July 15, 1870
Northwest Territories Becomes a Territory

Northwest Territories is one of the territories of the Dominion of Canada. It is located in the far north and includes islands in the Arctic Ocean. Northwest Territories is an important source of natural resources, which include diamonds and petroleum. It also has several national parks known for the natural beauty of their mountains, rivers, and waterfalls, which make it a popular place for tourists to visit. Another major importance of the national parks is being the home to the largest remaining herd of buffalo in Canada and the spring nesting ground of the whooping crane, which is an endangered bird. Two of the many famous people born in the Northwest Territories are Ethel Blondin-Andrews and James Gladstone.

Look at the map of Northwest Territories below. Label the capital of Northwest Territories. Locate the towns of Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, and Norman Wells, and label them on the map. Also locate the village of Fort Simpson and the community of Behchokò and label them on the map. Now label Mount Sir James MacBrien, the Franklin Mountains, and the Mackenzie Mountains. Also, locate the Mackenzie River, Liard River, Anderson River, Slave River, Horton River, Dubawnt Lake, Nonacho Lake, Wholdaia Lake, Great Bear Lake, and Great Slave Lake, and label them. Lastly, label the provinces, territories, states, or bodies of water that border Northwest Territories. When you have finished, move on to the timeline of Northwest Territories history on the next page and the research prompts that follow.



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Timeline of Northwest Territories History

1770

1789

1869

1870

1873

1880

1885

1920

1921

1951

1953

1954

1967

1970

1974

1981

1984

1990

1992

2012

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1. The North West Mounted Police is founded
2. The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources is created
3. Oil is discovered at Fort Norman
4. The Deh Cho Bridge across the Mackenzie River opens
5. The Northwest Territories becomes part of Canada
6. Treaty 11 is signed with the aboriginal peoples north of Great Slave Lake
7. Yellowknife becomes the capital of the Northwest Territories
8. Canada takes control of the Arctic islands that are now a part of the Northwest Territories
9. The government council becomes fully elected
10. Samuel Hearne is the first European to reach the area of the Northwest Territories
11. The Liard Highway opens
12. Elected members begin to be added to the government council that had previously been by appointment only
13. The Red River Rebellion led by Louis Riel begins
14. The Arctic Winter Games begin to be held
15. Northern Health Services is established by the federal government
16. The Northwest Rebellion fails
17. Kimberlite pipe is discovered
18. Alexander Mackenzie follows the course of the river that is later named for him
19. The first national park in the Northwest Territories, Aulavik, is established
20. A vote is held in the territorial government with the majority voting in favor of dividing the Northwest Territories, which allows for the later creation of Nunavut

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Research Prompt #1

In 1929, the first official airmail service to Canada's Arctic was flown. Do some research and find out how successful it was. Since the first flight was on December 28, 1929, do you think there were Christmas cards and gifts that had not yet reached the people living in these faraway places? How do you think they felt finally being able to have more contact with the outside world—do you think they were happy about it, or do you think they preferred their isolation? Write about your findings and your thoughts.

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Research Prompt #2

There was a mine on the tiny island of Outpost in the Great Slave Lake. Gold was being mined there, and then tungsten was discovered. This was in 1942, during World War II. The owners of the mine thought they would become wealthy from the gold and tungsten that was being mined. However, they did not take into account how hard it would be to get the ore from the mine to the markets that would need it. They could not get investors to back them and began losing money. They had built places for more than fifty miners and their families to live. Suddenly, in September 1942, the owners announced the mine was closing. What happened to the miners and their families? Do some research and write about what happened.

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Research Prompt #3

In 1969, the RCMP ran its last dog sled patrol across the Yukon and Northwest Territories. They were to be replaced by snowmobiles and aircraft. Do some research and find out how the transition went. Did it go as smoothly as the RCMP had hoped? Were there areas dog sleds could reach easier? Was it a problem to have enough fuel for the tremendous size of the area that needed to be covered? Write about your findings.

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Timeline of Northwest Territories History
Answer Key

Samuel Hearne is the first European to reach the area of the Northwest Territories	1770	
	1789	Alexander Mackenzie follows the course of the river that is later named for him
The Red River Rebellion led by Louis Riel begins	1869	
	1870	The Northwest Territories becomes part of Canada
The North West Mounted Police is founded	1873	
	1880	Canada takes control of the Arctic islands that are now a part of the Northwest Territories
The Northwest Rebellion fails	1885	
	1920	Oil is discovered at Fort Norman
Treaty 11 is signed with the aboriginal peoples north of Great Slave Lake	1921	
	1951	Elected members begin to be added to the government council that had previously been by appointment only
The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources is created	1953	
	1954	Northern Health Services is established by the federal government
Yellowknife becomes the capital of the Northwest Territories	1967	
	1970	The Arctic Winter Games begin to be held
The government council becomes fully elected	1974	
	1981	A vote is held in the territorial government with the majority voting in favor of dividing the Northwest Territories, which allows for the later creation of Nunavut
The Liard Highway opens	1984	
	1990	Kimberlite pipe is discovered
The first national park in the Northwest Territories, Aulavik, is established	1992	
	2012	The Deh Cho Bridge across the Mackenzie River opens

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