MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

Who Stands in Your Place?

A band list and a register: two ways of counting, and why it matters who signs.

Read

A band list under the Indian Act can change. People can join by marriage, by a vote, or by a change in the band's rules. People can also be left off. The band decides.

The Mohawk Nation of Grand River keeps a different kind of list, the Register. Each person must prove a family line back to one of the three villages. Then they swear to it before a magistrate, as the Crown ordered in 1796.

Why does it matter? If a band signs an agreement or a release, it signs for everyone on its list. It may sign for people who never held the right, and leave out people who did. It can never ask the children not yet born. The Nation says no one should sign in another person's place.

Look

How to read it: the rungs of proof, weakest at the bottom, strongest at the top.



the Crown's standard, 1796: sworn before a magistrate

Words to know

Word	What it means here
Band list	The list of members a band keeps under the Indian Act.
Register	The Nation's record of each person's proved line.
Release	A signed paper giving up a claim for good.
Settlement	An agreement that ends a dispute, often for money.
Oath	A solemn promise that what you say is true.
Unborn	Children who are not born yet.
Ascertain	To find out for certain.

© Mohawk's Printer for Grand River, 2026, for the Mohawk Nation of Grand River · Grand River Territory, Ohsweken. Free to copy for teaching.

MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

Who Stands in Your Place?

Work with a primary source

> *"... such registry has not been generally made; and as it is still necessary to ascertain the persons and families ... to ascertain the same upon oath before the magistrates ..."*
>
> Simcoe's Proclamation, 6 April 1796 (shortened).

Ask the source	Your answer
What had not been done by 1796?	
What did Simcoe say was still necessary?	
How were people to prove it?	
What can the source not tell us?	

Three points of view

Who can sign for the people, described three ways. Read each, then explain why they differ.

Who	Who can sign
Canada	The band council, for the members on its list.
The Six Nations of the Grand River	The community's own institutions, for the community.
The Mohawk Nation of Grand River	Each holder for themselves; no one for the unborn.

Claim, evidence, reasoning

Choose one claim the poster makes, for example "a band list cannot keep it" or "no one alive can sign for the unborn". Then fill in the table.

Claim	Evidence	Reasoning

Answer

1. **Historical significance.** Why did Simcoe want each person sworn before a magistrate?

2. **Evidence.** Which words in the source show the registry was unfinished?

3. **Cause and consequence.** What could happen if someone not entitled signs a release?

© Mohawk's Printer for Grand River, 2026, for the Mohawk Nation of Grand River · Grand River Territory, Ohsweken. Free to copy for teaching.

MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

Who Stands in Your Place?

4. **Continuity and change.** How can a band list change over time? How does the Register stay the same?

5. **Historical perspective.** Why might a band council believe it should sign for its members?

6. **Ethical dimension.** Can anyone fairly give away something that belongs to children not yet born?

> **Think about it.** Has anyone ever made a decision for you without asking? How did it feel, and what would have been fairer?

© Mohawk's Printer for Grand River, 2026, for the Mohawk Nation of Grand River · Grand River Territory, Ohsweken. Free to copy for teaching.

MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

Who Stands in Your Place?

Performance task: A seat kept for the unborn: who speaks for those not yet here?

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 difference between a band list and the Register, and why no one should sign in another person’s place.
An infographic	Design a one-page poster that explains the difference between a band list and the Register, and why no one should sign in another person’s place, 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 difference between a band list and the Register, and why no one should sign in another person’s place to someone your age.

What your work must include

- At least three facts with their dates.
- One quotation from the primary source, Simcoe’s Proclamation, 6 April 1796, 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 (Canada, 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.

© Mohawk’s Printer for Grand River, 2026, for the Mohawk Nation of Grand River · Grand River Territory, Ohsweken. Free to copy for teaching.

MIDDLE SCHOOL · AGES 11 TO 14

Who Stands in Your Place?

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 8, Strand A, *Creating Canada, 1850–1890* (the Indian Act), and Grade 10 Civics (CHV2O): who decides, and how.
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 4.0 (reading ease 86)
Plain language	Written to ISO 24495-1; new words taught in “Words to know”.
Balance	Three points of view on who can sign, side by side.
Time and materials	Two periods of 40 to 50 minutes.
Accommodations	Read aloud or in pairs; role-play the table before the questions.

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 know for certain who each person was, one by one.
2	“such registry has not been generally made”.
3	The right could be given away by people who never held it, and the true holders lose it.
4	Bands may add or drop members by vote or code; the Register’s test, a proved line and an oath, does not change.
5	To speak with one voice and protect members; the band is the body Canada deals with.
6	A reasoned view; for example, that no one alive can consent for them.

Sources: Simcoe’s Proclamation, 1796; Lord Dorchester’s Order in Council, 1789; the Indian Act. This sheet explains the Mohawk Nation of Grand River’s position beside others.

© Mohawk’s Printer for Grand River, 2026, for the Mohawk Nation of Grand River · Grand River Territory, Ohsweken. Free to copy for teaching.