder of the petition sent to Queen Victoria was ignored.

- Nahnee died in 1865 at the age of 41 in her home on the Saugeen Peninsula, overlooking the waters of Georgian Bay. She was buried in her garden.



Footnotes 7 William Sutton to Richard Alsop, 17 March 1861. (Originally transcribed by Melba Morris Croft)

8 Donald. B. Smith, *Mississauga Portraits: Ojibwe Voices from Nineteenth-Century Canada*, (University of Toronto Press, 2013), 94.

9 Nahneebahwequa, *Letter to The Christian Guardian*, 25 May, 1862.

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- The site of Nahnee's birthplace, formerly the Credit Mission, is now the **Mississauga Golf and Country Club**. In 2004, **Cobble Beach Golf Resort** was opened on the land that once made up Nahnee and William Sutton's property on the Saugeen Peninsula.
Located defiantly at the centre of the golf course at Cobble Beach (west of the 9th hole, across *Nahnee's Pond*) is the site believed to be Nahnee's grave. Even in death, Nahneebahwequa reminds people of the Mississaugas' presence on the land.



SOURCES:

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- Wright, Christopher James. "The Saugeen Ojibway Nation and Canada: Historical Relationships, Settler Colonialism, and Stories of a Shared Space." PhD diss. King's College London, 2017.
- Consultation With:
- Archives of Grey Roots Museum & Archives.
 - Dr. Amber Adams, *Mohawk Nation*
 - Dr. Alan Corbiere, *M'Chigeeng First Nation*
 - Rick Hill, *Tuscarora Nation*
 - Dave Mowat, *Alderville First Nation*
 - Professor Donald B. Smith, *University of Calgary*

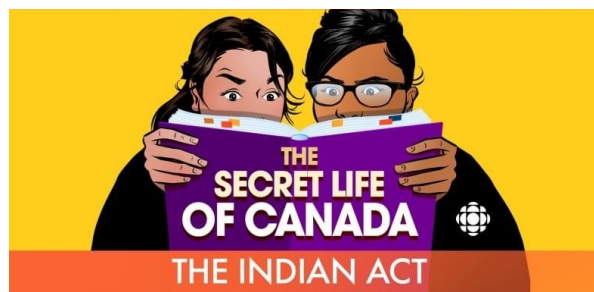
THE INDIAN ACT – CIVICS ACTIVITY

GRADE 10 CIVICS (POLITICS)



STEP ONE:

Listen to the [Secret Life of Canada podcast exploring the Indian Act](#) and make notes summarizing your learning about this piece of legislation and its impacts on the lives of Indigenous Peoples since its passage by the Parliament of Canada in 1876. These are your notes, so feel free to organize them in a way that helps you make sense of this complex and devastating Act of Parliament. You should also consult the [Treaty Primer: The Indian Act \(1876\)](#) for information.



The podcast reviews *Treaties*, including the *Silver Covenant Chain* and *Treaty of Niagara*, as well as discusses the *Gradual Civilization Act (1857)*, *enfranchisement*, *blood quantum*, the *Indian Act*, *Residential Schools*, *Confederation* and *John A. Macdonald*, *assimilation*, *60s Scoop*, *child welfare*, and *Indigenous governance structures*. **Confederation and the Indian Act begin to be discussed at 18:47.**



STEP TWO:

In a group, select from your notes what you think is the relevant data (information) you collected to answer the following **Big Question**: *How was Nahnebahwequa's experience, disrupting her Nation's self-determination, foreshadowing what was going to happen to the Covenant Chain relationship following Confederation?*

To understand what **self-determination** means, read [Articles 1-6 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| My conclusion | Conclusion - What is your conclusion? What do you believe now? Interpretations - What do you think the specific data means or is showing you? (data = your schema) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I believe...• I assume• I think• This means Data - the things you see (not making meaning from it yet) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What data are you paying attention to? What is catching your eye?• What data are you ignoring?• What did you notice? | Conclude Interpret Data Select Data Data Pool |
| How I interpreted that data: | | |
| Data I selected: | | |
| Name(s): | | |



STEP THREE:

As a group, interpret the data/information regarding how it helps you answer the **Big Question**.

Create statements such as the following:

- I believe ...
- I assume ...
- I think ...
- This means ...



STEP FOUR:

As a group, construct an informed conclusion (citing your data) that answers the **Big Question**. It should be a concise statement (one or two sentences).