Chapter 8

Welcoming the Explorers

Cabot had not arrived at the shores of an empty land. The coast he sailed past is the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq. Imagine how the arrival of the Europeans might have been from the Mi'kmaq's point of view.

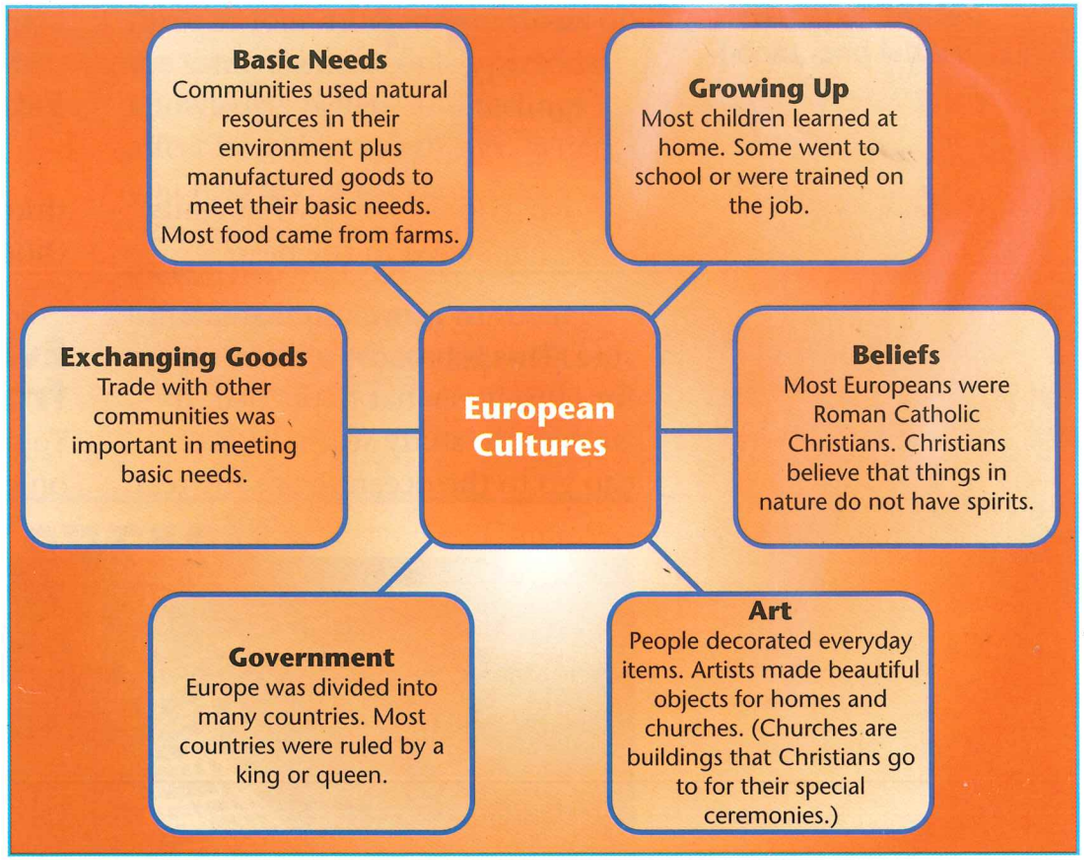
What would you do if you looked up and saw a strange vessel coming towards you? What would you think if you saw people whose skin was a colour you had never seen before? (Imagine bright blue!) How would you feel about this?

When explorers and Aboriginal peoples first met, they both had a lot to learn about getting along with people from other cultures. In this chapter, you can find out what happened when the Haudenosaunee met the French.

European Culture

Who were the Europeans? What were they like?

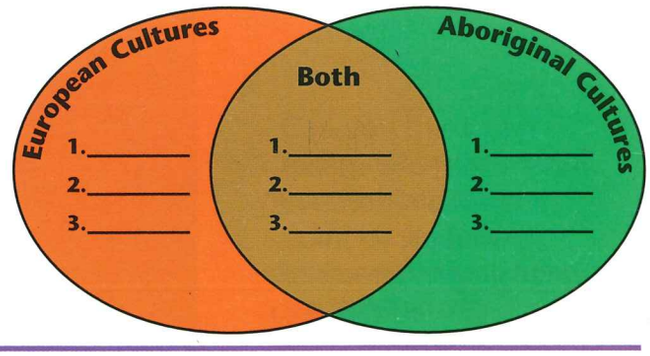
You have seen that Aboriginal cultures in North America had some similarities and some differences. European cultures also had similarities and differences. Here are some of the things European cultures had in common around 1500.



Try This

Compare this European culture web with the culture web for Aboriginal peoples on page 50. Work with a partner. That way, you can each open your book to a different culture web.

What do you notice about the similarities and differences between these two cultures? You could use a **Venn diagram** like the one shown here to compare them. Start by putting the similarities in the middle.



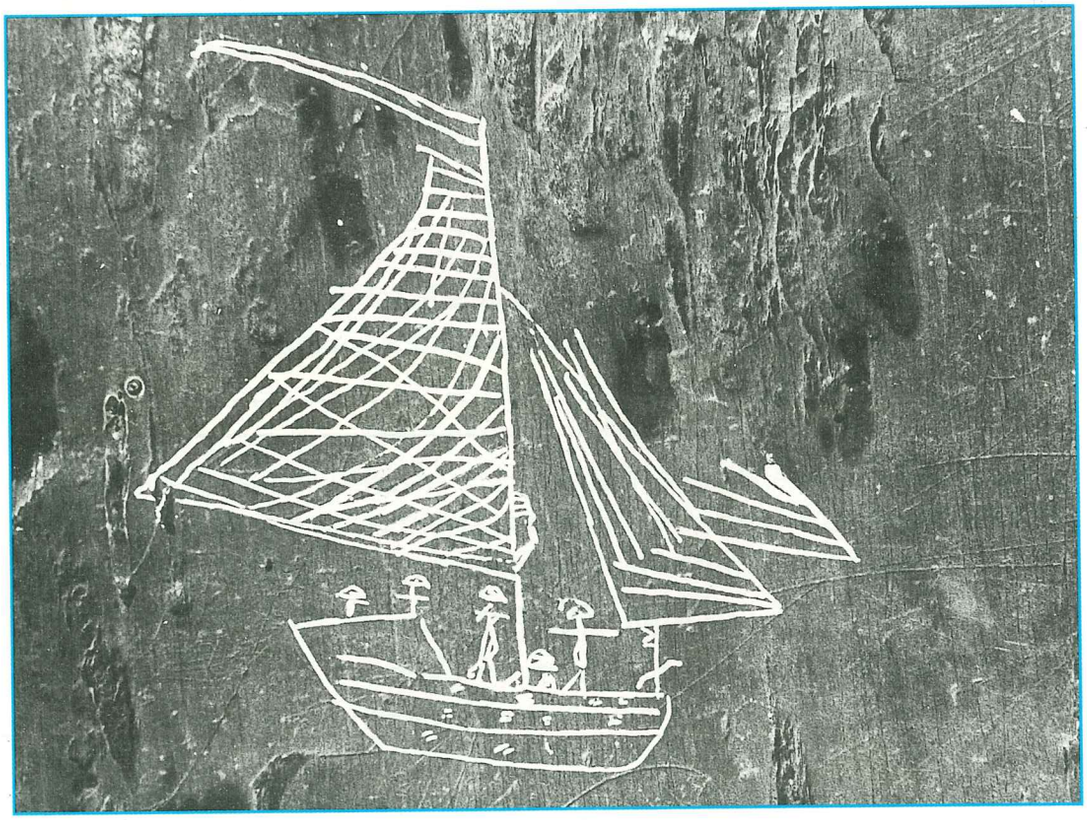
What Really Happened?

How do we know what really happened in the past?

The truth is, we often aren't sure. This is because we can't see for ourselves what happened. If we want to study seashells, we can go to the ocean to see the real thing. When we study history, though, we can't go back in time.

Evidence from the Past

To study history, we have to rely on evidence from the past. This



Some Aboriginal groups recorded events in pictures. This is a pictograph carved into rock by the Mi'kmaq. What does it show?

includes **artifacts**, such as tools and clothing that have been saved from days long ago.

Evidence also includes what people say about what happened in the past. We have evidence about the days of the explorers in the stories Aboriginal Elders tell us. We also have evidence in the historical **documents** that were written by the explorers and other Europeans at the time.

Do the Stories Match?

Sometimes different accounts of the same event don't exactly match. This might be because mistakes were made when the facts were written down. It might also be because different people saw the event from different points of view.

This can happen in any situation. There could even be three or four different **versions** of the same event. People's personal knowledge, beliefs, and feelings affect how they see things. When you read about the past, make sure you consider all points of view. Then you can use this information to form your own opinion about what happened.

Documents might include logs, diaries, newspaper articles, books, and letters.

Think For Yourself

When you hear two different versions of the same event, stop and ask questions that help you sort the facts from the opinions. Try practising with this example.

Maia and Tony play on opposite baseball teams. This is what they have to say about a game they played against each other.

Maia: *It was a great game! It rained a little, but that didn't stop us from playing our best. There were a couple of close calls, but the umpire got it right every time.*

Tony: *The game was a washout. The weather was lousy and the umpire didn't pay any attention to what was going on.*

Answer these questions yourself, then compare your answers with a partner's answers.

- *Whose team won the game?*
- *What makes you think this?*
- *What facts about the game can you tell from reading these two points of view?*

Can you think of a recent event in which you had a different point of view than someone else? Why did this happen?

First Sightings

We don't know exactly when or where Aboriginal peoples and Europeans first saw each other. The evidence makes historians think it was soon after Cabot's journey in 1497.

After Cabot's voyage, many fishers from Europe sailed to the waters around Newfoundland to catch cod. Fish were a valuable resource to the Europeans. Europe was a fairly small place. The farmers couldn't supply all the food they needed for the many people who lived there. For some Europeans, their beliefs also required them to eat fish rather than meat on many days of the year.

The fishers came ashore to fix their nets or to get food, water, and wood. They also needed to dry the fish they caught so that they wouldn't rot on the trip home. This was when Aboriginal peoples and Europeans met for the first time.

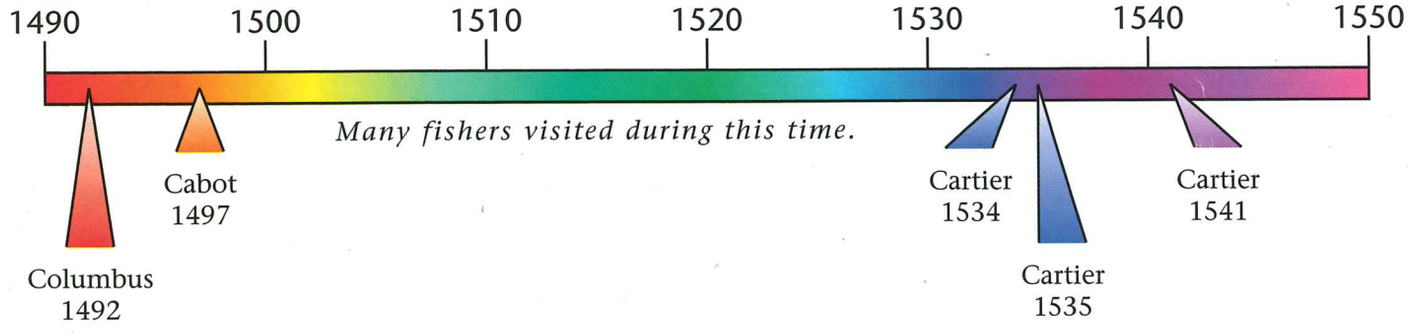
The Mi'kmaq Dream

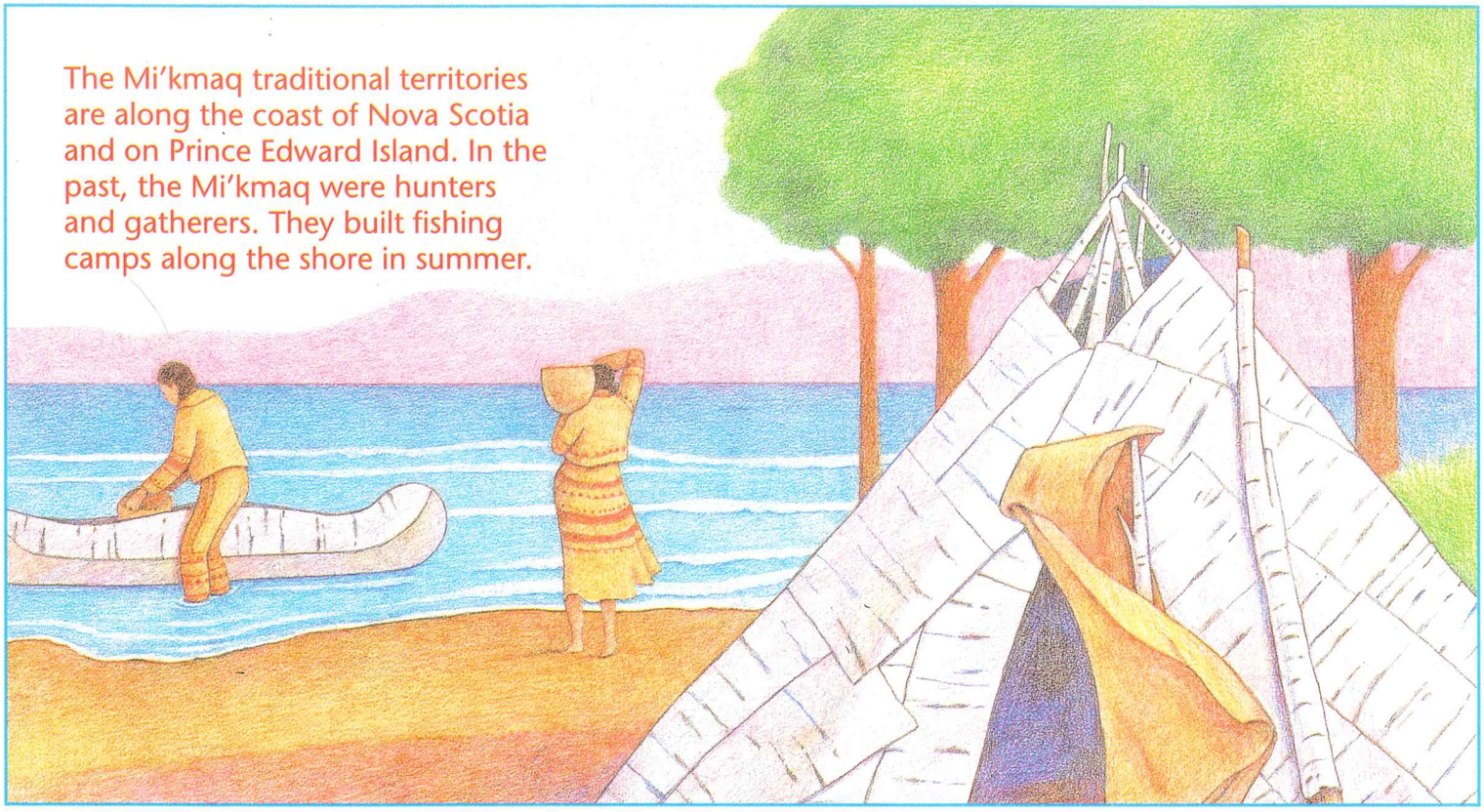
Many Aboriginal groups say shamans knew Europeans were coming before they actually arrived. Often, the idea came to a person in a dream.

One of the first descriptions of meeting from the Aboriginal peoples' point of view is a story told by Mi'kmaq Elders. We don't know who the Europeans were.

This timeline shows the explorers you learned about in Chapter 7 and Jacques Cartier, who is described in this chapter. How many years are there between each two markers on this timeline?

Making Contact





The Mi'kmaq traditional territories are along the coast of Nova Scotia and on Prince Edward Island. In the past, the Mi'kmaq were hunters and gatherers. They built fishing camps along the shore in summer.

In The Words Of...



The Mi'kmaq Elders

In this story, a young woman dreams she sees a small island with trees floating towards the land. The next day, the people see Europeans for the first time.

When they got up in the morning, they saw what seemed to be a small island that had drifted near to the land and became fixed there. There were trees on the island, and what seemed to be a number of bears were crawling about on the branches.

All the Mi'kmaq men seized their bows and arrows and spears, and rushed down to the shore to shoot the bears. But they stopped in surprise when they saw that the creatures were not bears but men. And what seemed to be a small island with trees was really a large boat with long poles rising above it.

Excerpt used with permission from *I Have Lived Here Since the World Began* by Arthur J. Ray (Toronto: Key Porter Books Ltd and Lester Publishing, 1996).

Think For Yourself

These questions might help you think about seeing Europeans from the Mi'kmaq point of view.

- *Why might the Mi'kmaq think the ship was an island with trees?*
- *Why might the Mi'kmaq first think that the men were bears?*

You might want to write down your answers, then make a drawing to show what you think the ship looked like.

The European Point of View

In 1534, the French explorer Jacques Cartier described the people he saw in the area of Newfoundland. This is the first description we have of Aboriginal peoples from the European point of view.

In The Words Of...



Jacques Cartier

From the evidence we have, historians think Cartier could be describing the Beothuk. We know that they painted their bodies and that they lived in this area.

[Their] bodies are fairly well formed but they are wild and savage folk. They wear their hair tied up on the top of their heads like a handful of twisted hay, and into it they weave a few birds' feathers. They clothe themselves with the fur of animals, both men as well as women. They [all] paint themselves with certain tan colours. They have canoes made of birch bark...from which they catch many seals.

Think For Yourself

Cartier described the Beothuk as "wild and savage," even though he hadn't met them. In a group, discuss why you think he described them this way. In what way are his comments biased?

In Search of the Northwest Passage

European traders soon realized that Cabot had not actually reached The Indies. They now knew the continent of North America was between Europe and Asia.

They didn't give up on finding a route, though. They had another idea. They thought they might be able to cross North America by water. They called this route the **Northwest Passage**.

Jacques Cartier was one of the first explorers to search for the Northwest Passage. You read Cartier's description of the Beothuk in the last section. Now you can find out more about his voyages.

A French Explorer

Jacques Cartier made three trips to North America between 1534 and 1541. The king of France paid for his voyages. During this time, Cartier kept a journal of what happened. After, he wrote a book based on his journals. Everything we know about Cartier's adventures comes from this book.

REAL PEOPLE: JACQUES CARTIER (1491–1557)

Jacques Cartier came from the French **port** of St. Malo. A port is a town on the ocean. Many men from St. Malo made regular trips across the Atlantic Ocean to the Grand Banks to fish. Cartier probably made such trips before he first began to explore. His experience as a sailor made him a good choice when the king of France wanted an explorer.



There are no pictures of Cartier painted at the time. The picture shown here was done in 1836 for a French book about clothing styles.

The First Voyage

Cartier's first voyage took place in the summer of 1534. He travelled with two ships and 61 sailors. It took them only 20 days to cross the Atlantic.

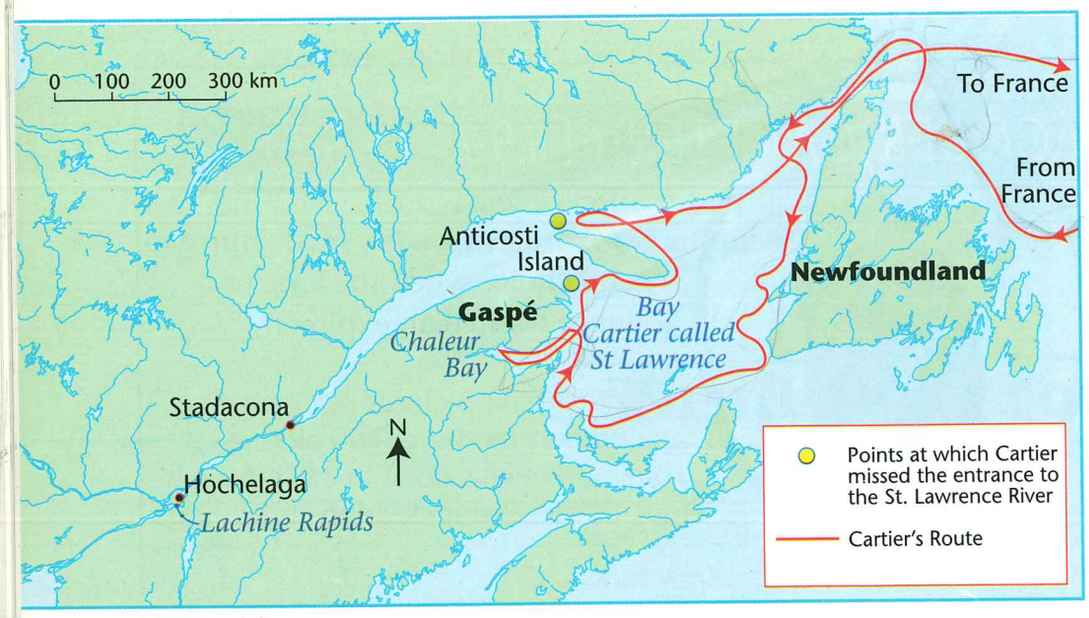
Cartier sailed around the northern tip of Newfoundland. He arrived at a body of water he called the St. Lawrence. It was actually a **gulf** at the mouth of a large river. The water's strong current made Cartier think there must be a river nearby. He thought this might be the Northwest Passage.

A gulf is a large bay of water. Even today, the rocky coast, strong winds, and shallow waters make the East Coast a challenge for sailors.

Cartier spent the summer exploring the coast and looking for the river. But the Gulf of St. Lawrence was so large, he missed finding the river. During this time, he made contact with two different Aboriginal groups: the Mi'kmaq and the Haudenosaunee.

Contact is the word we use to describe what happens when people from two cultures meet.

This map shows Cartier's first voyage in 1534.



Contact with the Mi'kmaq

When the Mi'kmaq of Prince Edward Island saw Cartier, they greeted him by waving furs on the ends of sticks. They called to him to show that they were friendly and wanted to trade.

Cartier and the Mi'kmaq first exchanged a few gifts. Then they got down to trading. The Europeans offered knives, necklaces, beads, and **ironware**. Ironware are metal items such as pots. The Mi'kmaq were eager to trade. They traded away all their furs—even the ones they were wearing!

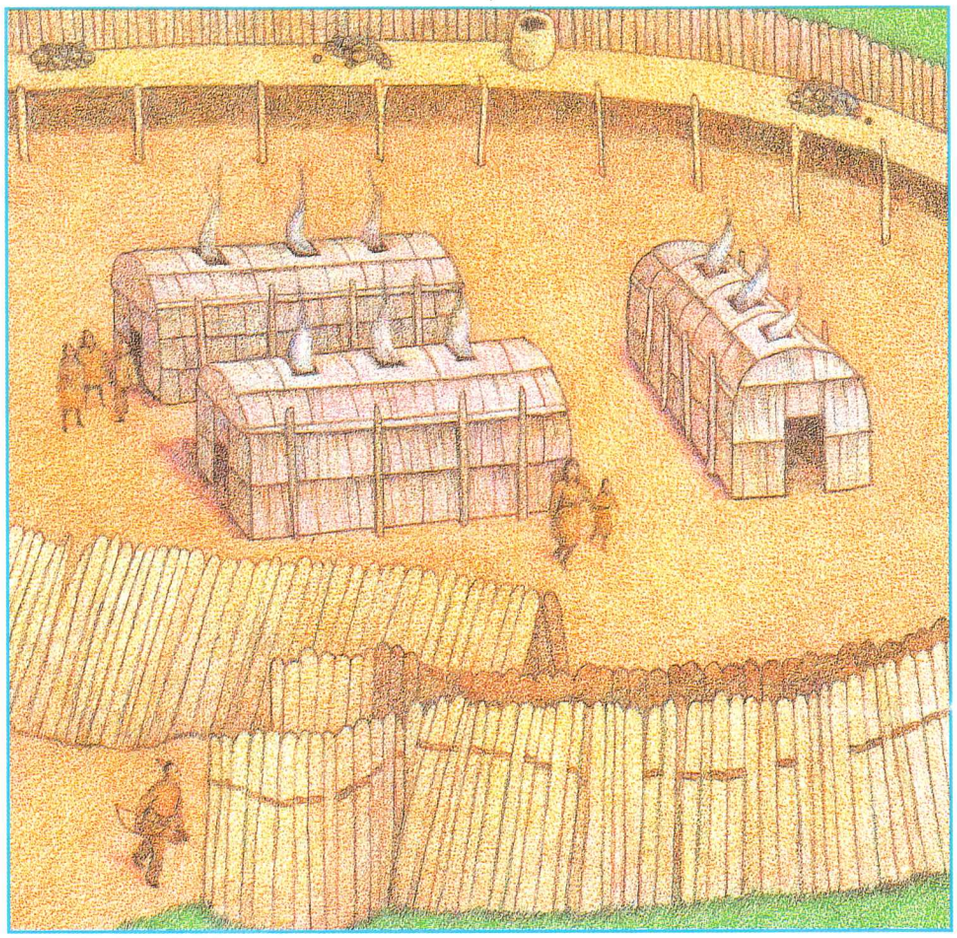
Contact with the Haudenosaunee

As Cartier continued to explore, he came across a group of Haudenosaunee [ha-duh-nuh-SAH-nee]. They had come to fish in the region we know as the Gaspé Peninsula. The Haudenosaunee were from the village of Stadacona, further up the St. Lawrence River. Their leader was called Donnacona.

The Haudenosaunee were also eager to trade their furs with Cartier. Cartier traded with them, but his real goal was to claim the land for France. He was sure he was no longer on an island. Instead, he believed he had found a continent that could provide France with many resources. Two

days later he put up a large cross. Across the top he wrote *"Vive le Roi de France!"*—"Long Live the King of France!"

Donnacona was not happy about the cross. He didn't know what the writing said, but he thought the cross was a symbol that Cartier was claiming rights to the land.



In the past, the people along the upper St. Lawrence River and around the Great Lakes lived year-round in villages made up of wooden longhouses. They hunted and fished. They also had farms.

In The Words Of...



Jacques Cartier

In his journal, Cartier tells us what Donnacona did when he saw the cross he had put up. A ***harangue*** *is when someone angrily tells you his or her opinion.*

When we had returned to our ships, the captain [village headman], dressed in an old black bear-skin, arrived in a canoe with three of his sons and his brother.... And pointing to the cross he made us a long harangue, making the sign of the cross with two of his fingers; and then he pointed to the land all around about, as if he wished to say that all this region belonged to him, and that we ought not to have set up this cross without his permission.

Cartier calmed Donnacona by lying. He used signs to suggest that the marker was there only to help him find his way.

At the time, explorers often captured people as proof that they had been to distant lands. In their culture, this wasn't a wrong thing to do.

Kidnapped!

After Cartier put up the cross, he had his men capture Donnacona and his sons. On board his ship, Cartier gave the Haudenosaunee many gifts. Then he explained that he wanted to take Donnacona's sons to France with him.

Cartier wanted to show the young men to the king of France. He also wanted them to learn French so that they could be his guides when he returned to the St. Lawrence. He made it seem like an invitation, but Cartier was really kidnapping the men.

Donnacona did not put up a fight. It might be that he didn't know what Cartier was saying—the French and Haudenosaunee spoke different languages. Or it might be that the Haudenosaunee knew they couldn't win a fight if they tried to rescue the young men. We only have Cartier's point of view, though, so we don't know for sure what happened. The next day, Cartier sailed back to France with Donnacona's sons.

What Cartier Found Out

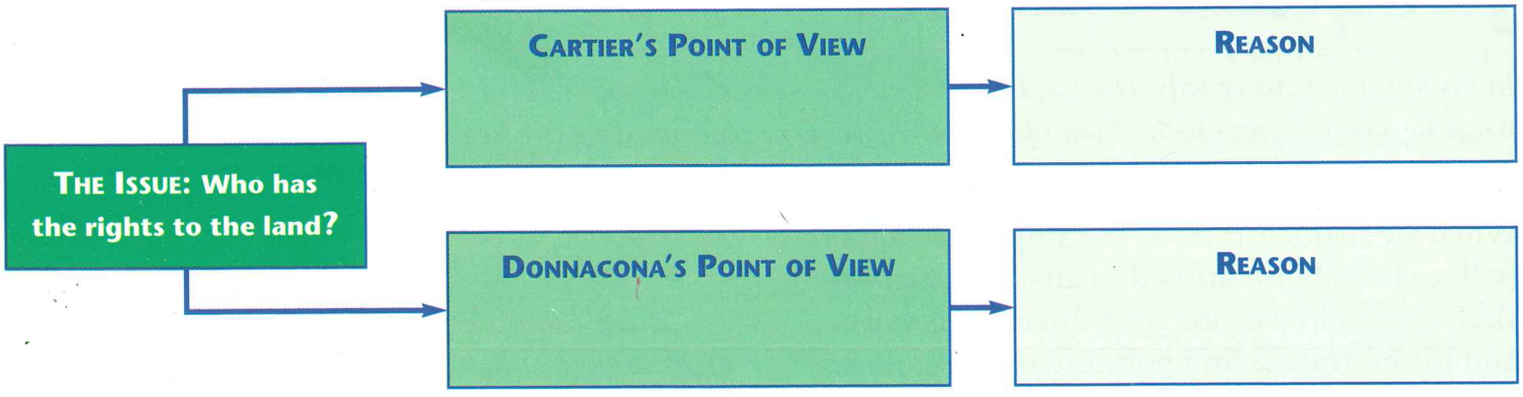
Cartier learned these important things on his first voyage:

- He discovered that Newfoundland is an island.
- He located the continent of North America.

Try This

Even though the information we have about events is from Cartier's point of view, there is evidence that Donnacona and Cartier disagreed about who had rights to the land.

Check back to find evidence of this disagreement. Then use a chart like this one to show Donnacona's and Cartier's different points of view.



A Second Voyage

Cartier returned to the Gulf of St. Lawrence the next year, in 1535. Donnacona's sons were with him. They guided Cartier to the village of Stadacona. This time the French planned to spend the winter. Although Donnacona tried to make friends with Cartier, Cartier didn't trust him, so the French made their own camp.

A Misunderstanding

Cartier then decided to explore further up the St. Lawrence River in search of the Northwest Passage.

At first it seemed as though Donnacona was going to help Cartier. But then Donnacona said Cartier couldn't go up the river because it was his territory. Cartier thought Donnacona was being unfriendly and unhelpful for no reason.

Historians who have read Cartier's journals think that Cartier didn't understand Donnacona and the Haudenosaunee. Donnacona wanted one of his people to stay with the French and a French person to stay with the Haudenosaunee. In his culture, this was a sign of friendship and respect for Donnacona's rights to the river. But Cartier didn't want to do this. So Donnacona thought Cartier was being unfriendly and unhelpful.

Cartier ignored Donnacona and sailed up the river as far as the Haudenosaunee village of Hochelaga. There he ran into strong rapids. The European boats were too large and heavy to carry around the rapids. Disappointed, Cartier returned to his camp near Stadacona. He knew that this river was not the Northwest Passage.

A Miserable Winter

As winter came, Cartier and his men built a shelter. It was a miserable time. The winter was colder than any they had ever known. The snow was so deep it was up to their armpits.

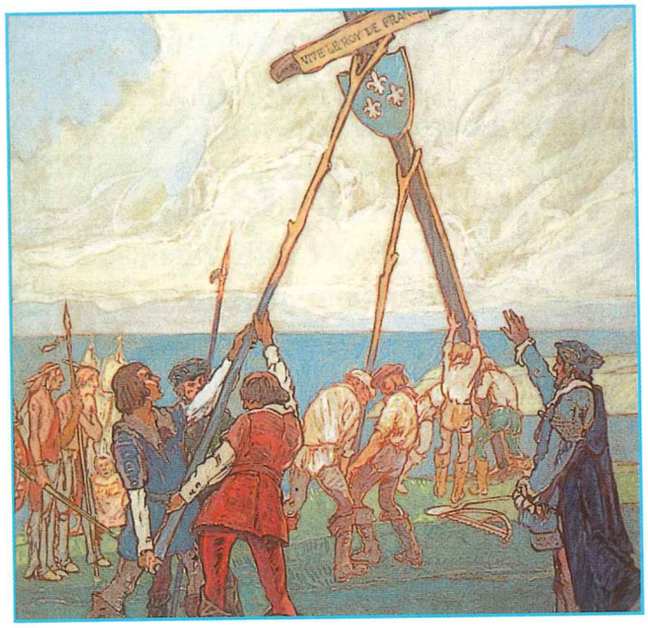
In the middle of winter, Cartier's men began to get sick from **scurvy**. Men were dying every day. Cartier tried to hide

At this time, Europeans began calling the region *Canada*. This may have been because Donnacona's sons used a similar sounding word to direct Cartier to their village.

Find Stadacona and Hochelaga on the map on page 138. What Aboriginal technology could have helped Cartier with his river trips?

Scurvy is a disease that is caused by a lack of vitamin C. People with scurvy get swollen arms and legs. Their gums rot and their teeth fall out. Eventually they die. Sailors on long voyages often got scurvy.

Do you think this painting shows the Aboriginal or European point of view of this event? What are the clues?



the deaths from the Haudenosaunee. He was sure that if the Haudenosaunee knew, they would attack them.

Instead, when the Haudenosaunee found out they helped the French. They showed them how to make a tea from parts of the white cedar tree. The tea was rich in vitamin C. It cured the men who were sick and kept everyone healthy for the rest of the winter.

More Kidnappings

During the winter, Donnacona told Cartier about lands nearby that were rich in minerals. Cartier thought Donnacona was talking about gold and silver. (Historians now think he was talking about copper. Copper was valuable in Aboriginal trading.) This gave him an idea. He wanted to set up a French colony along the St. Lawrence. This would be a base from which they could search for gold.

Now Cartier had to convince the king of France that this was a good idea. Once again, he decided to take back a Haudenosaunee to tell the king about these treasures. This time he kidnapped Donnacona and nine others before he returned to France in the spring.

What Cartier Found Out

Cartier didn't find the Northwest Passage on his second voyage. He did learn these things, though:

- There was a large river and several small rivers that could be used to travel the land.
- It was possible for Europeans to survive the winter in the land known as Canada.

Try This

Check back to the chart you made showing Donnacona's and Cartier's points of view about rights to the land. Did the events on Cartier's second voyage fit with the ideas you wrote on the chart?

The First Colony

After the second voyage, Cartier arrived back in France with his captives. Donnacona told the king about the riches in his homeland. Then Cartier was able to convince the king that it was a good idea to explore this land they now called Canada.

The king decided to set up a colony there. He did not put Cartier in charge, though. Instead, he asked a man called Jean-François de la Rocque de Roberval to run the colony.

Cartier wasn't happy about this, but the king had made up his mind. Then there was more bad news. During the winter, Donnacona and all of his group except one girl died from European diseases.

The Colony Fails

In 1541, Cartier returned to Stadacona with the first French **colonists**. (He didn't bring back the Haudenosaunee girl who was still alive, though.)

How do you think Donnacona's death will affect Cartier's return to the St. Lawrence?

Colonists are people who settle in a place when a country wants to claim an area of land. Having people from the country living in the colony helps make the claim stronger.

REAL PEOPLE: DONNACONA (?–C. 1540)

All we know about Donnacona comes from what Cartier tells us. We don't have any pictures of him or know what it was like for him to "discover" Europe. We know he learned to speak a little French and was often a guest at the king's court.

Donnacona seems to have been interested in new ideas. His actions show that he was worried, though, about what would happen to his people if the Europeans started to control things.

It seems Donnacona was loved by his people. When Cartier kidnapped him, the Haudenosaunee offered their most valuable goods to Cartier in exchange for their leader.



This is a painting of the Haudenosaunee showing the French a cure for scurvy. Do you think it is in the tradition of European art or Aboriginal art? What are the clues?

Because of Cartier's mistake, the French came up with a saying: Something that is a fake is called a "Canadian diamond."

The colonists were French convicts who had been released from prison when they agreed to make the trip with Cartier. (It was hard to find people who were willing to go on such an adventure!) Roberval planned to follow later with more colonists.

When they arrived at Stadacona again, Cartier met the new Haudenosaunee leader, Agona. He told him that Donnacona was dead, but that the other Haudenosaunee were living in France as wealthy and important people. He thought Agona would be pleased to know that Donnacona would not be coming back to take over as leader.

At first everyone was friendly. Then things changed. The Haudenosaunee tried to make life hard for the French. Eventually some of the colonists were killed by the Haudenosaunee. We don't know exactly why. Historians think the Haudenosaunee might not have believed Cartier's lies about their people in France.

After ten months, Cartier and his group left. When Roberval arrived with more colonists, they didn't do any better. They left a year later.

Gold and Diamonds

Cartier returned to France with samples of what he thought were gold and diamonds. But the stones were actually iron pyrites and **quartz**—a kind of clear rock. People at the king's court laughed at Cartier's mistake. He retired from the sea and spent the rest of his life in St. Malo.

Try This

Make a timeline that shows Jacques Cartier's three voyages. Include a drawing of each voyage that shows what happened from the Haudenosaunee point of view.

Think For Yourself

When we investigate the actions of a person in the past, we often ask a BIG QUESTION such as "What was this person's contribution to Canada?" SMALL QUESTIONS can help sort the facts from the opinions.

Here are some questions to ask yourself about Jacques Cartier:

- *What successes did he have on his voyages?*
- *What troubles did he cause for himself and for others?*
- *What part of his journeys interested you the most?*

You might need to skim this chapter to collect the facts you need. You could record your notes in a chart like this one.

Successes	Troubles	Interesting

Looking Back

In this chapter, you saw that Aboriginal peoples welcomed the Europeans. You also learned that the Haudenosaunee and the French had different points of view about rights to the land.

Why is considering different points of view an important part of social studies?