UNIVERSITY AND ACADEMIC

The Three Villages: a Study Brief

Who the promise was made to, and how a grant to some became a reserve of all.

Learning outcomes

By the end, a student will be able to	Level (Bloom)
Identify the class named in the Pledge of 1779 by village and adherence	Remember
Explain how the 1784 grant came to be read as a grant to the Six Nations as one people	Understand
Analyse the Proclamation's phrase "the Mohawk Nation and such others"	Analyze
Compare membership by village and descent with membership by clan and by band	Analyze
Evaluate how a dispersed posterity can be identified today	Evaluate

Overview

The Pledge names three villages; the Proclamation names "the Mohawk Nation" and "such others of the Six Nation Indians as wish to settle". In 1805 the Grand River Council itself recalled that the grant was first meant for those who lost their lands on the Mohawk and Susquehanna Rivers, then extended to others. One reserve under one name followed. The Mohawk Nation of Grand River reads the class from the Pledge outward: some of the Mohawks of three villages and their posterity, now dispersed worldwide.

Primary sources

The Haldimand Pledge, 7 April 1779

"the Mohawks of the villages of Canojaharie, Tikondarago and Aughuago, whose settlements there had been … ruined by the Rebels"

The Haldimand Proclamation, 25 October 1784

"the said Mohawk Nation and such others of the Six Nation Indians as wish to settle in that quarter"

The Grand River Council, 1805

"extended to such others of the Six Nations as wished to settle there"

Recalling that the grant was first meant for those who lost their lands on the Mohawk and Susquehanna.

Brant's census, 1785

"Mohawk 548 … 1,843 in all"

As reported in Kelsay, Joseph Brant (1984).

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Three readings

	Canada and the courts	The Six Nations of the Grand River	The Mohawk Nation of Grand River
The grantee	The Six Nations, read through the 1793 Patent	The six nations settled on the Grand	The Mohawks of the three villages, others coming in under them
Membership	Band membership under the Indian Act	Community and clan	Descent from a Loyalist ancestor of the three villages, by either sex
The posterity	Not a legal category	Those of the community	Every descendant, anywhere, most unaware

Historiography

The Mohawk Valley villages are well studied as places of the eighteenth century, and the Grand River as a Six Nations settlement. Less studied is the thread between them: who exactly the Crown's promise named, and what became of their descendants who left the community. The Nation's Register treats that thread as its subject. Test each reading against the Pledge's own words.

Discussion questions

1. Why might the Pledge name three villages rather than "the Mohawk Nation"?
2. Does "the said Mohawk Nation and such others" describe one grantee or two?
3. What does the Grand River Council's recollection of 1805 add, and how much weight should it carry?
4. How does membership by village and descent differ from membership by clan, and by band?
5. What evidence could prove a line back to one of the three villages today?
6. **Apply.** A person in England finds a Mohawk ancestor from Canajoharie. Under each reading, what does that make them?

Further reading

In Chicago style (17th ed.), bibliography form.

Kelsay, Isabel Thompson. *Joseph Brant, 1743–1807: Man of Two Worlds*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1984.

Johnston, Charles M., ed. *The Valley of the Six Nations*. Toronto: Champlain Society, 1964.

Mohawk Nation of Grand River. *The Nation and its Instruments*. National Books I. Grand River Territory, Ohsweken: Mohawk's Printer for Grand River, 2026.

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Assignment brief

Choose one prompt

A	In 1,500 words, argue who the grant of 1784 was made to. Quote at least three sources, and answer the strongest objection.
B	What does the Grand River Council's recollection of 1805 add, and how much weight should it carry? Answer in an argued essay.
C	Apply. A person in England finds a Mohawk ancestor from Canajoharie. Under each reading, what does that make them? Write it as an argued essay that applies the readings.

Requirements

- An argument: a thesis stated in the first paragraph and defended throughout.
- At least three primary sources from the list below, quoted precisely and read in their context.
- At least two secondary sources, one of them from outside the Nation's own books.
- The strongest objection to your thesis, stated fairly, and your answer to it.
- Footnotes and a bibliography in Chicago style (17th ed.).
- 1,500 words, 10 per cent either way, not counting notes and bibliography.

Sources you must use

- The Haldimand Pledge, 7 April 1779
- The Haldimand Proclamation, 25 October 1784
- The Grand River Council, 1805
- Brant's census, 1785

A suggested structure

- Introduction: the question, why it matters, and your thesis.
- Context: the instruments and events, briefly, in order.
- Analysis: the sources, read closely, one claim at a time.
- The objection: the best case against you, and your reply.
- Conclusion: what follows, and what remains open.

Timeline

- Week 1: choose a prompt; read the primary sources; write a one-paragraph proposal.
- Week 2: research the secondary sources; draft an outline with your thesis and the objection.
- Week 3: write the full draft; exchange with a peer for written comments.
- Week 4: revise and submit.

Format and submission

Twelve-point type, double-spaced, page numbers, your name and the prompt on the first page. Submit as your instructor directs; this sheet can also be filled in online for the discussion questions.

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Integrity

Your work must be your own. Quote and cite every source. If you use an AI tool for any part of the work, say which and how, in a note at the end.

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For the instructor: standards met

Universal competencies	Identify key facts and claims; Understand perspective and point of view; Analyse and evaluate evidence; Apply: what does this mean for us?. The same everywhere, whatever the curriculum.
Learning outcomes	Five outcomes with Bloom’s verbs, each matched to an activity.
Reconciliation	TRC Calls to Action 62 and 63.
Rights in education	UNDRIP arts. 14 and 15.
Primary-source practice	The Pledge, the Proclamation, the Council’s recollection and the census quoted and attributed.
Citation	Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition.
Balance	Three readings side by side; the brief names its own position.
Time	One seminar of about two hours; the assignment over a week.

Assessment: the assignment

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Needs work
Use of sources	Three or more primary sources, quoted precisely and read in context	Three, quoted accurately	Fewer, or quoted loosely	Missing or misread
Analysis	Weighs the readings against the documents and shows what turns on the difference	Compares the readings clearly	Describes them	Restates one
Argument	A clear judgment that answers the strongest objection	A clear, supported judgment	Thinly supported	No clear judgment
Writing and citation	Precise; Chicago style throughout	Clear; minor slips	Some unclear passages	Hard to follow

This brief states the Mohawk Nation of Grand River’s position alongside others. It is for study, not legal advice.

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