MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

The Grand, Source to Mouth

About 280 kilometres, six miles deep on either side: the river the Crown set apart for the Mohawk.

Read

The Grand River rises near Dundalk and flows about 280 kilometres south to Port Maitland, on Lake Erie. Its watershed covers about 6,800 square kilometres. Fergus, Elora, Waterloo, Kitchener, Cambridge, Paris, Brantford, Caledonia, Cayuga and Dunnville all stand on its banks.

In 1784 the Haldimand Proclamation set the river apart for the Mohawk and their posterity, with six miles of land on each side, from the lake to the river’s head. The Mohawk Nation of Grand River counts it as about 950,000 acres.

Today the Six Nations Reserve covers about 45,580 acres along the river, on Canada’s own limits. The Mohawk Village stood at what is now Brantford. The Nation says the whole river, from its source to its mouth, remains the class’s in right.

Look

How to read it: the river from its source to its mouth, with the towns along it.



six miles deep on each side, the whole way

Words to know

Word	What it means here
Source	Where a river begins.
Mouth	Where a river flows into a lake or the sea.
Watershed	All the land that drains into a river.
Bank	The land at the edge of a river.
Head	Another word for a river’s source.
Tract	The land six miles from each bank.
Posterity	All of a person’s descendants, including those not yet born.

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Work with a primary source

> *"... allotting to them for that purpose six miles deep from each side of the river beginning at Lake Erie and extending in that proportion to the head of the said river ..."*
>
> The Haldimand Proclamation, 25 October 1784 (shortened).

Ask the source	Your answer
Where does the land begin?	
Where does it end?	
How far from the river does it reach?	
What can the source not tell us?	

Three points of view

What the Grand River is today, described three ways. Read each, then explain why they differ.

Who	What the river is
Ontario and the conservation authority	A watershed to manage: water, floods, parks and towns.
The Six Nations of the Grand River	The river of the community, with land claims along it.
The Mohawk Nation of Grand River	The river the Crown set apart in 1784, source to mouth, still the class's in right.

Claim, evidence, reasoning

Choose one claim the poster makes, for example "six miles deep, head to mouth". Then fill in the table.

Claim	Evidence	Reasoning

Answer

1. **Historical significance.** Why did the Crown choose a river, rather than a square of land?

2. **Evidence.** Which words in the source give the land's length and depth?

3. **Cause and consequence.** How did the river shape where towns grew?

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4. **Continuity and change.** What has changed along the river since 1784? What has not?

5. **Historical perspective.** Why might Ontario, the Six Nations and the Nation describe the river so differently?

6. **Ethical dimension.** Who should care for a river: those who live on it, those who were promised it, or both?

Think about it. Where does your water come from? Could it be from the Grand River watershed?

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Performance task: Follow the river: a guide from source to mouth

Show what you have learned by explaining it to someone else. Your work should help a reader who has never seen the poster understand it.

Choose one

A letter	Write a one-page letter to your Member of Parliament or to the King explaining the Grand River from its source to its mouth: the towns, the land six miles on each side, and what the 1784 Proclamation says about it.
An infographic	Design a one-page poster that explains the Grand River from its source to its mouth: the towns, the land six miles on each side, and what the 1784 Proclamation says about it, with a drawing that puts a person in the picture.
A short talk or podcast	Record or give a two-to-three-minute talk explaining the Grand River from its source to its mouth: the towns, the land six miles on each side, and what the 1784 Proclamation says about it to someone your age.

What your work must include

- At least three facts with their dates.
- One quotation from the primary source, The Haldimand Proclamation, 25 October 1784, in quotation marks.
- At least three of the “Words to know”, used correctly.
- One point of view other than the Mohawk Nation of Grand River’s, explained fairly (Ontario and the conservation authority, The Six Nations of the Grand River).
- Your own claim, with the evidence and reasoning behind it.
- A list of the sources you used.

Steps

- Day 1: reread the poster and this sheet; choose your format; write your claim in one sentence.
- Day 2: gather your facts, your quotation and the other point of view; plan your work.
- Day 3: make a first draft; trade with a partner and give each other one compliment and one suggestion.
- Day 4: improve your draft, check the success criteria, and hand it in.

Success criteria: check before you hand it in

☐	My claim is clear.
☐	My facts and dates are correct.
☐	I quoted the source exactly and said where it is from.
☐	I explained another point of view fairly.
☐	I used at least three new words correctly.
☐	I listed my sources.

Due: About four class days from the start. Marked with the Achievement Chart on the teacher’s page.

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For the teacher: standards met

Universal competencies	Identify key facts and claims; Understand perspective and point of view; Make connections, personal to community to larger systems; Analyse and evaluate evidence. The same everywhere, whatever the curriculum.
Curriculum	Ontario Geography, Grade 7, Strand A, *Physical Patterns in a Changing World*, and History, Grade 7, Strand A.
Specific expectations	Teachers choose which specific expectations to assess. The sheet supports the overall expectations named above.
Historical thinking	Each question names its concept: significance, evidence, cause and consequence, continuity and change, perspective, ethical dimension.
Reading level	Flesch–Kincaid grade 7.5 (reading ease 69)
Plain language	Written to ISO 24495-1; new words taught in “Words to know”.
Balance	Three views of the river, side by side.
Time and materials	Two periods of 40 to 50 minutes. A map of the watershed is useful.
Accommodations	Read aloud or in pairs; give a map with the towns marked.

Assessment: the Achievement Chart

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Knowledge and Understanding	Names some facts with help	Names the main facts and dates	Explains them accurately	Explains them and how they connect
Thinking	Answers with little use of the source	Uses the source in part	Uses the source to support answers	Weighs the points of view against the source
Communication	Ideas are unclear	Some ideas are clear	Clear, with the new words	Clear, precise, new words used well
Application	Makes few connections	A simple connection to today	Connects the past to today	Explains why it still matters

Answer key

	A good answer includes
1	A river gave water, travel and a clear boundary that anyone could find.
2	“six miles deep from each side” and “beginning at Lake Erie … to the head”.
3	Mills, crossings and harbours drew settlers to its banks.
4	Towns, dams and farms; the river itself, and on the Nation’s reading the right.
5	Each sees it through its own role: managing, claiming or holding.
6	A reasoned view.

Sources: the Haldimand Proclamation, 1784; the Nation’s land map; the Grand River Conservation Authority’s watershed figures; reserve limits, Natural Resources Canada. This sheet explains the Mohawk Nation of Grand River’s position beside others.

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