

The Acadians Reading Comprehension

Name _____

The Acadians were a group of French settlers who lived in Canada during the seventeenth century. They established a colony on North America's Atlantic coast, in Canada and the state of Maine. Samuel de Champlain, the French explorer who later founded Quebec, visited the Acadian colony in 1604, as did French explorer Pierre de Gua.

The Acadian colony attained historical prominence during the French and Indian War, a conflict between France and England in the middle part of the 18th century. As part of the Treaty of Utrecht, signed between Britain and Spain, the Acadian lands came under possession of Great Britain. However, the Acadians were allowed to keep their land as long as they swore allegiance to the British crown. The Acadians were reluctant to accept that condition for two main reasons. First, the Acadians' primary religion was Roman Catholic, while the British were Protestant. Second, the Acadians feared that accepting British rule would leave them vulnerable to attack from the Mi'kmaq, a native tribe living nearby that deeply disliked the British. Due to this, the Acadians chose to remain neutral.

During the French and Indian War, the Acadians began sending supplies to the French fortresses, and fought together with the Mi'kmaq tribes against the British. Military officer Charles Lawrence was angered by the Acadians' behavior and set into motion what is known today as The Great Upheaval. On Lawrence's orders, over eleven thousand Acadians were forcibly removed from their homes and colony. The first wave of removals sent the Acadians to rural parts of Connecticut and New York; the second forced them to France, Britain, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Of the fourteen thousand Acadians residing in the colony, only 2,600 were able to escape capture and removal by the British.

The Acadians began forming their own French-speaking colonies across the world; one group settled in southern Louisiana and are known today as the Cajuns. After the end of the war and the Treaty of Paris in 1763, Britain took control of Canada, and the Acadians ceased to exist as a political group. Acadians were allowed to return to their home if they signed allegiance to Britain; some groups traveled to Nova Scotia or New Brunswick. In 2003, Queen Elizabeth II issued a royal proclamation and formal apology to the Acadian people for their forced displacement.

- 1. Which of the following is not a reason why the Acadians were unsure about accepting the Treaty of Utrecht?**
 - a. A threat to safety
 - b. Religious difference
 - c. Allegiance to the Spanish
 - d. All of the above are reasons.

- 2. To which of the following places were the Acadians not forcibly removed?**
 - a. New York
 - b. Massachusetts
 - c. Connecticut
 - d. Halifax

- 3. Infer why Queen Elizabeth issued an apology to the Acadians almost three hundred years after The Great Upheaval occurred.**
- a. The Acadians had returned to their original colony and they needed her permission to settle there again.
 - b. Queen Elizabeth was an Acadian herself, and wanted to do something for her native people.
 - c. The original displaced Acadians were still alive and were petitioning for Queen Elizabeth to issue a statement.
 - d. The British never took responsibility for their actions and the negative consequences experienced by the Acadians.
- 4. Which of the following historical events most directly relates to the story of the Acadians?**
- a. 1831-1877: Native Americans are forced by President Andrew Jackson to move their homes westward, walking thousands of miles on the Trail of Tears.
 - b. 1848-1855: Thousands of Americans travel westward to strike it rich when gold is discovered in California.
 - c. 1863: The Emancipation Proclamation, a document issued by Abraham Lincoln, frees the slaves.
 - d. 1972: President Nixon resigns after news gets out of his involvement in a robbery of a political building.
- 5. Which statement about the Mi'kmaq is true?**
- a. The Mi'kmaq considered the Acadians enemies.
 - b. The Mi'kmaq considered the British and anyone who associated with them enemies.
 - c. The Mi'kmaq supported the British during the French and Indian War.
 - d. The Mi'kmaq were Roman Catholic.
- 6. Which statement about the Acadians is true?**
- a. They persevered despite an unfair and adverse situation.
 - b. They got the fate that they deserved.
 - c. They were immediately compensated for the troubles they had to go through.
 - d. They were lazy, and didn't want to leave their home.
- 7. Which event happened first?**
- a. Queen Elizabeth II issued a formal apology to the Acadians.
 - b. The Treaty of Paris was issued.
 - c. The Treaty of Utrecht was issued.
 - d. The Acadians were displaced from their home.