Name _____ Date _____

The French & Indian War

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. b′

Today, more than 20 percent of Canadians are native French speakers, with the majority residing in the eastern province of Quebec. French immigration to Canada began in the early 17th century. France sought access to the profitable natural resources of Canada\xe2\x80\x99s east coast, particularly fur and fish. Most of these early colonists were migratory trappers and traders with little interest in settling permanently. This attitude, combined with disease and frequent territorial conflicts with local Indigenous nations, limited the size of the French colony in its early years. At the start of the French and Indian War, the British population in North America outnumbered the French by a factor of 20.

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Following their defeat by Britain in 1763, France was made to surrender all of its territory on the continent. Even under British rule, however, the French colonists retained their language, social customs, and Catholic faith. Over time, new waves of immigration brought tens of thousands more to Canada. They began to develop a distinct national identity, separate from that of their ancestral homeland. They demanded political reforms designed to prioritize their culture, even advocating for Quebec to become independent from Canada.

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2. b′

Though Britain triumphed in the French and Indian War, the conflict proved costly in several ways. When the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763, residents of the 13 British colonies were thrilled. France was forced to surrender its entire North American empire. British colonists could now move west without fear of retaliation from a competing power. Back in England, however, officials worried that unchecked westward expansion would provoke conflict with Indigenous nations, many of whom had previously been allied with the French. They instituted the Proclamation Line of 1763, which forbade colonists from settling in lands acquired during the war. But colonists ignored the rule, sparking a conflict known as Pontiac\xe2\x80\x99s Rebellion. From 1763 to 1765, tribes from the Ohio River Valley and Great Lakes region attacked British forts and settlements in an effort to drive them out. Still, many colonists saw the boundary as a way to keep them dependent on Britain by restricting access to profitable farmland and natural resources.

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Fighting an overseas battle for nine years was also an enormous expense for Britain. By the time the French and Indian War ended, the empire\xe2\x80\x99s debt had nearly doubled. To raise money, King George III imposed high taxes on his subjects, worsening colonial resentment of the crown. These issues, as well as colonists\xe2\x80\x99 growing sense of a distinct American identity, culminated in the Revolutionary War.

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3. b′

Before becoming the first president of the United States, George Washington made a name for himself in public service and the army. Having grown up on a plantation in the Virginia colony, he learned about the value of land in his first job as a surveyor. He then received military training and was appointed commander of the Virginia Regiment, which fought in the French and Indian War. Still, Washington thought of himself primarily as a farmer. He was a \xe2\x80\x9cgentleman farmer,\xe2\x80\x9d meaning he farmed for pleasure, not because he needed the money or the food that he grew. After marrying Martha Dandridge Custis in 1759, he lived and worked at Mount Vernon, his family\xe2\x80\x99s ancestral home. Washington was a curious and creative farmer. He read all the latest research about agriculture, experimented with different crops and farming methods, and documented many of his observations in the hopes of helping future American farmers. By the end of Washington\xe2\x80\x99s life, he had expanded Mount Vernon from 2,000 acres to an 8,000-acre property with five farms. However, most of the labor required to maintain this sizable estate was performed by hundreds of enslaved people.

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