MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

The National Books

Thirty-six books: how the Nation works, written so that anyone can read it, and check it for themselves.

Read

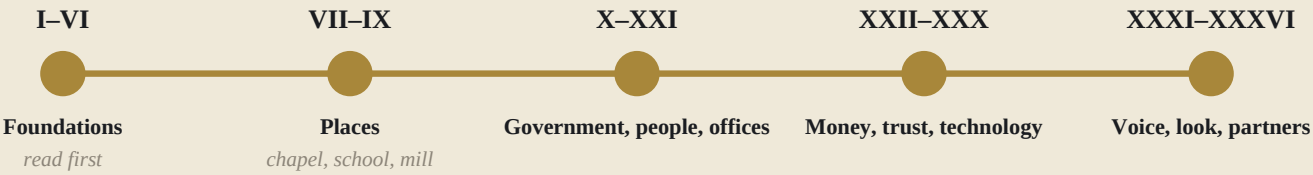
The Mohawk Nation of Grand River has written a set of thirty-six books, the National Books, on how the Nation works, with The Reader’s Guide as the front door. They are grouped on shelves: Foundations; Places (the chapel, the school and the mill); Government; People and records; The offices at work; Money and business; Trust and technology; Voice and look; and Partners. Read Book I first: every other book assumes it.

Every book has one number, its Mohawk Publication Number, in the Nation’s own three blocks, and the ISBN of a printed edition beside it. Every edition has a fingerprint, its SHA-256 hash, on page 2 and on the Nation’s Ledger: a copy that differs is not the published edition.

Every book shares the same parts: worked examples, the standards it follows, how it compares with the world’s leaders, and the questions an expert or a critic would ask, answered. All of them can be read and downloaded on the Register.

Look

How to read it: the shelves of the set, from Foundations to Partners.



Words to know

Word	What it means here
Publication number	The book’s own number, in the Nation’s three blocks.
ISBN	The international number for a printed book.
Edition	One published version of a book.
Fingerprint (hash)	A code computed from a file; any change gives a different code.
Cite	To name a source so others can find it.
Transparency	Being open, so others can check.
Benchmark	A comparison with the best.

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Work with a primary source

> *“Every edition has a fingerprint … A copy that differs is not the published edition.”*
>
> The National Books poster, “How a book is cited and checked” (shortened).

Ask the source	Your answer
What is a book’s fingerprint?	
How can you tell if a copy has been changed?	
Why might that matter for a Nation’s books?	
What can the source not tell us?	

Three points of view

What a Nation’s books are for, described three ways. Read each, then explain why they differ.

Who	What the books are for
A reader	To learn how the Nation works.
A critic	To test the Nation’s claims against the evidence.
The Mohawk Nation of Grand River	To be fully transparent: every claim written down, cited and checkable.

Claim, evidence, reasoning

Choose one claim the poster makes, for example “written so that anyone can read it, and check it”. Then fill in the table.

Claim	Evidence	Reasoning

Answer

1. **Historical significance.** Why might a Nation write down how it works?

2. **Evidence.** What two numbers identify a book?

3. **Cause and consequence.** What happens to trust when anyone can check a book?

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4. **Continuity and change.** How is a digital fingerprint like a printer’s mark of old, and how is it different?

5. **Historical perspective.** Why might a critic read the books differently from a member?

6. **Ethical dimension.** Should some books be confidential? Why, or why not?

Think about it. If you wrote a book about your school, which chapter would come first, and why?

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Performance task: A reader’s guide to one book

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 one of the National Books: what it covers, who it is for, how to cite it and how to check it.
An infographic	Design a one-page poster that explains one of the National Books: what it covers, who it is for, how to cite it and how to check 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 one of the National Books: what it covers, who it is for, how to cite it and how to check it to someone your age.

What your work must include

- At least three facts with their dates.
- One quotation from the primary source, The National Books poster, “How a book is cited and checked”, 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 reader, A critic).
- 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 Language, Grades 7 and 8 (2023): reading informational texts and media literacy; Grade 10 Civics (CHV2O).
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 10.5 (reading ease 61)
Plain language	Written to ISO 24495-1; new words taught in “Words to know”.
Balance	Three views of the books, side by side.
Time and materials	Two periods of 40 to 50 minutes.
Accommodations	Read aloud or in pairs; browse one book’s page 2 together.

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	To be transparent, to guide its officers and people, and to answer critics.
2	The Mohawk Publication Number and the ISBN.
3	Trust grows, because no one has to take the Nation’s word for it.
4	Both identify a source; a hash proves the exact content, and anyone can compute it.
5	The critic tests claims; a member uses the books to act.
6	A reasoned view: for example, security details may be confidential, while the principles are public.

Sources: the National Books and their page 2s; The Reader’s Guide; the Register’s national-books pages. This sheet explains the Mohawk Nation of Grand River’s position beside others.

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