MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

The Mill

An economy from one bushel: the mill the Crown promised, the mill that was, and the Mohawk Mill to come.

Read

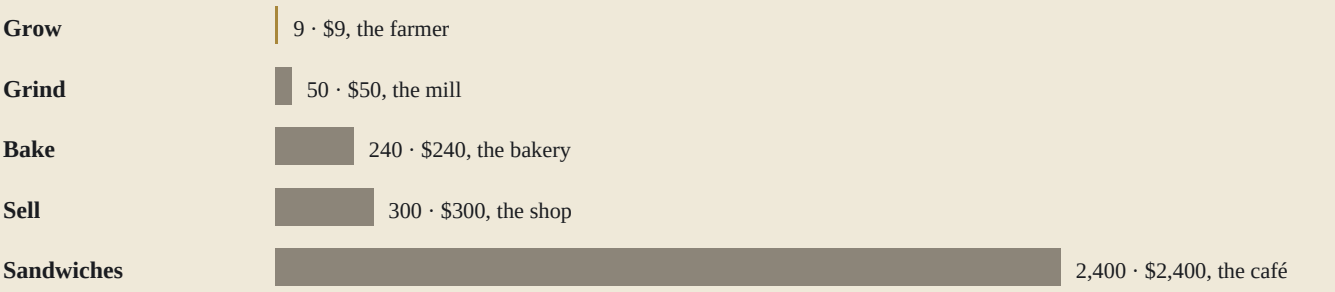
In 1784–85 Governor Haldimand promised the Mohawk on the Grand a church, a school and a mill. By 29 June 1796, when the surveyor Thomas Walsh sent grain to be ground, the King's Mill was running: a double mill, making flour and meal for the village and boards for its houses, fences and chapel. By 1815 it had burned by accident. Its stone foundation lies at the end of Mohawk Street, beside the river.

A mill is where an economy starts. Follow one bushel of wheat up a ladder: grown, it is worth about $9; ground into flour, about $50; baked into bread, about $240; sold, about $300; made into sandwiches, about $2,400. Every rung is a job.

The lesson the Nation draws: a people who own only the first rung sell at $9 and buy back at $240. The Mohawk Nation of Grand River plans a Mohawk Mill again, stone-grinding flour and Haudenosaunee white corn, each bag carrying the Nation's name and a Record Code, sold for the Grand River dollar.

Look

How to read it: one bushel, five rungs; the value at each rung is illustrative, at 2026 Ontario prices.



illustrative values for one bushel

Words to know

Word	What it means here
Mill	A building where grain is ground into flour.
Bushel	A measure of grain, about 60 pounds of wheat.
Grist	Grain brought to a mill to be ground.
Millstone	A heavy round stone that grinds grain.
Value added	The worth a step adds to a product.
Economy	How a community makes, trades and uses what it needs.
Toll	The share of grain the miller kept as payment.

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Work with a primary source

> *"... a Saw Mill and a Grist Mill ..."*
>
> The mills promised by Haldimand in 1784–85, with a church and a school (as described in the Nation's record).

Ask the source	Your answer
What two kinds of mill were promised?	
What would each one make?	
Why would a new settlement need both?	
What can the source not tell us?	

Three points of view

What a mill on the Grand would mean today, described three ways. Read each, then explain why they differ.

Who	What the mill means
A historian	A ruin at the end of Mohawk Street, part of Brantford's history.
A business person	A small food business that needs land, money and customers.
The Mohawk Nation of Grand River	The third promise, and the first rung of the Nation's own economy.

Claim, evidence, reasoning

Choose one claim the poster makes, for example "own only the first rung and you sell at $9 and buy back at $240". Then fill in the table.

Claim	Evidence	Reasoning

Answer

1. **Historical significance.** Why might the Crown have promised a mill along with a church and a school?

2. **Evidence.** What does Walsh's grain, sent in 1796, prove about the King's Mill?

3. **Cause and consequence.** What happens to a community that sells only raw grain?

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4. **Continuity and change.** How is a modern mill like the King’s Mill, and how is it different?

5. **Historical perspective.** Why might a historian and the Nation see the mill’s foundation differently?

6. **Ethical dimension.** Who should benefit from what is made on the Grand River?

Think about it. Pick one food you eat often. How many rungs does it climb before it reaches you, and who earns at each?

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Performance task: A business plan for one rung

Show what you have learned by planning one rung of the ladder: a small business that adds value on the Grand River.

Choose one

A letter	Write a one-page letter to your Member of Parliament or to the King explaining one rung of the bushel's ladder as a small business on the Grand River: what it makes, who works there, and what it adds.
An infographic	Design a one-page poster that explains one rung of the bushel's ladder as a small business on the Grand River: what it makes, who works there, and what it adds, 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 one rung of the bushel's ladder as a small business on the Grand River: what it makes, who works there, and what it adds to someone your age.

What your work must include

- At least three facts with their dates.
- One quotation from the primary source, The mills promised by Haldimand in 1784–85, with a church and a school, 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 (A historian, A business person).
- 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 History, Grade 7, Strand B, *Canada, 1800–1850* (mills and settlement), and Grade 10 Civics (CHV2O); useful in business studies (BBI1O/2O).
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 7.8 (reading ease 73)
Plain language	Written to ISO 24495-1; new words taught in “Words to know”.
Balance	Three views of the mill, side by side.
Time and materials	Two periods of 40 to 50 minutes.
Accommodations	Read aloud or in pairs; use real flour, bread and a sandwich to show the ladder.

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 mill was what made a settlement work: food and lumber.
2	That it was running and grinding grain by that date.
3	It sells cheap and buys back dear; the jobs and profit go elsewhere.
4	The same idea, grain to flour; different power, scale and rules.
5	The historian sees what was; the Nation sees what was promised and what can be again.
6	A reasoned view.

Sources: Haldimand’s promise of mills, 1784–85; Thomas Walsh’s letter of 29 June 1796; the Six Nations’ petition of 1815; illustrative prices at 2026 Ontario values. This sheet explains the Mohawk Nation of Grand River’s position beside others.

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