



● **Nova Scotia Heritage Day 2022** ●





**Activity Sheets
For School Staff and Community Members**



**Prepared by the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse
February 2022**



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Background

Nova Scotia Heritage Day

Nova Scotia Heritage Day was established a statutory holiday in Nova Scotia in 2015 and takes place on the third Monday in February. It is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate a remarkable person, place or event that have made Nova Scotia what it is today. For example, Viola Desmond was selected as the holiday's very first honoree.

Landscape of Grand-Pré, UNESCO World Heritage Site

This year, to mark the 10th anniversary of the Landscape of Grand-Pré becoming a UNESCO World Heritage site, the province has chosen to celebrate the exceptional traditional agricultural settlement still in use today and which represents an iconic place in the hearts of the Acadian diaspora.

The Landscape of Grand-Pré is located in the southern Minas Basin of Nova Scotia, where the Grand-Pré marshland and archaeological sites constitute a cultural landscape bearing testimony to the development of agricultural farmland using dykes and the aboiteau wooden sluice system, started by the Acadians in the 17th century and further developed and maintained by the Planters and present-day inhabitants.

Over 1,300 hectares, the cultural landscape encompasses a large expanse of polder farmland and archaeological elements of the towns of Grand-Pré and Hortonville, which were built by the Acadians and their successors.

The landscape is an exceptional example of the adaptation of the first European settlers to the conditions along the North American Atlantic coast, which was made possible with the help and vital support of the Mi'kmaw people. The site is also inscribed as a major place of memory to Acadians.

Source: <https://heritageday.novascotia.ca/content/2022-honouree-landscape-grand-pré-world-heritage-site>



To celebrate this very special day that will take place this year on February 21st, the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, in partnership with the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, produced a video and this document to encourage schools and the public to celebrate the richness and contribution of the Acadian people.

Expected Outcomes

Jonathan Fowler, archeologist, is very well versed in the Landscape of Grand-Pré as he has led archeological works in the area for more than 20 years. Here is how he describes this landscape:

The landscape of Grand-Pré is a special place. It's on the UNESCO Heritage list, to begin with, but why? It is an example of human ingenuity over centuries because it's a place where humans have tested their wits against nature's great forces – the Fundy tides. So beginning with the Acadians in the 17th century we see the installations of dikes and drains and aboiteaux which transformed the landscape into a place where they could make a living from the bounty of the land. It's also a place of memory so that the Acadian people and in fact all of us can learn from the events that took place there, including of course the Deportation of 1755.

In order to provide a better understanding of the Landscape of Grand-Pré, as well as the Acadian community of Nova Scotia, you will find in this document activity sheets grouped in three main sections: The settlement of Acadie; The Present-day Acadie and The Landscape of Grand-Pré: a Heritage to celebrate. Each of these activity sheets includes a text and discussion or research activities to:

- Better understand why Grand-Pré is a place of memory for the Acadian people;
- Appreciate the identity and the cultural heritage of the Acadian people of Nova Scotia;
- Appreciate the contribution of the Acadian people to the history of Nova Scotia and to the history of Canada;
- Celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Landscape of Grand-Pré as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

We hope these activity sheets will foster reflection regarding Acadie and wider discussion of the lessons we can learn from a history that is not only that of the Acadian people but also that of Nova Scotians and of our country.

Settlement of Acadie

ACTIVITY SHEET # 1: Acadie and its first inhabitants

The origin of the name “Acadie” is not known for sure. The earliest origin of the word is attributed to the Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano in 1524. Apparently during his exploration of the Atlantic coastline of North America, he was so impressed by the beauty of the Bay of Chesapeake trees that he named this region “Arcadie” a name reminiscent of the splendors of ancient Greece.

The word “Cadie” (“Lacadie” ou “Acadie”), according to some linguists, could also be derived from the Mi'kmaw language to designate fertile land as we can see in words such as Passamaquoddy, Shubenacadie and Tracadie. It is also possible that the word “Acadie” comes from the mi'kmaw word “algatig” for camp.

In today's world, the term Acadie is typically used to refer to all Maritime provinces of Canada.



Birch box ornated with stained porcupine quills – mi'kmaq craft



Notwithstanding its origin, the region named Acadie has been inhabited for thousands of years by First Nations peoples and mostly by Mi'kmaq. When the French settlers first came on the land, there were 3,000 Mi'kmaq living in the area. The Mi'kmaq and the French settlers quickly bonded and created strategic alliances to exchange not only food but also customs and traditions that helped shape, in part, the Acadian identity. This friendship endured for numerous years, until the Deportation of the Acadians.

Activities

1. Go to the site below and answer the following questions:
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/reserves-in-nova-scotia>
 - a. Nova Scotia has a large number of mi'kmaq reserves. Where are these reserves located?
 - b. The ancestral land of the Mi'kmaq people is called Mi'kma'ki. What are the present-day provinces that are located in Mi'kma'ki?
2. A large number of locations in Nova Scotia have a mi'kmaw name. Which location is the closest to your hometown?
3. Name some of the important Mi'kmaq skills or knowledge that helped Acadians survive on this new continent? Which of those skills are still used today?

ACTIVITY SHEET # 2: Foundation of Acadie

Canada's history begins in Nova Scotia. As early as 1604, French explorers, led by Pierre Dugua de Mons and the navigator Samuel de Champlain, chose Sainte-Croix island as an exploration base. After enduring a harsh winter, these first French settlers founded Port-Royal in 1605, establishing the first permanent European settlement in North America. The colony expanded progressively along the shores of French Bay, giving birth to a proud, resilient and courageous people: the Acadians.

Between 1604 and 1710, the territory changed hands nine times, becoming in turn French or English possession. Acadians already established on the land chose to remain through those changes, and they were permitted to do so on the condition that they not take up arms against the British.



Port-Royal National Historic Site: a replica of the Habitation and one of the first attempt of European colonization in North America.

Source: Parks Canada



Activities

1. Find the location of Port-Royal National Historic Site on a Nova Scotia map.
2. On this map, indicate where is the French Bay. What is the present-day name of this Bay?
3. You have the power to travel through time and to give ONE (1) modern technological tool to de Mons for his expedition. Given the difficulties he went through, what tool would best help de Mons and his men? Why?
4. Samuel de Champlain is known, among other things, for his creation of the *Order of Good Cheer*, the first social club in America. Why do you think this activity was important?



ACTIVITY SHEET # 3: Deportation of the Acadians

The Acadian settlement continued to develop in spite of unremitting wars between European powers. In 1713, the Treaty of Utrecht finally ceded Acadie to England. From that moment, succeeding governors used relentless and concerted coercion methods against Acadians contrary to Queen Anne's promise that Acadians could maintain their possessions and continue to practice their religion. For example, an oath of allegiance was obtained from the Acadians guaranteeing their neutral status; Acadians were prohibited to be employed as civil servants, they were denied the right to vote and their possessions (boats and arms) were confiscated; the State religion was imposed; priests were forbidden to work in schools.

In spite of these measures, the Acadian population doubled every 15 years and, in 1755, there was between 15,000 and 18,000 Acadians on the territory soon to become Nova Scotia. A number of Acadian communities were established between Digby and Windsor but also in Tebougue and Pobomcoup, la Hève, Cobequid, Tatmegouche, Beaubassin, Chedabouctou and Canso as well as on Île Royale in Nérichac, Port-Toulouse, Baie-des-Espagnols and Niganiche.

At that moment, the British authorities, in complicity with the governors of New England, undertook to deport the Acadians in order to claim and distribute their lands to protestants settlers. Under the false pretext that Acadians were refusing to sign an oath of allegiance, thousands of Acadians were captured, their lands and possessions destroyed, families separated. This brought a drastic change to the Acadian society.

It is estimated that of the 18,000 Acadians living in Nova Scotia, Île Saint-Jean and Île Royale, 12,000 were deported between 1755 and 1763, the majority lost to epidemics, cold, misery, starvation or shipwrecks. The Acadians that managed to escape the Deportation were not better off: they were hunted, killed or imprisoned. After the Deportation, the *Planters* from New England settle on the lands formerly occupied by Acadians.



The Deportation of the Acadians: painting by Claude Picard

Activities

1. On what day and on what year is it formally decided to deport the Acadians?
2. What historical events are similar to this attempt to eliminate all trace of Acadians?
3. Lands occupied by Acadians were extremely fertile, thanks in part to the construction of *aboiteaux*. What is an *aboiteau* and how does it work?



ACTIVITY SHEET # 4: Return of the Acadians

With the signature of the Treaty of Paris in 1763, France irrevocably ceded her North American colonies to Great Britain. From 1764, Acadians were given permission to return to the territory of the old Acadie. However, and until 1784, the legislation was very repressive. The *Board of Trade*, the British ministry responsible for commerce and industry, ordered Governor Wilmot to free the Acadians still imprisoned and to permit them to settle, along with the Acadians that were deported, providing they sign an oath of allegiance. Governor Wilmot followed these instructions but imposed additional conditions to discourage the Acadians from remaining in the province: they were only given the most unfertile and scattered lands; Acadians could only settle in groups of 10 people or less; they couldn't own land; their possessions were confiscated; the catholic clergy was expelled. Furthermore, in 1759, a law was passed cancelling any title of ownership Acadians formerly possessed.

Defeated, the Acadians accepted these conditions and settled on the lands that the province choose to give them: Chéticamp, Richmond, Clare (Baie Sainte-Marie), Argyle (Par-en-Bas); Pomquet, Tracadie and Havre-Boucher as well as the region of Torbé near Cape Breton; also, Chezzetcook and, to a lesser extend Minudie, Nappan and Maccan near the New Brunswick border. This banishment to the four corners of our province made Acadians even more vulnerable as they were surrounded by anglophone regions, much more densely populated. Furthermore, the land of their ancestors and other fertile lands being occupied by English settlers, the Acadians had little choice but to become fisherman in order to survive. In some cases, Acadians were at the mercy of rich English businessmen who controlled the region's economy, and it took close to 100 years to break this subservience.



Historical Acadian Village of Nova Scotia

Activities

1. Why did the authorities give Acadians permission to return and settle in small groups in scattered locations? What are the challenges Acadians had to face when they resettled?
2. The distance separating Acadian communities helped to create distinct regions with their own cultural, economic or geographical identities. Name some characteristics of an Acadian region you may know.
3. The Chéticamp area is known for a powerful network of cooperatives. Why was it necessary for the Acadians of this area to create this network?



ACTIVITY SHEET # 5: Revival of the Acadians

The return of the Acadians took place slowly and sporadically in each of the regions. Of all the regions occupied by the Acadians before 1755, only Isle Madame and Pubnico were given back to Acadians. In communities such as Minudie, Nappan and Maccan, as well as in Chezzetcook, Tracadie, Havre-Boucher and the region of Torbé, Acadians were assimilated within the majority. As for Clare, Argyle, Pomquet, Chéticamp and Isle Madame, while isolated from each other, they were still able to form small clusters of villages and at least develop in their local area. This helped with the survival of the French language and the Acadian culture.

The beginning of the 1860s saw the Acadians slowly emerge as a society: learning establishments were created, and a first French-language newspaper was founded. In 1881, a number of Acadians decided to organize the first National Convention in Memramcook, New Brunswick, which included more than 5,000 Acadians. During this first Convention, Acadians adopted a National Day. The Second Convention, held in 1884 in Miscouche, Prince Edward Island, saw the adoption of a flag, an anthem, an insignia and a motto. A third Convention took place in 1890 in Pointe-de-l'Église, Nova Scotia, and was followed by a series of other conventions to discuss issues of general interest and further define Acadian identity.



The Acadian Flag, adopted in 1884

Activities

1. What date was chosen as the Acadian National Day?
2. What is the motto of Acadie? What would be the translation in English?
3. Go to the web site of the Société Nationale de l'Acadie at <https://snacadie.org>. What are the main sectors of this umbrella organization? Who are the member organizations?

The present-day Acadie

ACTIVITY SHEET # 6: Education

With the return of the Acadians after the Deportation, the government of Nova Scotia adopted a series of repressive acts to hinder the development of the Acadians communities, if not to outright assimilate them, in favor of the Anglophone majority.

As an example, at the education level, an act was passed in 1864 forbidding the instruction in French in Nova Scotia. However, the presence of Collège Sainte-Anne in Pointe-de-l'Église, later to become Université Sainte-Anne, considerably helped with the academic curriculum, the training of teachers and the availabilities of French material in the schools of Clare and Argyle.



Founded in 1890, Université Sainte-Anne is located in Pointe-de-l'Église.



In 1971, the government of Nova Scotia established a Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial and Municipal Relations. In its report, Commissioner Graham recommended, among other things, that Acadians have access to a French-language education and the right to develop programs and school material for their own schools. It wasn't until 1981, however that Acadians finally obtained French-language public schools at the elementary level funded by the provincial government. As for the Junior and the Senior High Schools, mixed-schools with French-speaking and English-speaking students and mixed-programs, some courses offered in French while others offered in English, were implemented. This education system, along with an increase of English spoken at home and in the community caused a devastating assimilation for the Acadian community: between 1981 and 1996, the French first-language population in Nova Scotia dropping from 80,000 to 42,000.

In 1996, the *Education Act* was again amended to create the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial. However, despite this important gain with regard to school management, the government refused to implement Acadians French first-language schools and French first-language programs. Acadians were left with no choice but to take this matter all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada pursuant to section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom*.

Activities

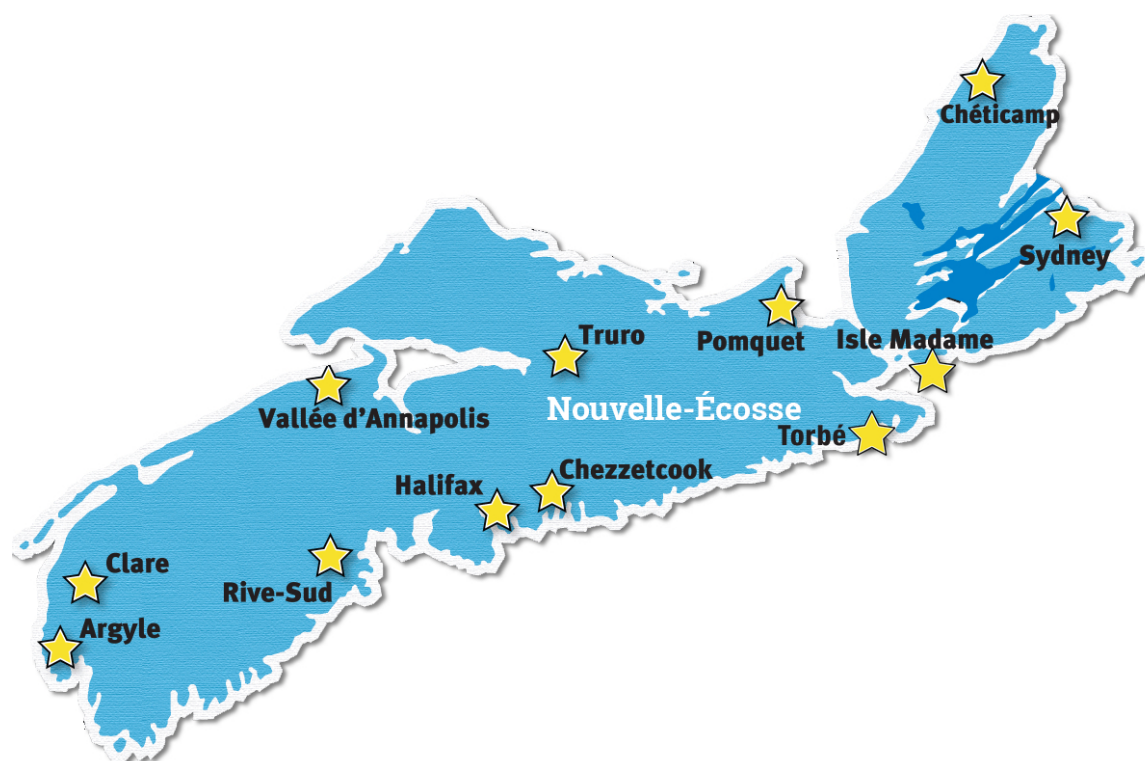
1. What were the causes of the important decrease in French-speaking Acadians between 1981 and 1996?
2. Why is it important to have French-language schools in Nova Scotia?
3. What is the difference between a French-language school and an immersion school?
4. Go to the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial's Web site at: <https://csap.ca>. What is the mandate of the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial? How many schools are part of the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial?



ACTIVITY SHEET # 7: Acadians et Francophones in Nova Scotia

According to the 2016 census, more than 90,000 respondents have identified being able to speak French and, of that total, more than 33,000 have identified French as a first language in Nova Scotia. These respondents reside *mostly* in Acadian regions officially recognized by the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

French is the second most spoken language in Nova Scotia. In comparison, according to Statistics Canada, there are 7,110 people who speak Arabic, 4,640 people who speak Mandarin, 4,185 people who speak Mi'kmaw, 3,435 people who speak German and 1,830 people who speak Spanish. Moreover, among the respondents who indicated neither French nor English as their first language, a significant number are nonetheless able to speak French.



Member regions of the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse



Activities

1. The Acadian families who came back to Nova Scotia after the Deportation were forced to settle in new regions. What are the main Acadian regions recognized by the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse?
2. Halifax is the region with the largest concentration of Francophones in Nova Scotia. What are the reasons for this concentration of Francophones in HRM? Can you list some?

ACTIVITY # 8: Acadian Organizations

The Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse is the oldest provincial organization representing the Acadian communities of Nova Scotia. Founded on October 14, 1968, the Fédération acadienne promotes the interest of Acadians and Francophones in Nova Scotia and is currently comprised of 29 member organizations.



Twelve organizations represent the regions that are recognized by la Fédération acadienne: Clare, Argyle, Rive-Sud, Vallée d'Annapolis, Halifax, Chezzetcook, Truro, Pomquet, Torbé, Chéticamp, Sydney and Isle Madame.

There are also two institutional organizations: Université Sainte-Anne and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial.

Finally, 15 members organizations represent diverse sectors such as early childhood, youth, parents, women, seniors, culture, health, justice, sports, economy, media, literacy, heritage, and cooperatives.

Activities

1. Go to the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse's Web site at: www.acadieNE.ca. Name the organization responsible for promoting the area of Grand-Pré?
2. What organization is representing your region?
3. Name the organization that represents the youth sector?



ACTIVITY SHEET #9: Arts and Culture

Arts have played and are still playing an important role in the survival of the Acadian culture and language. Here are just a few Acadian artists to illustrate the vibrancy and diversity of Nova Scotia's Acadie:

Jacques Surette is a 21-year-old singer/songwriter from the south-west area. He started playing guitar at 12 years old and writing his own songs at 14 years old. This young artist has gathered lots of interest on social media networks with his simple yet touching songs.



William Roach is a self-made Acadian artist from Chéticamp. He creates wooden art pieces using traditional tools to celebrate the Acadian tradition and experience. His sculptures are whimsical, bright and always original. In 2005, he received the Grand-Pré Award for this contribution to Acadian culture.





Georgette LeBlanc is an author who grew up in Baie Sainte-Marie. In just a few years, she became one of the most influential figure of Modern-day Acadian poetry. She has collaborated on and contributed to theatrical, television and musical projects and her artistic approach focuses on every dimensions of History. Georgette was the Parliamentary Poet Laureate in 2018-2019.



Ronald à Gonzague was a self-made artist from Petit-de-Grat. Ronald (à Gonzague) Landry first moved to Ontario to work as a furniture salesman. His heart still in Isle Madame, he decided to come back home in 1979 where he started a small art shop “la Cachette à cadeaux” to create and sell various products and arts works.





Festivals and Events

The **Congrès mondial acadien (CMA)** is a major event bringing together Acadians from all over the world. This event takes place every five years and is a showcase of Acadian culture for the entire world. The CMA included family gatherings, outdoor shows and conferences to discuss key issues and concerns for the Acadian and Francophone community.

The very first CMA took place in 1994, in the south-east part of New Brunswick. Nova Scotia, ancestral land of Acadians, hosted the CMA in 2004 and will again host the event in the south-west region in 2024.

Acadians and Francophones organize each year numerous festivals and events in all Acadian regions of Nova Scotia to celebrate Acadian culture and traditions with music, dance, plays and parades.

Activities

1. The arts have been a part of Acadian culture for a very long time. What is the name of the very first play in North America? Where was it played? Who wrote that play?
2. What is the Grand-Pré Award? Name a few honorees.
3. Do you know other Acadian artists from Nova Scotia? To discover more about Acadian artists and how vibrant the Acadian community is, go to TÉLÉNÉ, a project of la Fédération culturelle acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse at <https://fecane.ca/tele>
4. What is la Mi-Carême?
5. What is the oldest Acadian festival and in what region does it take place?
6. Festival Savalette is celebrated each year in the Torbé area. Who was Captain Savalette and what kind of relation did he have with the Mi'kmaq?



The Landscape of Grand-Pré: a Heritage to celebrate

ACTIVITY SHEET #10: A story to be told

La Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, in partnership with the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage, has produced a video to celebrate this year's Heritage Day.

Activities

Visit the YouTube page of la Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse at <https://www.youtube.com/user/Federationbenevoles> to view this video of about 30 minutes and answer the following questions:

1. Why is the landscape of Grand-Pré so special?
2. How have Acadians transformed the landscape of Grand-Pré?
3. When did the first archeological work take place at Grand-Pré and what was the objective of these efforts?
4. Who were the *Planters*?
5. What type of tree can still be seen at Grand-Pré that would have been planted by Acadians?
6. What are the different sites that have been discovered at Grand-Pré?
7. What technology is used nowadays for archeological work?
8. Name two artefacts that were found during the archeological excavation.
9. What lessons can be learned from the Deportation of the Acadians?



Conclusion

This document and the activity sheets are far from being a full picture, but we hope that we have sparked your interest to learn even more about the history of Acadie, to visit the Acadian regions of Nova Scotia, to get to know this dynamic and welcoming people and, who knows, you may discover that you too have Acadian ancestors. We are looking forward to meeting you!



Online resources

Here are a few links to help you know more about Nova Scotia Acadie and Acadie in general.

Acadia Historic Trail: <https://sentieracadie.ca/en/>

Acadia Historic Trail on Balado Discovery:
<https://baladodiscovery.com/circuits/744/acadia-historic-trail>

Affaires acadiennes et Francophonie : <https://acadien.novascotia.ca/fr/>

Experience Acadian Culture in Nova Scotia :
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsq6HuQIA4E>

Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse : www.acadieNE.ca

Festival in Nova Scotia Joins Together the Mi'kmaq and Acadians | APTN News :
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rnq6KxxEvOc>

Fort Anne National Historic Site: <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/ns/fortanne>

Fort Edward National Historic Site: <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/ns/edward>

Georges Island National Historic Site: <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/ns/georges>

Grand-Pré National Historic Site: <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/ns/grandpre>

Landscape of Grand-Pré - UNESCO World Heritage Centre:
<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1404/>

Melanson Settlement National Historic Site: <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/ns/melanson>



Société Nationale de l'Acadie : <https://snacadie.org>

The landscape of Grand-Pré: <http://www.landscapeofgrandpre.ca>

Port-Royal National Historic Site:

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/ns/portroyal>