

## Arts and Culture

In this section you will learn about three music icons: Portia White, Measha Brueggergosman, and Oscar Peterson, who have made a lasting mark on Canadian music.

**Here is a list of activities you will work on:**

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Listening / Video

Look at the KWL chart below. What do you already know about black musicians in Canada? Write what you already know in the "K" column. What do you want to know about Portia White, Measha Brueggergosman and Oscar Peterson? Write down what you want to know in the "W" column of the chart.

**KWL chart**

K	W	L
What I know about Portia White, Measha Brueggergosman, and Oscar Peterson	What I want to know about Portia White, Measha Brueggergosman, and Oscar Peterson	What I learned about Portia White, Measha Brueggergosman, and Oscar Peterson

--	--	--

## READING



**Portia White (1911-1968)**

Portia White broke through the colour barrier to become the first black Canadian operatic concert singer to win international acclaim.

Portia White was born in 1911, in Nova Scotia, and was the third of 13 children born to William A. White, whose parents had been in Virginia, and Izie Dora White, who was descended from Black Loyalists in Nova Scotia. Portia began singing in the church choir at age six. By the age of eight, she was singing the soprano parts from the opera Lucia de Lammermoor, and was so determined to become a professional singer that she walked 10 miles a week for music lessons.

She started her teacher training at Dalhousie University in 1929, and after graduating, became a schoolteacher in Black Nova Scotian communities, such as Africville and Lucasville.

Along with her teaching career, Portia White's performance career began with her formal debut at age 30, where critics described her voice as "a coloured and beautifully shaded contralto...It is a natural voice, a gift from heaven".

She went on to tour North America, South America and Europe during the 1950s and 1960s. One of her performances was for Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip at the Confederation Centre of the Arts in 1964. Her final public performance took place at the World Baptist Federation in Ottawa, in 1967.

In 1995, Portia White was named a "person of national historic significance" by the Government of Canada. A millennial stamp bearing her image was issued in 1999.



**Oscar Peterson (1925-2007)**

Born in 1925, in Montréal to Caribbean parents, Oscar Peterson was one of Canada's most honoured musicians and was regarded as one of the greatest jazz pianists of all time.

The youngest of four children, he began studying the piano and trumpet at age five. His father, a self-taught amateur organist, led the family band in concerts at community halls and churches, insisted that all the Peterson children learn the piano and a brass instrument. Oscar began studying the trumpet at age five, but focused solely on piano at age eight, after a battle with tuberculosis, a disease of the lungs.

He attended the Conservatoire de Musique du Québec in Montréal. As a student he entered a contest held by radio personality Ken Soble, and won first prize. As part of the prize he began his own weekly radio show called "Fifteen Minutes' Piano Rambling".

He emerged as a celebrity in Montréal's music scene in the early 1940s. His dazzling style earned him the nicknames "The Brown Bomber of Boogie-Woogie" and "Master of Swing".

Peterson was also a composer. His best known composition was *Canadiana Suite*, an eight part work which is composed of jazz themes inspired by regions of Canada including "Wheatland" (The Prairies), "Hogtown Blues" (Toronto), and "Land of the Misty Giants" (the Rocky Mountains). Peterson described it as "the Musical portrait of the Canada I love". *Canadiana Suite* was nominated for a Grammy Award as best jazz composition of 1965.

His lasting legacy has been noted by him being inducted into the Canada Walk of Fame in 2013.



**Measha Brueggergosman - (1977-Present)**

Have you ever wondered what it was like to sing in front of thousands of people? The famous Canadian opera singer Measha Brueggergosman can tell you a little bit about it. Born in Fredericton New Brunswick, as Measha Gosman, she began singing in the choir at her Baptist church to which her father was a deacon. She went on to study voice and piano at the age of seven.

As a teenager Ms. Gosman spent her summers on scholarship at the Boston Conservatory, and later went on to earn her Bachelor of Music degree at the

University of Toronto. She then travelled to Germany for five years to earn her Master's degree at the Robert Schumann Hochschule.

Ms. Gosman married her high school sweetheart Marcus Bruegger. When they married, they combined their last names to make Brueggergosman, and she is known by that name today.

Brueggergosman has appeared throughout Canada, where she has performed with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Montréal Symphony Orchestra, and Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra. She has also appeared internationally, in countries such as the United States and Germany.

Brueggergosman has had an interest in exploring her ancestry and learning about how her ancestors came to live in Canada. In 2015 she starred in the documentary titled *Songs of Freedom*, which following her learning about her African ancestry, leading up to a concert of African-American spirituals. This documentary was broadcast on Vision TV, in February 2015 to celebrate Black History Month. Here is a short clip from the movie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qI4n2lWYyag>

### **Listening/ Video**

Information from the videos and audios will also be included in the quiz.

Watch the following videos. What strikes you about them?

1. "D'Oreste, d'Ajace" from Idomeneo [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OU1SE-zJT\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OU1SE-zJT_I)

Measha Brueggergosman performs with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra

2. "Night and Dreams"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vqwls2dMTyw>

Measha Brueggergosman performs a song from her album

3. **"Wade in the Water"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2m5wrkFOiY>

Measha Brueggergosman performs an African American Spiritual

4. **Oscar's Boogie**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0cnme-ntig>

5. **Canadiana Suite, "Wheatland"**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C1VZHrFH2k>

**References**

*This is for more information. You do not have to study the references.*

<http://blackhistorycanada.ca/arts.php?themeid=22&id=3>

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/en/article/oscar-peterson/>

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/en/article/portia-white-emc/>

## Community

Many Edmontonians pride themselves in assisting the youth in their community. One of those leaders is named Harriet Tinka. Here you will learn about her extraordinary journey, and her quest to reach out to teens in our community.

**Here is a list of activities you will work on:**

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Video

Look at the KWL chart below. What do you already know about Harriet Tinka? Write what you already know in the "K" column. What do you want to know about Harriet Tinka? Write down what you want to know in the "W" column of the chart.

**KWL chart**

<b>K</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
What I know about Harriet Tinka	What I want to know about Harriet Tinka	What I learned about Harriet Tinka

**READING****Harriet Tinka**

Harriet Tinka is a motivational speaker, life coach, and mentor whose goal is to inspire teens to reach their full potential.

Harriet began her career as a model and has over sixteen years of experience in an international and local modeling career. After a tragic life altering experience in university, she was encouraged to move forward and use her pain to inspire others. As she saw more and more models coming in with unrealistic expectations of beauty, and low self-esteem, she started teaching extensively in modeling school, helping the models boost their self-esteem and overcome negative self-talk in order to love themselves unconditionally.

After receiving much encouragement, she established the non-profit organization 'Empowered Youth' with the motto "I Believe in Me Because...". The organization aims to inspire, educate, empower, value, and support all youths to have a sense of purpose and live to their full potential.

To her students, she is known as a "Powerhouse Role Model who makes being genuine the most powerful thing of all". On June 7, 2014, Harriet Tinka was officially inducted into the "National Wall of Role Models" by the Black Canadian Awards.



Harriet Tinka continues to test the limits and be the best at everything she does.

## VIDEO

Information from the videos and audios will also be included in the quiz.

In this video you will learn about Harriet Tinka's journey to becoming a mentor.

<http://globalnews.ca/video/1979281/woman-of-vision-harriet-tinka?iframe=true&preview=true>

## FUN FACTS:

Here are some quick interesting facts about Harriet Tinka:

- Harriet is originally from an East African country named Uganda and now lives in Edmonton
- Her workshops which she runs in schools are called, "Believe in Me Because..."
- In 2013, Harriet completed the 12 mile Tough Mudder Whistler military challenge!
- One of her role models is Maya Angelou, a very gifted Black American author and civil rights activist who died in 2014
- Harriet loves to challenge herself! She is afraid of heights, but decided to face her fear and rappelled (which means to jump using a rope) 28 floors down the Scotia Place Skyscraper in downtown Edmonton!

## REFERENCES

This is for more information. You do not have to study the references.

Harriet Tinka, <http://empoweredyouth.ca/harriet-tinka/>

<http://blackcanadians.com/harriet-tinka>

<http://www.avenueedmonton.com/May-2015/Global-Woman-of-Vision-Harriet-Tinka/>

## History

In this section you will learn about Mathieu DaCosta, the first black man to come to Canada, and about an immigration movement called the Exodusters.

**Here is a list of activities you will work on:**

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Listening / Video

Look at the KWL chart below. What do you already know about Mathieu DaCosta? and the Exodusters? Write what you already know in the "K" column. What do you want to know about Mathieu DaCosta and the Exodusters? Write down what you want to know in the "W" column of the chart.

**KWL chart**

K	W	L
What I know about Mathieu DaCosta	What I want to know about Mathieu DaCosta	What I learned about Mathieu DaCosta

--	--	--

## READING



Mathieu Da Costa

Mathieu Da Costa was the first black person known to have come to Canada. In 1605 Mathieu Da Costa travelled from France to the new French colony of Port Royal, in today's Nova Scotia.

Mathieu Da Costa was a free man, not a slave, who worked as a translator. He could speak French as well as the language of the local Native people, the Mi'kmaq. The French needed Da Costa to help them trade with the Mi'kmaq. He returned to Europe around 1607.

## THE EXODUSTERS

In the 1880s in the United States, many Black Americans escaped violent anti-Black groups and segregation laws in the south by moving west to new states such as Oklahoma and Kansas. Most were poor farm labourers known as Exodusters.

Many Exodusters did well in Oklahoma and Kansas, but some farmers were hit by drought and floods, and others found that land was becoming too expensive. They began to think about moving north to Canada.

By the 1910s the state of Oklahoma had passed segregation laws like the ones in the southern United States. This prompted a group of Exodusters to move to the Canadian Prairies to see what it would be like to live in Canada. In 1911 a group of nearly 200 Black People from Oklahoma and Kansas made the journey to the Canadian Prairies to live. They went on to establish communities from western Alberta to Thunder Bay, Ontario.

16

**All Colored People**  
 THAT WANT TO  
**GO TO KANSAS,**  
 On September 5th, 1877,  
 Can do so for \$5.00

=====

**IMMIGRATION.**

WARREN, W. the colored people of Lexington, Ky. knowing that there is an abundance of choice lands now belonging to the Government, have assembled ourselves together for the purpose of locating on said lands. Therefore,

Be it Remembered, That we do now organize ourselves into a Colony, as follows—

Any person wishing to become a member of this Colony can do so by paying the sum of one dollar (\$1.00), and this money is to be paid by the first of September, 1877, in installments of twenty-five cents at a time, or otherwise as may be desired.

Resolved, That this Colony has agreed to consolidate itself with the Nicodemus Town, Solomon Valley, Graham County, Kansas, and can only do so by entering the vacant lands now in their midst, which cover 1500.

Resolved, That this Colony shall consist of seven officers—President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three Trustees. President—M. M. Bell; Vice-President—Isaac Talbot; Secretary—W. J. Niles; Treasurer—Daniel Clarke; Trustees—Jerry Lee, William Jones, and Alton Walker.

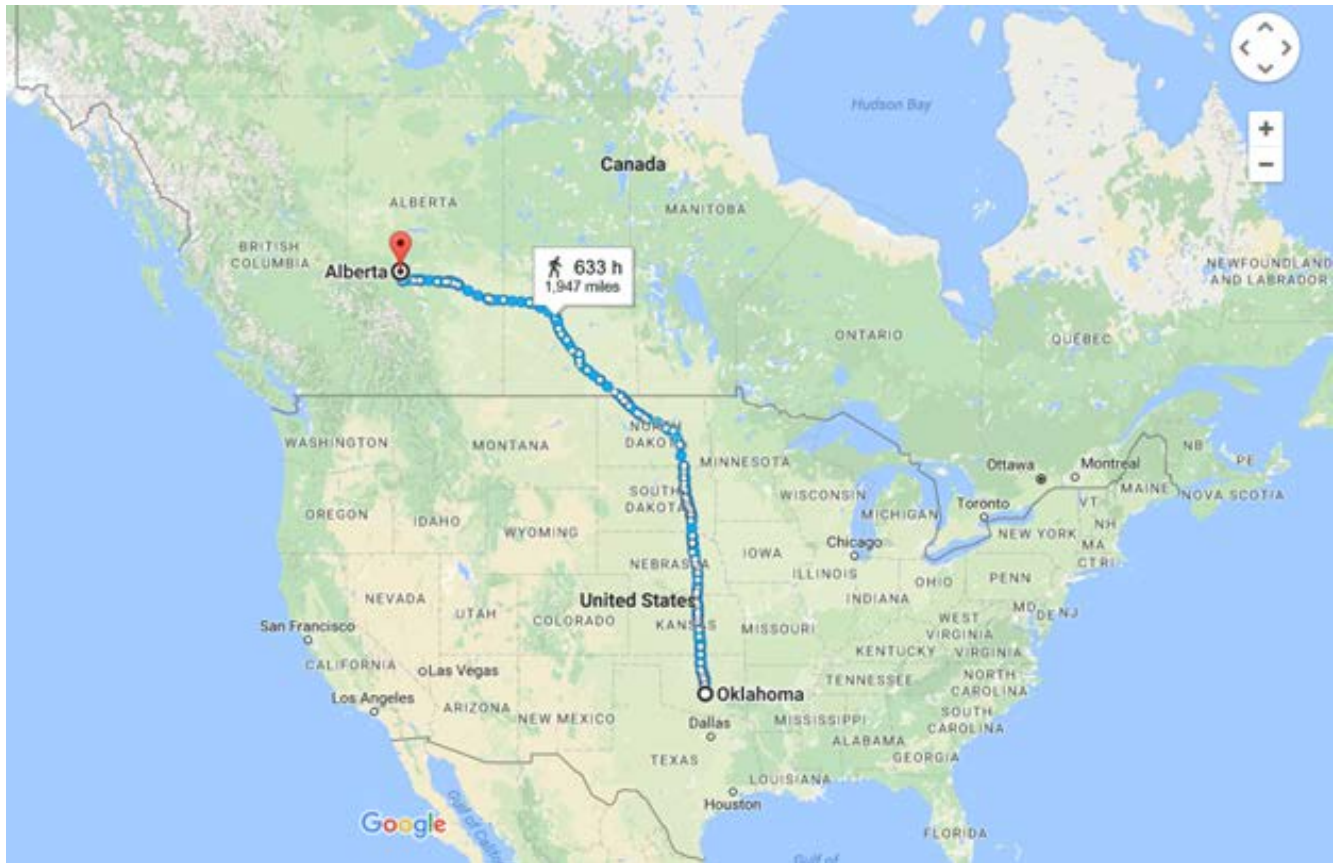
Resolved, That this Colony shall have from one to two hundred million, more or less, as the case may require, to keep peace and order, and any member failing to pay in his dues, or otherwise, or failing to comply with the above rules in any particular, will not be recognized or protected by the Colony.



Between 1910 and 1911, about 1500 Blacks came to the Prairies from the United States, specifically from Oklahoma. The majority of these people settled in Amber Valley, Alberta.

Using Google Maps you can see the journey from Oklahoma to Alberta





### **LISTENING/VIDEO**

Information from the videos and audios will also be included in the quiz.

In this video you will see a brief explanation of the Exodusters journey from the South to Kansas.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQ8181EU1f8>

### **REFERENCES**

*This is for more information. You do not have to study the references.*

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/mathieu-da-costa/>

<https://www.pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/settling-the-west-immigration-to-the-prairies-from-1867-to-1914>

Sadler, Rosemary, *The Kids Book of Black Canadian History*. Toronto: Kids Can Press. 2003

## Politics

Canada became a country in 1867. Our system of government is called a Constitutional Monarchy, where Queen Elizabeth the II is the Head of State, and a Parliamentary Democracy where we vote for the members of our government. Below you will find out about two members of government, Michaëlle Jean and David Shepherd, that have contributed to Canada.

### Here is a list of activities you will work on:

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Listening / Video

Look at the KWL chart below. What do you already know about Michaëlle Jean and David Shepherd? Write what you already know in the "K" column. What do you want to know about Michaëlle Jean and David Shepherd? Write down what you want to know in the "W" column of the chart.

**KWL chart**

K	W	L
What I know about Michaëlle Jean and David Shepherd	What I want to know about Michaëlle Jean and David Shepherd	What I learned about Michaëlle Jean and David Shepherd



--	--	--

## Reading



**Michaëlle Jean (1957-Present)**

The Right Honorable Michaëlle Jean was the 27th Governor General of Canada from 2005-2010. The Governor General is the representative of the Queen in Canada. Michaëlle Jean was born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She immigrated to Canada with her family in 1968.

Jean attended the University de Montréal, where she received a bachelor's degree in Italian and Spanish. She became fluent in five languages, French, Haitian Creole, English, Italian, and Spanish.

In 1986, Michaëlle Jean returned to Haiti to conduct research for an article on the island's women. A producer noticed Michaëlle Jean's work and invited her to be a researcher for a film about the Haitian elections that would air on Radio-Canada, the French language arm of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. When Radio-Canada hired her, she became the first black person on French television news in Canada.

With her husband, Jean-Daniel Lafond, Michaëlle Jean made several documentaries in the 1990s, including *Tropique Nord* (Tropic North), about the black experience in Québec, the award-winning *Haiti dans tous nos rêves* (Haiti in All our Dreams).

In August 2005, Prime Minister Paul Martin announced Jean's appointment as governor general. Jean became the first black person to serve as governor general. The descendant of enslaved Africans, she used her office to passionately emphasize freedom as a central part of the Canadian identity. Reflecting on her experience as an immigrant, Jean argued that it was time to "eliminate the spectre" of the two solitudes, French and English, which had long characterized Canada's history.

### **Coat of Arms of Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean Governor General of Canada**



In the centre of the coat of arms is a sand dollar, which is a special talisman for Michaëlle Jean. Sand dollars are marine creatures found on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Canada and Northern United States.

The Royal Crown symbolizes the vice-regal function and service to all Canadians.

Above the shield, the sea shell and broken chain allude to the famous sculpture *Marron inconnu* by Albert Mangonès, displayed in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, depicting an escaped enslaved African blowing a sea shell to gather and call to arms his fellow sufferers around the whole island. For Michaëlle Jean this image evokes the victory of her ancestors over barbarism and, more broadly, the call to liberty.

Beside the shield are two Simbis, water spirits from Haitian culture who comfort souls, purify troubled waters and intervene with wisdom and foresight. Moreover, the Simbis' words are enlightening and soothing. These two feminine figures symbolize the vital role played by women in advancing social justice. They are shown in front of a rock set with a palm tree, a symbol of peace in Haitian history, and a pine tree representing the natural riches of Canada.

The motto *Briser les solitudes*, which means "Breaking down solitudes", is at the heart of the objectives Michaëlle Jean intends to follow. An annulus inscribed with the motto of the Order of Canada, *DESIDERANTES MELIOREM PATRIAM* (*they desire a better country*), encircles the shield, and the insignia of a Companion of the Order of Canada is suspended from the shield.



**David Shepherd (1973-Present)**

David Shepherd is an MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) representing Edmonton Centre.

David Shepherd is a lifelong resident of Edmonton. He graduated from MacEwan University's music program in 1995 and spent several years working as a musician and studio engineer. He has also earned a BA in Professional Communications

through Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia. He has lived in Edmonton-Centre since 2008.

Shepherd has spent five years in the public service with the Canada Revenue Agency, Alberta Health, and, most recently,

He has held a variety of positions facilitating public understanding of government policy and services.

David Shepherd is also an avid cyclist and passionate advocate for active transportation, working with community groups to improve safety and accessibility on Edmonton's streets and promote community engagement. Shepherd is an active supporter of Edmonton's arts scene, and has spent three years working with the North Edge Business Association to promote businesses in Central McDougall and Queen Mary Park. Through this work, he has developed a reputation as a powerful communicator and thoughtful commentator and contributor to politics and public policy.

### **Listening/ Video**

Information from the videos and audios will also be included in the quiz.

Watch the following videos on government in Canada and on David Shepherd

Students vote 2015 - Educational tools

Levels of Government

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7C8uDuhLqvg>

Government and Democracy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgBBfM8SYPA&index=1&list=PLJAwzEsZJnuOCkD2UVsUWHQGJ-V4R2Jyt>

David Shepherd

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nndI8WxW9PI>

### **Helpful Definitions**

**Constitution:** a set of rules that guides how a country, state, or other political organization works

**Parliament:** the lawmaking group of the government

**Head of State:** the chief public representative of a country, such as a president or monarch, who may also be the head of government.

**Constitutional Monarchy:** a form of government in which a monarch (example: king or queen) acts as head of state of a country

**Parliamentary Democracy:** is a form of government where voters elect the parliament, which then forms the government.

### **References**

*This is for more information. You do not have to study the references.*

The Governor General of Canada

<https://www.gg.ca/document.aspx?id=3>

Encyclopedia Britannica Kids

<http://kids.britannica.com/elementary/article-352996/constitution?>

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

[https://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=mla\\_bio&rnumber=31&leg=29](https://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=mla_bio&rnumber=31&leg=29)

<http://www.albertandp.ca/davidshepherd>

[http://archive.gg.ca/heraldry/emb/03/index\\_e.asp](http://archive.gg.ca/heraldry/emb/03/index_e.asp)