

History: African and Caribbean Migration Patterns to Canada

Introduction:

Welcome to the history module! In the next few pages, you are going to learn about different times when people migrated to Canada from Africa and the Caribbean, from as late as the 2000s to as early as pre-historic times.

Here is a list of activities you will work on:

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Summary

KWL Chart

K	W	L
What I know about migration to Canada from Africa and the Caribbean	What I want to know about migration to Canada from Africa and the Caribbean	What I learned about migration to Canada from Africa and the Caribbean

Reading

African Immigration to Canada¹²

When people are "African" in Canada, that usually means that they come from West, East and Southern Africa, as well as the Hamito-Semites of Ethiopia. "African" is also used to talk about people of other ethnicities who think of Africa as home because they have had several generations of their family living in Africa.

The African population in Canada has been growing fast. In 2001, it was recorded that about 48% of black immigrants who came to Canada in the 1990s were born in Africa.

Why are so many Africans leaving the African continent and coming to countries such as Canada? Many Africans who move to Canada do so because of political violence and war in their home countries. This is true for East African countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Tanzania which have had a history of unrest.

By 2006, a population of 77 960 French-speaking Africans had made the province of Québec their home (ibid). Many were refugees from the massacres and genocide of East African French-speaking countries such as Rwanda and Burundi.

In Southern Africa, many of the people who left to go to Canada did so during struggles for independence from colonization. Recently, many have left countries such as Zimbabwe in search of better jobs and living conditions.

Large communities of immigrants also came for from Egypt and Morocco in North Africa .

¹ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/africans/>

² <http://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/black-canadians/>

Caribbean Immigration to Canada³

Canadians of Caribbean origin are one of the largest non-European ethnic groups in Canada.

There have been three major periods of immigration from the Caribbean:

- 1) A group of 556 Jamaicans arrived in Canada in 1796 after an unsuccessful British attempt to enslave them in Jamaica, but early contact between Canada and West Indians were few.
- 2) Between 1800 and 1920 a small number of Jamaicans and Barbadians immigrated as labourers to work in the Cape Breton and Sydney mines, but from 1920 until the early 1960s there was almost no immigration from the Caribbean to Canada.
- 3) Immigration from the Caribbean really began in the 1960s, and by 1973 almost 13 percent of all immigration to Canada was from the Caribbean. Language has played an important part regarding in which Canadian provinces people choose to make their new homes. For example, Haitians (people from Haiti) have usually chosen to move to Québec (Montréal) because they speak French. English speaking people from the West Indies have tended to choose Ontario (Toronto).

³ <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/caribbean-people/>

The great pre-historic migration from Africa⁴

It's interesting that so many people who live in Canada today came from Africa and the Caribbean. But did you know that many scientists believe that all mankind, everyone living on every continent, originally migrated from Africa thousands of years ago?

Between about 130,000 and 90,000 years ago there was a warm period during the Ice Age that first caused a large number of *Homo sapiens* (modern humans) to migrate across Africa.

Then, from about 70,000 years ago, the climate cooled, causing glaciers to form on the tops of mountain ranges so that parts of north-west and north-east Africa were cut off from each other, as well as from the south. What do you think was the result of this separation? The *Homo sapiens* developed genes in their separate groups that made them look different from the other groups. In the end there were four major ethnic groups:

- 1) Khoisan (African),
- 2) Caucasian (European),
- 3) Mongolian (Chinese and American Indian)
- 4) and Aboriginal (Australian).

From about 60,000 years ago, these four groups of humans emigrated from Africa separately and in their own time across the world, taking their small genetic differences with them. DNA evidence suggests that this movement away from Africa involved anywhere from 1,000 to 50,000 people.

In recent years, there have been many discoveries that provide evidence for the fact that the modern human race originated in Africa. In 2003, a team of anthropologists reported the discovery of three unusual skulls—two adults and a

⁴ <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-great-human-migration-13561/>

child—at Herto, near the site of an ancient freshwater lake in northeast Ethiopia. The skulls were between 154,000 and 160,000 years old.

Cool, huh?

Reading a Map

Look at the map below. It was created by the National Geographic to show the pre-historic movement from Africa you read about above.



This link takes you to the map online. There you can click on the different arrows to see more information about the different migration routes.

<https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com/human-journey/>

Do you know the four points of the compass? They are: North, South, East and West.

Looking at the National Geographic Map, can you figure out which side of Africa on the compass humans all started out from?

Circle the side of Africa from where humans came:

North

South

East

West

Summary

In this module, we have learned about the people from the Caribbean and Africa who migrated to Canada. We have read about some of the reasons they left their home countries and some reasons they chose to live in certain provinces in Canada. Then we took a giant step back in time and learned about the discoveries scientists have made that led them to believe that all humankind came from Africa- long before the other continents had people living on them.

References

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/africans/>

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<http://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/black-canadians/>

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