

52 Weekly Stories About Canada

— Grades 3-4 —

Written by Ruth Solski

The 52 stories in this book have been designed to familiarize and develop student awareness of Canadian symbols, sports, birds, wild animals, insects, reptiles, famous inventors and inventions, famous Canadian athletes, famous Canadian people, special Canadian places and sights to visit, Canadian ghost stories, and famous Canadian mysteries. Each topic contains an information story and a follow-up exercise designed to review and develop strong reading and phonetic skills. The material in this book can be used in a variety of ways.



RUTH SOLSKI was an educator for 30 years. She has written many educational resources and is the founder of S&S Learning Materials. As a writer, her main goal is to provide teachers with a useful tool that they can implement in their classrooms to bring the joy of learning to children.

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At A Glance

Learning Intentions

	Canadian Symbols	Canadian Sports	Canadian Birds	Canadian Animals	Canadian Insects	Canadian Reptiles	Canadian Inventors/ Inventions	Canadian Athletes	Famous Canadian People	Famous Canadian Places/Sights	Canadian Ghost Stories	Canadian Mysteries
Reading Comprehension Skills:												
Recalling Details, Locating Information	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•		
Classifying Information; Details	•	•	•	•	•	•			•			
Sequential Ordering							•	•			•	
Noting Details	•							•				•
Making Inferences										•		
Cause and Effect			•									
Finding Proof; Recalling Events				•				•				•
Drawing Conclusions; Making Inferences								•			•	
Main Idea; Using Context Clues								•	•			
Language Skills:												
Antonyms, Synonyms, Homonyms	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Parts of Speech	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Kinds of Sentences; Punctuation			•	•				•	•	•		
Verb Tenses								•		•		
Capitalization							•					
Phonetic Skills:												
Root Words; Compound Words	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•		
Alphabetical Order		•			•		•			•		
Double Consonants			•			•						
Vowel Combinations					•	•				•		
Long/Short Vowels									•			
Syllabication	•			•				•				
Contractions								•				
Spelling	•											
Suffixes			•					•		•		
Word Meanings				•								
Singular/Plural Words				•	•			•				

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TEACHING OBJECTIVES

STUDENTS WILL:

- read and become familiar with Canada, Canadian Symbols, Canadian Sports, Canadian Birds, Canadian Insects, Canadian Reptiles, Canadian Animals, Famous Canadian Inventors and Inventions, Famous Canadian Athletes, Famous Canadian People, Famous Canadian Places or Sights, Famous Canadian Ghost Stories, and Canadian Mysteries.
- review and practise reading skills in an informal learning situation or experience.
- use previously learned word attack skills to unlock new vocabulary.
- practise silent reading skills and discussion skills in a group.
- work independently while reading a non-fiction story and completing a follow-up activity worksheet.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

The non-fiction stories and followup worksheets may be used in any of the following ways:

1. Reproduce the story sheet and worksheet for the students to use to practise their reading skills at school or for home study.
2. Reproduce each story and its worksheet. Mount the information story on one side of stiff cardboard and the worksheet on the back of the same card. Laminate the cards. The cards could be placed at a “Let’s Read About Canada” centre. All the cards could be placed in one large box with dividers indicating the different sections or they could be placed in individual boxes labelled with each section’s name.
3. Each story could be used as a teaching tool. It could be used on an overhead or on a white board. The students would read the story silently. Then the story’s content and new vocabulary could be discussed. This would also be a good time to practise fluency and expression during oral reading. Sentences could be read as a group or independently. Direct the students’ fluency speed with your hand or a pointer. Practise oral reading of the story several times.
4. If you feel your students will have difficulty with new vocabulary, print the words on a chart prior to the reading and discuss what they say and what they mean. Encourage your students to examine each one carefully. Ask them any of the following questions, and use other devices that you have found have helped your students to attack new words.
 - What does the beginning and ending sounds of the word say?
 - Are there any vowels inside the word? What do they say?
 - Is this word a compound word or a big word made of two words?
 - Does the word belong to a word family?
 - Can you sound out the word?
 - Is there a little word inside the word?
5. Use any of the science topics such as Canadian Birds, Animals, Insects etc. during Science Lessons.
6. The stories in any of the sections could be collated with a cover to form a non-fiction storybook. For example Canadian Animals, Canadian Birds etc. The students could create an interesting cover page with a title.
7. While reading about Canada and places to visit in our country, use a large political map that shows the provinces, territories, and their capital cities. Discuss the names of the political divisions, their capital cities, and have students locate each one. Discuss the compass rose and have students tell the location of each province/territory. Example: Which province is east of Saskatchewan? (Manitoba)
8. The stories about Canada and places in Canada could be used in Social Studies lessons. They also could be collated to form a non-fiction story book for students to take home to read to their parents.
9. Many of these stories about Canada could be used during indoor recesses as an activity for the class to do together on a white board.
10. Many of these stories could be used with students who are new Canadians to strengthen their oral speaking skills.
11. Students at higher grade levels with reading problems could strengthen their skills by reading the stories and completing the worksheets.



The following vocabulary lists for each story should be presented before each story is read by some students. Train them to use their phonetic skills effectively and efficiently.

CANADIAN SYMBOLS

STORY #1: OUR COUNTRY CANADA;

PAGE 9: continent, Jacques Cartier, exploring, Native, guides, language, Kanata, parliament, Prime Minister

STORY #2: PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA;

PAGE 11: government, Prime Minister, political, election, majority, Cabinet, departments, Conservative, position, official, campaigns

STORY #3: CANADA'S CAPITAL CITY;

PAGE 13: remote, Bytown, Lieutenant, Colonel, population, magnificent, decisions, galleries

STORY #4: HOW CANADA GOT ITS

OWN FLAG; PAGE 15: union, shield, designs, unfortunately, Lester B. Pearson, unity, Confederation, committee, Ensign, politicians, governor general

STORY #5: CANADA'S NATIONAL FLAG;

PAGE 17: official, parliament, peace, honesty, bravery, strength, unity, respected, important, private

STORY #6: SYMBOLS OF CANADA; PAGE 19:

recognized, shield, fleurs-de-lis, valour, unicorn, motto

CANADIAN SPORTS

STORY #1: BASEBALL IN CANADA; PAGE 21:

alternate, organize, amateurs, National, international, competitions, Stadium, league

STORY #2: CANADIAN FOOTBALL; PAGE 23:

popular, spectator, professional, stadium, dangerous, affect, engraved, ransom

STORY #3: SOCCER IN CANADA; PAGE 25:

popular, championships, rectangle, equipment, jersey, cleats, referee

STORY #4: CANADIAN BASKETBALL;

PAGE 27: colleges, universities, court, invented, physical, education, balcony, professional, careers, American

CANADIAN BIRDS

STORY #1: THE SNOWY OWL; PAGE 29:

extend, entirely, tundra, variety, eider, disturbing, approaches, threat

STORY #2: THE ATLANTIC PUFFIN;

PAGE 31: awkwardly, prey, capelin, hake, colonies, difficult, amongst

STORY #3: THE BURROWING OWL;

PAGE 33: roost, badgers, roaches, pellets, disturbed, bothered, poison, survive

STORY #4: THE RUBY-THROATED

HUMMINGBIRD; PAGE 35: perching, hover, rotate, connected, grooved, tubular, lichen, territory

STORY #5: THE COMMON LOON; PAGE 37:

official, territorial, mussels, leeches, balance, protection, speckled, intruder, frantic

CANADIAN ANIMALS

STORY #1: THE CANADIAN BEAVER;

PAGE 39: scaly, balances, threatened, valves, blunt, nocturnal, vegetarians, lynx, wolverine, lodge

STORY #2: THE BLACK BEAR; PAGE 41:

territory, cinnamon, species, measure, lumbering, omnivorous, cavities, hibernation, pollution, endangering

STORY #3: THE MUSKRAT; PAGE 43:

rodent, invisible, dome, scent, musk

STORY #4: THE SNOWSHOE HARE;
PAGE 45: appearances, similar, differences,
 slightly, solitary, escape

STORY #5: THE OPOSSUM; PAGE 47:
 marsupial, mammal, coarse, prehensile, shelter,
 rodents, carrion, marsupium, bothered, threatened,
 fluid, anal

STORY #6: THE MUSK OX; PAGE 49:
 roamed, tundra, prefer, musk, impossible,
 temperatures, birth

CANADIAN INSECTS

STORY #1: THE FIREFLY; PAGE 51:
 forewings, straight, larva, pupa, nocturnal, chemicals

STORY #2: THE LADYBUG; PAGE 53:
 poisonous, liquid, aphids, clusters

STORY #3: THE DRAGONFLY; PAGE 55:
 aerial, nymphs, usually, motion, direction

CANADIAN REPTILES

STORY #1: THE SNAPPING TURTLE;
PAGE 57: nostrils, active, swallow, carapace,
 hibernates, vision, salamanders, leeches, musky

STORY #2: THE LEATHERBACK TURTLE;
PAGE 59: adapted, reptile, rubbery, leathery,
 carapace, urchins, squid, algae, clutch, hatchlings

STORY #3: THE PRAIRIE RATTLESNAKE;
PAGE 61: poisonous, blotches, nostrils, fangs,
 boulders, heat-sensing, venom, inject, reptiles,
 amphibians

FAMOUS CANADIAN INVENTORS/INVENTIONS

**STORY #1: JOSEPH-ARMAND BOMBARDIER
AND THE SKIDOO; PAGE 63:**
 Valcourt, ability, fiddling, mechanical, machines,
 dangerous, propeller, satisfied

**STORY #2: ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL –
TELEPHONE; PAGE 65:** scientist, engineer,
 inventor, Edinburgh, Scotland, Brantford,
 invention, assistant, transmitters, receiver, transmit,
 experimenting, vibrate, vibrations, magnetic

**STORY #3: JACQUE PLANTE’S HOCKEY
MASK; PAGE 67:** protection, serious, injured,
 vision, equipment, fibreglass, designed

CANADIAN ATHLETES:

**STORY #1: P.K. SUBBAN – ONE OF THE
FAMOUS HOCKEY BROTHERS; PAGE 69:**
 Pernell, Jamaica, Montserrat, professional,
 defenceman, memorial, trophy, Nastassia, Natasha,
 talented, rookie, Belleville

**STORY #2: THE DUFOUR-LAPOINTE
SISTERS – CANADA’S MOGUL QUEENS;
PAGE 71:** Dufour-Lapointe, Maxime, Chloé,
 Justine, Yves, Johane, supported, praised, equally,
 Lac Champlain, competitive, rookie

**STORY #3: ALEXANDRE BILODEAU –
FREESTYLE SKIING KING; PAGE 73:**
 Lillehammer, natural, aerials, flawless, battled, podium

**STORY #4: MARK MCMORRIS – A
SNOWBOARDING WARRIOR; PAGE 75:**
 competitions, politician, Aspen, Colorado, fractured,
 qualified, attempt

**STORY #5: MARIELLE THOMPSON –
GOLDEN GIRL ON SKIS; PAGE 77:**
 reigning, Whistler, community, instructors,
 supported, challenges, paradise, position



Canada's National Flag



Canada raised its new flag on Parliament Hill on February 15, 1965 in Ottawa. This date is now called "National Flag of Canada Day."

Canada's flag is red and white, which are also the official colours of Canada. The colour white stands for peace and honesty. The colour red stands for bravery and strength. In the centre of the white square is a red maple leaf that has eleven points. Canada's flag is twice as long as it is wide.

Canada's flag is the symbol of our nation's unity and stands for all the people living in it. It is a symbol that must be respected and cared for. There are rules that must be followed for its care.

Did you know that:

- Canada's flag must be taken down every night and carefully folded.
- if someone important dies, the flag is raised and then lowered to half mast.
- Canada's flag should never be allowed to drag along the ground.
- it must be always flown the correct way up, unless there is danger or a threat in the area, then it can be flown upside down.
- torn or faded flags should be replaced with new ones.
- old flags should be burned in private.



Canada's National Flag

A

Sentences tell a reader many things. Some sentences tell you more than one thing. Record on the line what each sentence is telling you.

who why how what where when

1. Canada's flag is red and white. _____
2. When someone important dies, Canada's flag is raised and then lowered to half mast. _____
3. In the centre of the white square is a red maple leaf. _____
4. The flag is to be carefully folded after it is taken down. _____
5. Canada's flag must be flown the correct way most of the time.

6. Canada's new flag was raised on February 15, 1965 on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. _____
7. The only time Canada's flag can be flown upside down is if there is danger.

8. Every night Canada's flag must be lowered, folded, and put away.

B

Locate **antonyms** in the story for the following words.

- | | | | |
|----------|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. old | _____ | 6. dying | _____ |
| 2. then | _____ | 7. up | _____ |
| 3. sits | _____ | 8. lowered | _____ |
| 4. day | _____ | 9. narrow | _____ |
| 5. short | _____ | 10. always | _____ |

C

Locate **synonyms** in the story for the following words.

- | | | | |
|------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. laws | _____ | 5. famous | _____ |
| 2. evening | _____ | 6. lifted | _____ |
| 3. ripped | _____ | 7. right | _____ |
| 4. middle | _____ | 8. trail | _____ |

The Atlantic Puffin



The Atlantic puffins are often called the clowns of the sea as they often land awkwardly on the ground and on the water. They are black and white sea birds with colourful red, orange, and bluish beaks. Some people refer to them as "sea parrots" because of the shape of their beaks. Their legs are orange too, with webbed feet. During the winter, their beaks and feet fade to a lighter colour. The colour does return in the spring.

The Atlantic puffin's beak grows bigger as the bird grows older. It is used to catch an average of ten fish each trip. The puffin dives into the water, scoops up as many fish as it can, and pins the prey in its bill with backward pointing spines that are on its tongue and on the top of its mouth. Did you know that the largest number of fish found and recorded in a puffin's beak at one time was 62? Puffins mainly eat small fish such as capelin, herring, and hake.

While fishing, Atlantic puffins must watch out for its main enemy, called the great black-backed gull. They also must be on the look-out and avoid herring gulls as they will steal the fish right out of their beaks.

In the spring and summer, thousands of puffins gather in colonies on the coasts and islands of Canada, off the North Atlantic Ocean. They live at sea for most of their lives.

Did you know that an Atlantic puffin can live for twenty years? Every day they fly, swim, dive for, and feed on, fish. An Atlantic Puffin finds flying difficult and must flap its wings 300 to 400 beats per minute in order to stay in the air. Not only do puffins fly through the air, they also can fly through the water using their wings as paddles. They also use their feet to steer themselves on top of the water and while fishing under the surface. Puffins are able to stay down for 30 seconds and dive as deeply as 61 metres (200 feet). While flying, puffins flap their wings 400 times per minute and can fly as fast as 88 kilometres (55 miles) an hour.

Puffins often return to the same nesting grounds each spring and often use the same burrow year after year. The burrow or nest is often seen on steep, rocky cliffs where they and their eggs are safe from their enemies. The burrow may be on the ground or amongst some rocks. If they are making a new burrow, they use their beaks to cut into the soil and then remove the dirt by sweeping it out with their feet. A burrow is about 91 cm (3 feet) long. One end of the burrow is lined with grasses, seaweed, and feathers.

In the burrow, the female puffin lays a single egg. It takes 42 days for the chick to hatch. Both parents care for the chick by watching out for enemies and feeding it fish. It takes 49 days for a puffin chick to learn how to fly and to live on its own. If there is danger near the burrow, the puffin will make a sound like a chainsaw buzzing.



The Atlantic Puffin

A Locate and record the sentence in the information that answers each question.

1. Where and when would we find Atlantic puffins in Canada?

2. Who is the Atlantic puffin's main enemy?

3. When does the Atlantic puffin make a sound like a chainsaw buzzing?

4. How many eggs does a female Atlantic puffin lay?

5. Which method of travel do Atlantic puffins find the most difficult?

B Record on the line provided, the name of each kind of sentence. Is it **Assertive**, **Interrogative**, **Imperative**, or **Exclamatory**?

1. Those puffins act like little clowns! _____

2. Did you know that puffins can hold lots of fish in their beaks?

3. The puffin flew down and landed with a bump on the sandy shore

4. Do not go near the puffin's burrow! _____

C Some words are written with the same double consonants found in the middle or at the end. Skim through the story to locate ten words that have double consonants. Record them on the lines below.
