Land and People: French Canadian Immigration to the United States and Describing Family Members through Role-Play and Letter Writing

Curriculum Unit 13.02.02
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Introduction

But Miss, (or Madame, as the case may be) .... Why do we even have to learn French? France is so far away and nobody even speaks French here. What's the point? Outside of all the standard language teacher responses involving the joys of learning another language, the beauty of the French language, the increased English vocabulary skills that come from shared word roots, and the doors now open to you as a learner of French, there is also the fact that in Connecticut we are so relatively close to a rich Francophone culture in the Canadian province of Quebec. As we seek to introduce the varied available realms of possibilities in life to our barely-teenaged students, it is imperative that we help them develop a sense of the larger world around them, and how that world is and has been shaped by others over time.

In this unit, we will focus on two distinct aspects of that larger world around our students - land and people - as we examine the geography of French-speaking North America and the immigrant families who brought that heritage and culture to the United States. Specifically, we will look at the path of migration over time from France to Canada to the U.S., and a brief history of who did what and why. We will start with the period of exploration from France to North America and the settlement of New France. This initial migration will be the anchor for our work. From there we will address the idea of forced migration with the Acadian Expulsion in 1755, which brought Acadians to the United States, Louisiana in particular. Finally, we will explore late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century immigration to New England and strive to understand concepts of national identity in the process. Students will put themselves into the roles of these French Canadian immigrants to practice the language skills of talking about self and others, family members in particular, via letter writing and role-play activities centered around the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century immigration of families to textile mills in New England.
Rationale and Objectives

I teach French at an arts magnet middle school in New Haven, Connecticut. Students who start a language in fifth grade generally continue to study that language during all four years there, but some join the class in sixth or seventh grade. So while the majority of students in seventh grade will have had two years of French (focusing on oral communication, vocabulary building, and simple language patterns), some will have had only one year, and a few will have had no previous French experience. The combined seventh and eighth grade curriculum is the equivalent of the high school ninth grade curriculum, so that students who are successful in middle school language study may enter into second year high school language courses. As such, the demands of the seventh and eighth grade language classes are increased from fifth and sixth grades, most notably in terms of the level of writing proficiency pursued and expected. The challenge is to make the increased written requirements of the seventh and eighth curriculum as engaging as when the focus was more squarely on oral communication activities. I believe that combining oral communication via spontaneous role-plays grounded in new learning, and written communication via letter writing based on those role-plays and that new learning, will effectively lead to increased engagement and improved written proficiency for students.

The World Languages curriculum for seventh and eighth grade in my district is written by a committee of teachers; it used to have a component during the first marking period of seventh grade called Global Awareness, which served as an introduction to the entire francophone world – geography, people, culture. It proved to be quite a challenge to address all areas in a meaningful way, and so the curriculum was thoughtfully revised for the 2012-2013 school year to allow for more freedom in exploring themes of global awareness over the course of the two years it spans, calling for a different global awareness focus each marking period. This allows us the opportunity to go deeper into aspects of culture and place as we teach the required language functions, so that we are not merely front-loading a bunch of names and images of people and places at the beginning of the year, hoping that some stick.

In the first marking period of the seventh grade curriculum, students learn to introduce themselves by giving their name, where they are from, what their nationality is, what they like to do, etc. Last year in another Institute seminar, I wrote a unit to reinforce those skills that asked students to take on the roles of famous French-speakers. (Although now of course I will reflect the afore-mentioned change in curriculum by focusing on those who live in and around France, which is the global awareness focus area for the first marking period.)

In the second marking period, students transition from talking about self to talking about others, family members in particular. The global awareness focus is now "France and the Americas: Explorers, colonization, slavery, and immigration - how French wound up in Canada, New England, Louisiana, and the Caribbean Islands." As a bridge between the first-person language skills practiced during the first marking period and the third-person language skills of the second marking period, we will revisit the personalities introduced in marking period one to talk about them instead of as them. Then we will use the same structures and format to introduce some famous French Canadian personalities, so that students get more practice and can learn about these people without struggling to learn more than some relevant new vocabulary terms. Then we will be ready to go forward with this curriculum unit. So the language structures of talking about others will already have been introduced and delineated; here we put them into more varied practice.
My students generally have a vague sense of spatial relationships in geography. They also have a hard time keeping track of dates and facts and synthesizing that information into a solid conceptual understanding. While some are quite skilled at fact recall and others are quite skilled at reasoning through causes and effects, many have a tough time doing both, and some are turned off by and thus tune out from that daunting task. Add to this the challenge of doing so in a different language, and the very thought can be enough to intimidate many students at the outset. So while planning and creating every activity in this unit, I (and you) must constantly consider these two questions: How can we make this a fun linguistic challenge, like a puzzle or a game rather than a task to complete? And how can we make this more visual, more tangible, more actively participatory? Students need to interact with the geography and the dates, heavily using visuals and tangibles whenever possible. We must keep these two questions or goals in our minds as we move forward with this unit.

In order for my students to better conceptualize French Canadian immigration to the United States, they need to be reminded of the way the French even got to North America in the first place. There has long been a multiple-choice question on the quarterly exam for the first marking period of seventh grade French class that asks students the country and continent where the French language developed. Every year I think this will be the question that everyone gets correct, yet it is often one of the most-missed responses. Between our drive to convey to students where else French is spoken, students' hazy conceptualization of world geography, and their distrust of what seems like too easy of an answer, many students will not confidently mark that the French language developed in France, Europe. This past year I was more explicit in class about discussing this concept, and the same student who laughed when I asked the question because he thought it was so obvious selected Morocco, Africa on the multiple choice test. Although this could easily springboard us into a conversation about the merits and disadvantages of multiple-choice tests, let's leave that debate for another arena on another day and suffice it to say for now that my students need some simple, clear, explicit instruction and practice with geography, especially in connecting the path from France to North America, so that France is always clearly the point of origin.

Role-play is used in this unit for several reasons. First, it allows students to practice oral expression within a context, which hopefully makes it more fun, interesting, and meaningful, by giving them a "reason," however artificial, for speaking. It also helps lighten the mood and loosen things up as we are learning aspects of history and geography that can sometimes be challenging in the target language. And it provides opportunities for repetition of language skills while limiting the threat of getting stale, as students continue to take on new roles.

We all have a range of language proficiency and preparedness levels in our classes, which will necessarily affect what we teach and how deep we go with it. The content needs to be something that can remain engaging even when stripped to very basic language, so that students newest to the language will not only understand but will also find value in the work. At the same time we must be able to convey enough interesting and advanced aspects of the content, using enough new language structures, to challenge the more experienced students. In this unit I present a selection of content and activities to engage students in a meaningful way toward a worthwhile end, using language structures largely already in most curricula.
Multimedia Geo-Timeline and Dates: Mapping Place and Time

Keeping elements of place and time straight over the course of a unit can be complicated. To help, we will create and continually refer to timelines that organize relevant information, anchoring a combination of images and words as well as audio and video clips to geographic reference markers, which will then be anchored to dates on a timeline.

As the unit progresses, we will create a large-scale version of this geo-timeline on our bulletin board; each student will create an individual notebook-sized one as well, using folded 11x17 paper and pasting notable images and keywords as they learn, perhaps adding pop-out features if they are so inclined (which at least a few will most certainly be.) Each day I will show our timeline on a projector and zoom in on the relevant markers, adding links throughout the unit to images, audio clips, or videos that set the stage, describe the landscape of the area and living and working conditions, and bring to light aspects of culture and identity. I will also post this multimedia geo-timeline on my class website as a living resource for students.

To help students develop a sense of time and change over time, as well as to solidify their working application of forming large numbers, all information and activities will be placed within the context of a particular year or span of years. To help students develop a sense of geography and how regions are connected, all information and activities will also be placed within the context of a location on a map, that location's relation to others we have discussed, and indication of migration flow where applicable.

When focusing on a particular time period, the date will be emphasized in many different ways. For example, I will attach an index card bearing the date with Velcro to the timeline and remove them it we are discussing that time period, gesturing with the card and generally making a fuss about it, as well as repeatedly peppering questions about what year we are discussing throughout the lessons.

Q: Quelle année est-ce? (What year is it?)
Q: C'est 1562? R: Oui, c'est 1562 and/or Non, c'est 1910!

Years are often difficult for students to say in French, so we will practice going step by step through each place value of the date. I find that varying my tone of voice and using hand gestures that mimic that voice modulation both help students feel comfortable as they struggle through the task. For example, when saying mille (one thousand, the first step to all of the dates we will say unless we reference current time, when we will say deux mille instead), before saying the word I draw my right hand into a loose fist and then shoot the fingers out flat to emphasize the single syllable of the word as I say it, mille. From there my voice will go up in tone and my hand will follow, going from parallel to the ground to perpendicular to it, while we say the number that goes before the hundred or cent. When I say the cent I bring my voice back down and with it goes my hand, back to the loose fist. It always amazes me how students latch onto these little voice-gesture combinations as they work through the language. They often repeat the process on their own, using the sensory memory of the sound and feel of the changes in voice and gesture as a support for remembering the steps to saying the year or whatever is being practiced.
Over the course of the unit, maps should be used and relationships between locations should be stressed. Immigration routes can be drawn, shared, and compared, with attention to the landmarks along the way. Notice can be given to places in the United States whose names come from the French. Students can create their own maps with meaningful image and language markers. See Lesson Plan I - Maps.

See the section called *Music: The Evolution of a National Anthem* for suggestions on how to use music over the course of the unit to thread the theme of national identity into lessons, as students learn about the French Canadian search for a national anthem. These music clips can be added as audio files to our multimedia timeline.

### A Note on Terms: Migration, Immigration, and Emigration

Although these terms often seem to be used interchangeably, there is a difference between them. "Migration" is the umbrella term and refers to movement in general, although it can also denote seasonal movement, of either people or animals. The terms "immigration" and "emigration" are only used in reference to people, and they both imply a more permanent movement, as in a permanent relocation. You immigrate to a place and emigrate from a place. All three words are are feminine in the French, and the only difference in spelling is that there is an accent aigu over the "e" in *émigration*.

### The French Came from France: Canada and *La Nouvelle France*, 1534-1763

The name New France, or *La Nouvelle France*, is given to all the French colonies in North America established starting at the time of "discovery" by Jacques Cartier in 1534 and continuing until 1763. (2) The King of France at the beginning of this period of exploration was King Francis I. He reigned from 1515 until his death in 1547. It was King Francis I who sent explorer Jacques Cartier to North America (to search for gold, spices, and a passage to Asia) and it is for him that the colonies were referred to as "New France." (3) Cartier is said to have been responsible for the naming of Canada, from the Huron-Iroquois word *kanata*, meaning village or settlement. He was referring to present-day Québec City when he said it, but the name stuck to the whole expanse that was colonized by the French in North America.

The French settled what we now know as Nova Scotia (La *Nouvelle &EACUTE;cosse*) and Prince Edward Island (L’*île du Prince-&EACUTE;douard*), as well as parts of New Brunswick (Le *Nouveau Brunswick*), the Gaspé Peninsula (La *Gaspésie*), and Maine (Le *Maine*) in 1603, arriving at the Bay of Fundy (la *Baie de Fundy*), known then as la *Baie Francaise* . Although Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island are now referred to as the Maritime Provinces, or *Les Maritimes*, at the time of discovery the area was named Acadia, and the people were referred to as Acadians. King Henri IV was responsible for sending Samuel de Champlain, a mapmaker and explorer, along with Sieur Pierre Du Gua de Monts, viceroy and lieutenant general, to the area. It began as a farming community, although the fur trade became very popular. The French were alternately successful and not here, the success or lack thereof revolving around the ability to corner the market on the fur trade industry as well as the ability to survive the harsh winters, which they learned to do from the native Mi’kmaq population. Fishing was a common occupation in the Maritimes.
Some French citizens immigrated to North America at this time as a result of Reformation, the religious revolution of the sixteenth century in Western Europe. They were displeased with what they considered to be corrupt practices and unappealing doctrines of the Roman Catholic church. In particular, they thought that the church had become too involved in politics, too motivated by power and money, and they questioned its moral fiber. So they split from the Roman Catholic church and joined the newly growing Protestant church. This group of French Protestants, known also as Huguenots, had been given political rights and religious freedom under the Edict of Nantes in 1594 under King Henri IV. Some chose to stay in France because it wasn't so bad as long as they had these rights, while others chose to exercise their right to immigrate to North America instead. But in 1685 King Louis XIV revoked the Edict, outlawed Protestantism and ordered French Protestants to convert or be sentenced to death; now immigration was illegal, so those who did immigrate at this time were wealthy enough to afford bribes or false documents. They were also mostly skilled and well educated. Although most of the French Canadian population were and are Roman Catholic, there was and is a small but not insignificant French Protestant population as well.

Selected vocabulary: By boat (en bateau) / Explorer (un explorateur) / Farmer (un fermier, une fermière) / Fisherman (un pêcheur) / Fur-trader (un fourreur) / Fur trapper (un trappeur) / King (Roi) / Settler (un colonisateur)

The Fight for Acadia and the Acadian Expulsion, 1755-1763

There were challenges to face in Acadia from the British, who wanted the area for themselves due to it's favorable geographic location, which gave access to both the Gulf of Saint-Lawrence and the Atlantic Ocean, a jackpot in terms of trade routes. In 1613 an English ship arrived and its people set fire to the settlement when everyone was in the fields or at the mill, decimating crops, destroying buildings, and killing the farm animals. The Acadians did not give up though; they rebuilt, showing perseverance in the face of mass destruction.

Over the next hundred years or so, the land went back and forth between England and France. It was during one of those transfers, in 1621, that the name Nova Scotia was given, meaning New Scotland, as King James I (a.k.a. James IV of Scotland) gave the land to a Scottish lord, Sir William Alexander. But in 1632 the land was given back to France and went back to being called Acadia. There was lots of fighting back and forth during this time between the French and the English, with the land transferring back and forth between the two countries. The Acadians were pretty much stuck in the middle of this battle. Although they were originally from France, they had become disillusioned by the lack of French support during the British attacks. As a result they really felt no loyalty to the French; but they certainly had no warm feelings for the British, either.

Starting in 1755, the British went from town to town, tricking the Acadians into gathering in a central location, only to imprison them and load them onto ships bound for British settlements along the Atlantic coast (Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Virginia.) The Acadians were not welcomed when they arrived, to say the least; many died of starvation. Some moved to Louisiana, then under Spanish rule; they are the foundation of the strong Cajun (derived from Acadian) population in Louisiana. Some of the Acadians escaped the soldiers and hid in the woods, eventually moving to what is now Quebec. Between 1755 and 1763 it is estimated that around 10,000 Acadians were forced from their homes in this experience of forced migration.
That forced migration occurred under in conjunction with the biggest war of this time period - the Seven Years War, also known as the French and Indian War, and known in Canada as the War of the Conquest. It lasted from 1756 to 1763. The end of the Seven Years War marked the end of New France, as France lost all rights to its landholdings once and for all to the British. Instead of New France we now had British North America (l’Amérique du Nord brittanique). Canada was split into the mostly Anglophone Upper Canada (Le Haut-Canada) and the mostly Francophone Lower Canada (Le Bas-Canada). In 1840 the Canadas were united as the Province of Canada, or United Canada (le Province du Canada / le Canada-Uni). With confederation in 1867 the name changed to the Dominion of Canada (le Dominion de Canada), or simply, Canada.

For students who are history buffs as well as those who are in need of more challenges (in class or at home) there is a great video on the French BrainPOP website about the Seven Years War. (6) The video is intended for French children, and the language is fast. There are options for a self-quiz and the results can be emailed to you, or else students can review results themselves. You can also print out a quiz for them. Additionally, you could ask students to watch and list vocabulary they hear and facts they determine from what they see and hear.

In the Classroom Resources section of this unit, there is a link to a French-language article, written for children, explaining the Expulsion. It may be used in part or whole as a guided reading activity in which students highlight cognates or words they know in one color, words they think they know in another color, and then as the basis for a class discussion on the thought process of figuring meaning out through these context clues, determining what language must be understood and what is not actually necessary in order to make meaning of the content. If you go to the link, you can also click on English at the top for a translation. (7)

**French Canadian Immigration to the United States, 1860-1930**

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century was a time of great voluntary migration to the United States by Canadians, to New England for work in the shoe and textile industry starting in the late nineteenth century, and to the Midwest - especially Michigan - as part of the automobile-manufacturing workforce starting in the early twentieth century. (8) Between 1850 and 1930, it is estimated that almost a million French Canadians left Quebec for destinations in America. (9) The Franco-American population is comprised of Canadians from Quebec and those from Acadia, but many more are from Quebec. Although the overwhelming majority of emigrants did so for economic reasons, some left for political and religious reasons. They were tired of being discriminated against for jobs as well as education by the British ruling faction. Although some came from cities and towns in Quebec searching for more stable and higher-paying skilled positions, most came from small communities along the St. Lawrence and Richelieu rivers looking for the unskilled jobs that were readily available in factories.

There were two distinct waves of emigration from Canada to the U.S. during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, during the 1860s-1880s and between 1900-1930. The first wave revolved around farming and rural labor in the borderlands of the United States, and the second around urban factory labor.

Quebec's was a largely agrarian economy, and in the 1800s it had suffered from a scarcity of farmland made worse by a high peasant/farmer population with a high birth rate. During the 1840s-1880s, French Canadians
were immigrating to rural borderlands in the United States for work as farmhands, lumberjacks, and bricklayers. The work was tough but familiar, and it was more affordable to travel closer to the border. The majority of the immigrants at this time were single males, although there were a fair amount of single women who worked as maids in the United States.

By the 1860s though, the developing railway system was making traveling farther less of a financial burden, and the immigration pattern was starting to shift to industrial centers within the heart of New England. At the end of the American Civil War in 1865, there was both an increased need for textiles in the form of civilian clothes as well as an increased access to raw cotton from the South. The mills needed lots of cheap labor, and actually sent recruiters to Quebec to entice the peasants, or habitants, to come to New England and work in the textile mills. Also active in the recruitment racket were French-Canadian railway ticket agents whose income depended on that travel.

By 1900, French Canadian immigrants and their children made up 46% of the cotton textile industry in New England. (10) Another appeal of the textile mills was that they would employ children. Families could immigrate together, and most of the immigration at this time was by families rather than individuals. The members of these families generally ranged in age from about fourteen to forty, with any younger and older members of the family staying in Canada. Men, women, and children would work long hours in the mills for very low wages. This did not make them popular with the local labor unions and inhibited relations between the immigrants and the rest of the community.

The invention of the steam engine locomotive in the early nineteenth century and the ensuing development over that century of the railway system in Canada and the United States not only made travel between Canada and the United States relatively easy and accessible, but it was also a big industry, especially in the United States and especially after the end of the Civil War. Lots of banks invested heavily in railroad construction at the time and in 1873, one of those banks realized it had overextended itself and filed for bankruptcy. This caused something of a domino effect whereby other banking firms did the same, and a major panic ensued that lasted for the next twenty years. This was known as the Great Depression until the occurrence of what we now call the Great Depression of 1929-1939; it is now referred to as the Long Depression. (11)

Although most immigrants during this time came in families, some young Canadian men fled to the United States between the years of 1914-1918 in an effort to evade the draft during World War I. The immigration boom ended with the onset of the Great Depression in 1929.

La Franco-Américanie in 1900 is a map in the Brault text that shows pockets of French-speaking communities in New England at the turn of the century. (12) Although there are relatively few pockets in Connecticut (mostly clustered around the Northwest corner, sharing borders with Massachusetts and Rhode Island, whose industrial centers attracted many more French speakers), it will be useful to add this map to our geo-timeline to give students a visual representation of the patterns of immigration and settlement at the time. It is also notable that most of these areas of increased immigrant presence are small to mid-size towns or cities located along rivers, which provided the needed resource of water for hydroelectric power.

Selected vocabulary: Assembly Line (la chaîne, la chaîne de montage) / Assembly plant (l'usine de montage) / By train (en train) / Factory (l'usine - f) / Factory worker (l'ouvrier d'usine - m) / Garment factory (l'usine de vêtements) / Maid (la domestique - la bonne = familiar term) / Textile factory (l'usine de textile) / Shoe factory (l'usine de chaussures)
Push and Pull: Why People Leave

When discussing immigration and migration, there are inevitably factors of both push and pull at play; the push factors are things happening at home that are making people want to leave, or pushing them to do so, and the pull factors entail what is happening elsewhere that is pulling or drawing people to want to go there. In French, rather than use the words push (pousser) and pull (tirer), the concepts of repulsion and attraction are used, by referring to les facteurs de répulsion et d'attraction.

To reinforce this concept of push and pull factors with students, we can put factor vocabulary on cards or on the board and ask students if it is a facteur de repulsion or a facteur d'attraction. Later, when the class is role-playing and writing letters we can point to reasons people give for leaving and ask students the same question.

The Complexities of Franco-American Identity

As with many discussions of identity, there were some contradictions to the sense of identity and heritage shared by French Americans at this time. Although their lineage was rooted in France, because of the lack of support or protection during the hundred years of British attack and conquest, many French Canadians as well of course as those who migrated to America felt little connection to France and certainly did not consider it as their homeland. Many felt like the language was the only connection they still had to France, and by consequence they developed strong roots in French Canada, which those who migrated carried with them. As France ceased to feel like home, in real memories and heritage as well as in the collective unconscious of French Canadians, Quebec and the Maritimes grew solidly as a cherished homeland. So much so that many Americans felt threatened by their attachment to it and their ethnic traditions. Many French Canadians that settled in the United States made frequent trips back to their native villages, to keep in touch with relatives who did not make the trip as well as to reminisce; this also helped keep the culture strong.

Whenever immigration happens, there is a struggle of some sort between holding tight to the heritage of origin and seeking to build a new life in a new land, with new stories and traditions. Often there is the sense that one must relinquish the traditions of old in order to properly assimilate into the new society. While some do that eagerly, others resist and resent the implied need to do so, gripping tight to traditions that reflect their national and cultural origins.

French Canadians had become intent on preserving their cultural identity, and this desire traveled with them to the United States. As has been stated elsewhere, many were Roman Catholic, and this was an important facet of their identity. Family, including extended family, was also a strong part of French Canadian life and culture, out of love and kinship of course, but also out of necessity, as the predominant farming lifestyle relied on a family's worth of involvement. It was common for three generations to live in the same house, and family celebrations were often big, all night affairs.

Edmond-Joseph Massicotte was a popular Quebecois artist-illustrator who depicted life in Quebec in the early twentieth century. He has been compared to Norman Rockwell in the way he expressed a sense of
sentimentality and nostalgia in his works, as well as in the way he has become part of the heritage and identity of Quebec. Any number of his works, found online, would be excellent additions to our timeline.

To emphasize some of the ideas behind the issues of identity here, you may wish to add components to the oral or written activities, such as differentiating between the language one speaks with family versus at work or adding vocabulary to reflect these concerns more explicitly. Also, students may be asked about why or when they feel French or American. With no information on a role card, students will need to think about their answers a little more deeply; for some this will be a welcome challenge, and for others it will be a little uncomfortable, so be sure to scaffold accordingly!

**Music: The Evolution of a National Anthem**

Music can be used to grab attention as well as to link students back to the timeline, and is a great way to start or end a class! Some days you may just want to play the music and leave it at that, other days you may have students jot down words they hear (or think they hear) and concepts they have pulled from listening. Sometimes you will want to play the music once without the words and then offer the words, other times you may want to have students explore the lyrics first and then play the song.

I find the story of the Canadian national anthem particularly compelling. What follows is a series of songs that can tell that story little by little each day, hopefully causing students to think about what it means to have a national anthem and how it must connect to a country's people. I think we tend to take our own for granted, accepting that it is without really thinking about what the original motivations and emotions behind it were. It was the Francophone Canadian population that really hungered for a national anthem, and this search must be considered in the context of the history of division and unification within Canada. This story will take us from Canada, to France, back to Canada, and then to New England, which I hope will show students how music moves with the people who both create it and appreciate it.

In 1835, Canadian statesman Georges-Étienne Cartier wrote and sang a nationalistic song called *Ô Canada! Mon Pays! Mes Amours!* that became quite popular. (18) I have included a link to the lyrics and a video clip of the song in the Classroom Resources section.

*Vive la Canadienne (Long Live the Canadian Girl)* was a folk song and sung as the national anthem in the nineteenth century. Later, during WWII, it was turned into the official march of the Royal 22nd Regiment. The clip listed in Classroom Resources for the march has a 43 second version that quite fast in tempo and high in pitch, and will serve as an excellent attention getter in class! The second version in the clip is slower and softer and can perhaps be used during transitions. I've also included a version from Bonnie Dobson in 1972 and one that sounds more traditional, to represent the original.

*À la claire fontaine* is a traditional French song that was also widely sung in French Canada from its beginnings. There are many versions of the song, both in France and Canada. It was designated as a national anthem in 1878. In the Classroom Resources section is a traditional version of the song, rich with images from the early settlement period. There is also a link to the song as sung by children in France, with lyrics and videos. I have also included a beautiful version from the 2006 film *The Painted Veil*; it has scenes from the movie so I would only play the audio and not the video in class.
French Canadians kept searching for their national anthem, but although the ones we have explored were lovely, the search was still on. Somehow they just didn't fit the bill. There was a festival scheduled for June of 1880, during the National Holiday (La Fête Nationale). This was the time! The music committee set the task of getting a national anthem ready for the festival, and through a series of events they succeeded with O Canada! (19) Until 1964, versions of this song were used as the national anthem throughout the whole of Canada; because there was no official anthem, some (non-Francophone) municipalities would use "God Save the Queen," which was the de facto anthem of Great Britain and some of its territories. As Canada approached the point of confederation, in 1964 Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson decided that the country should have one national anthem, and committees were formed which ultimately created the solution that O Canada would be the national anthem, and God Save the Queen would be the royal anthem. It took another fifteen years for the song to officially become the national anthem, in 1980.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings has gathered songs that reflect the heritage of "French Canadians who immigrated to New England and became Franco-Americans," called Mademoiselle, Voulez-Vous Danser?: Franco-American Music from the New England Borderlands. (20) The compilation was recorded between the years of 1994-1998 at festivals, informal gatherings, and small studios in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and eastern New York. There are so many great and relevant songs, but in particular I recommend "Entre Moi (Between Me)" because it starts with a take on O Canada and is about the songwriter's conflict between the "traditions of her French heritage and contemporary American culture." I think that using more of the songs on this compilation can be effective in showing students how people connect with their culture through music, whether or not they are presently living within the community of their heritage. It connects people over both time and place, and can be a point of entry for others to understand their heritage as well. Sometimes there are performances by Franco-American musicians in the area, which would be a fun field trip to consider!

Roles and Role-Play

Through these roles we will discuss name, nationality, country of origin, language(s) spoken, job, gender, birth year, age in a given year, where one is going, how one is getting there, and what one wants or is looking for. By discussing what people want I hope to convey a sense of the motivations behind the immigrations. Occupations will also get at that.

Roles may be generated in several ways or formats, according to the needs of the class or student. For those classes (or students) needing the most support, index cards could be made with full sentence identity information in random order: J'ai 35 ans. / Je m'appelle Richard DuBois. / Etc. Here, students are mostly reading the sentences, but meaning is still being made as conversation must flow logically and information will not be listed in order. Or, cards may list information in varying but logical conversation order, so that students must really listen and think about appropriate responses.

The next step or option could be to have index cards with identity information given in order, like on a form: Nom: Richard DuBois / Âge: 35 ans / Etc. This gives students less of the linguistic structure than the first suggestion. Another option could be to have all the identity information mixed up on the card with no labels, and students would have to deduce the appropriate corresponding sentences: 35 / Richard DuBois /
Etc. Or you could generate image cards, using symbols combined with identity keywords so that students have to determine and apply needed vocabulary. For example, a picture of France means "I am from France," a picture of an arrow going to the United States means "I am going to the United States," etc.

As indicated earlier, you may choose a particular delivery style for the whole class or you may provide different styles of role cards to different students based on need. Some days you may want to keep students within their comfort zones, while other days you may wish to lead them outside of those zones. Another option is to progress through these choices throughout the course of the unit as a structured scaffolding. Information gap activities may be created for use here. And students may be asked to use a variety of graphic organizers to keep track of information according to the needs you see fit.

Students may role-play by identifying themselves to border agents during their travels, by re-introducing themselves to the former neighbors who they are using as contacts for immigration to the U.S., or by introducing themselves to people or families they meet in the U.S. Then they may practice talking about others as they introduce or describe their families to any of the people indicated above. And of course some students will need to take on the roles of border agents and contact or other families.

From the foundation of the first-person role cards, students must be guided to make the changes to third-person discussion. Be sure to stress the similarities and differences in both written and oral form, and emphasize the parts with which students struggle. Often that includes the difference between masculine and feminine third-person subjects, the changes in some verb forms and the way some changes are seen in writing but not heard in speaking, and using the correct form of "my" when identifying family members. And of course, family member vocabulary must be learned and used.

Students often have a tough time internalizing the difference between language, nationality, and country; for example they often say things like Je suis de français (I am from French) instead of Je suis français or Je suis de France (I am French/I am from France.) Continued explicit practice of those skills is necessary as we move to third-person usage.

Just for fun, we will put on exaggerated silly voices to convey gender, since there are more male characters in general combined with fewer males in my class. In the fifth and sixth grades, students loved when we got silly with our voices, so I'm hoping that the nostalgia factor helps add to the fun here. Elements of costume or use of large pins could also help define and represent our roles and help students distill relevant information.

There is an online searchable database of border crossings from Canada to the United States, from 1895-1956, that can be browsed for authentic information to be used in some of the roles. (21) Although most roles will be for French Canadian immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, I have include a few early explorers and you may create other roles along the way, to illustrate conceptual or linguistic points needing emphasis, or to offer variants for contrast in terms of key points like time period, occupation, or location.

Below, I have listed sentence templates for the key components to be practiced in role-plays; they may be easily modified to the options delineated above. Following them, there is a set of three sample identities from a French Canadian "family," as well as the three identities for explorers mentioned previously.

My name is…. / Je m'appelle....
I am (nationality). / Je suis....
I am from (Country – city in parentheses) / Je suis de….
I speak (language). / Je parle….
I am (job, no definite article). / Je suis….
I am (a man/woman/child/boy/girl). / Je suis un homme / une femme / un enfant / un garçon / une fille
I was born in (year). [died in .....] / Je suis né(e) en .... (mort en ....)
I am # years old. / J'ai # ans. (22)
It is the year .... / C'est l'année .... (23)
I am going to (place). / Je vais à....
I travel by (means of transportation). / Je voyage en ...
I want to (verb phrase). / Je veux… (24)

Jean-Paul Barrette (Husband): Je suis français. / Je suis de Québec, Canada (Trois-Rivières). / Je parle français. / Je suis fermier. / Je suis un homme. / Je suis né en 1872. / Je vais au Rhode Island. / Je voyage en train. / Je veux travailler à une usine textile.

Catherine Barrette (Wife): Je suis française. / Je suis de Québec, Canada (Trois-Rivières). / Je parle français. / Je suis fermière. / Je suis une femme. / Je suis né en 1876. / Je vais au Rhode Island. / Je voyage en train. / Je veux trouver un poste à une usine textile.

Paul-Phillippe Barrette (Son): Je suis français. / Je suis de Québec, Canada (Trois-Rivières). / Je parle français. / Je suis étudiant et fermier. / Je suis un garçon. / Je suis né en 1896. / Je vais au Rhode Island. / Je voyage en train. / Je veux aller à l'école, mais je dois travailler à une usine textile avec mon père et ma mère.


Christophe Colomb: Je suis italien. / Je suis d'Italie (Genoa). / Je parle italien. / Je suis explorateur et navigateur.
Letter writing

Letter writing can happen around all of the scenarios delineated in the previous section. A variety of greeting and leave-taking expressions should be provided, as well as structures for asking questions and responding to them. (25) It is very important that students include dates on these letters so that the story may be followed over time. A side benefit to this should be an improved occurrence of the date appearing on other class work as well!

These letters may be generated from a prompt or from information expressed in role-play exercises. They may also be used in future role-play contexts. For instance, a letter from a contact in the United States could be used to prompt a role-play scenario between a French Canadian immigrant and a border agent. Very few documents were required between the U.S. and Canadian border until mid-century, after World War II, but people would often show letters of reference.

Students can write letters to contacts in the United States - family or community members who have already made the move - in which they identify or introduce themselves, including where they are from, where they want to move, with whom, and why. Students can write responses to these letters as well. Alternatively, they can write letters to family members who did not make the move, describing family and work life in the United States, the migration route and process, and perhaps telling when they will come back to visit.

This is a good opportunity to stress the difference between the formal and familiar forms of the subject pronoun "you." When writing to family members, students can use the familiar tu but when writing to community members with whom they are not very close, they can use the formal vous. I didn't suggest this in the role-play section because I didn't want students to become overly preoccupied with these details during that more spontaneous activity, as it could thwart the process. But of course it is also an option.

The following additional writing opportunities may be used throughout the unit:

JOURNAL ENTRIES: Students may be asked to record the day's information in some way, using sentences, fragments, and drawings. This can be used to assess what has been learned well and what still needs development, in a risk-free and creative way.

LISTS: Students may be asked to jot down lists that can allow them to practice and gather necessary and relevant vocabulary. Examples include: Who is going to the United States with me? / Qui va aux États-Unis avec moi?; Who is staying here? / Qui reste ici?; Why go to the U.S.? / Pourquoi aller aux É.U.?; What I like about America / Ce que j’aime d’Amérique.
DIALOGUES: Students may be asked to write dialogues reflecting given aspects of the unit. They might be original or you might ask them to take notes after a role-play activity and then create a dialogue that reflects it.

Culminating Activity

Students may role-play a return trip back to Canada to visit with family members, in which questions are asked and answered about the experience in the United States. Students can form into family partnerships in which one member still resides in Canada and the other comes back for a visit. They can create their own role cards which can be collected for assessment at the end; they may be asked to create role cards for just one role or for a whole family. There can be a list of topics for discussion geared to each group, returning immigrants and remaining family members. In order to facilitate this, students can pick task cards based on those discussion topics to prompt conversation. For full or extra credit, students may be asked or choose to join in on another role-play.

Expansion Possibilities

Depending on a number of factors, you may wish to expand certain elements of this unit. The following are some aspects you could include or increase, to that end.

In *Crossing the 49th Parallel*, Bruno Ramirez shows the importance of Anglo-Canadian migration to the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, despite popular opinion that the migration was largely French Canadian. In fact, the ratio of Anglo- to Franco-Canadians was pretty squarely 2:1. (26) I would advise against making it a 2:1 representation so as not to undercut the importance of the French Canadian experience. Most Anglo-Canadians immigrated to the Mid-West, so you could have some students take on the role of Anglo-Canadians, and look at settlement patterns there. (27)

Canada actively recruited immigrants from the British Isles as well as from central-eastern and southern European countries. In developing this concept, the roles that students wear could reflect these more varied ethnicities, as many of those immigrants to Canada then re-immigrated to the United States. (28)

When using the identities of explorers or other historical figures in role-play activities, you could add the identities of their family members into the mix.
Lesson Plan I - Maps

I want students to get familiar with the actual land space between Canada and the United States. Not only do they often not realize how close Canada, especially French-speaking Canada, is to the U.S. and especially to us in New England, but they often lack a strong grasp of U.S. geography. So comparing maps over time can give them a sense of change over time at the same time as it helps reinforce geographic awareness.

Use "Map of New France, 1750" and "Map of United States," found under the heading "Images" in the Classroom Resources section. Be sure to label the year on both maps.

Students may work in pairs, although be sure each student has his or her own maps, for ease of use as well as so that they may be marked up in ways that are meaningful to each student. First hand out copies of "Map of New France, 1750" and project it with an overhead or LCD projector.

Indicate the date – C'est l'année 1750 en Amérique du Nord.


Start at Washington state and move eastward, marking the modern border between Canada and the U.S. Voilà la frontière moderne entre le Canada et les États-Unis. Voilà le Washington, le Idaho, et le Montana.
Et voilà la frontière. Dessinez-la.

Have students clarify what is the present-day border between Canada and France. C'est le Canada ou les États-Unis? And students will be able to answer C'est le Canada. / C'est les États-Unis.

Continue eastward…. Ici c'est le Dakota du Nord, le Minnesota.

Along the way, ask for verification – Attendez, c'est le Montana ou le Minnesota? Beh oui, c'est le Minnesota. Merci.

To identify the Great Lakes (Les Grands Lacs), point at them, individually, and ask what each mass is. Qu'est-ce que c'est? Students will likely answer in English, and you can affirm in French, giving each name in order and labeling them on the projected map as students label their own (Lac Supérieur, Lac Michigan, Lac Huron, Lac Érie, Lac Ontario.) Students may just know that they are the Great Lakes and not the individual names. In that case, give them options – Est-ce que c'est le Lac Supérieur ou le Lac Huron?

Give them a silly memory tool (un aide-mémoire) for remembering the order by just pronouncing the first sounds of each lake name – SM-HEO. By exaggerating the nonsense word, it will likely actually stick in their heads!

Once that present-day border has been clarified for students, pass out "Map of United States." Make a help sheet for students regarding U.S. state names in French. Since most state names are masculine and are spelled the same in French, I would break it down like I do below, in lists of the feminine state names and names that are similar but different from English to French. Be sure to space it out well on a page so that it is clear and easy to process.

Les États-Unis d'Amérique qui sont FÉMININS : LA Californie/ LA Caroline du Nord/ LA
Caroline du Sud / LA Floride / LA Géorgie / LA Louisiane / LA Pennsylvanie / LA Virginie / LA Virginie-Occidentale

Les États-Unis d’Amérique qui ont l’orthographe différent:


It would be fun to have students brainstorm memory strategies for those groups, like taking the first syllable of each feminine state name to create a new "nonsense" word – calcarocaroflogéoloupennvirgivirgi for example!

Next, guide students in pairs through a series of questions that compare the geography of today with that of 1750. The basic sentence structure will be as follows: What is (state name) in 2013 was a colony of (country name) in 1750.

Ce qui est X en 2013 était une colonie de Y en 1750.
Ce qui est Ohio en 2013 était une colonie de France en 1750.

Note: When discussing the Maritime Provinces, this activity and these maps can be revisited, using the map of Maritime Provinces located in the Classroom Resources section to place the locations on the map of New France.

Lesson Plan II - C’est possible ou probable?

In this activity, students will either choose from three decks of cards made ahead of time or role three pre-made large dice. There will be a set of cards or dice for Occupation, Year, and Gender. Let's say you roll/choose Explorateur / 1910 / femme. Your partner will ask you if the grouping is possible, Est-ce possible? If it were possible you would reply Oui, c’est possible! But since it's not, you would reply Oui, mais ce n'est pas probable! (Yes, but it's not probably/likely.) I want to get at the idea that just because it isn't likely or just because our information doesn't reflect it, doesn't mean it's not possible. Then each player gets an opportunity to make a change to one card to see if he or she can make it more likely – plus probable. After switching partners several times for variety and varying viewpoints, students can create two unlabeled drawings, exploring the ideas of most and least probable combinations. They will make a most probable, archetypal character as well as a least probable character. Here we will see what students have absorbed based on what is present and absent in each drawing. Students will then choose someone else's drawing and present it to the class. The student will make a declaration on if they think they chose the most probable or least probable character will give reasons for their opinion. The class will agree or disagree, giving reasons.
Resources - Annotated Bibliography - Books


Ramirez, Bruno. *Crossing the 49th Parallel: Migration from Canada to the United States, 1900-1930.* Cornell University Press, 2001. This is a key resource for information on the migration of Canadians to the United States leading up to and including the dates in the title.

Resources - Annotated Bibliography - Websites

Bélanger, Claude. Marianopolis College; Canadian history (HIS 925) and Quebec history (HIS 951) course documents. This site has a wealth of useful, relevant information.  
http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/QuebecHistory/encyclopedia/HistoryofAcadia.htm

Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales de Québec.  

This online archive of French-language periodicals from Québec has a variety of periodicals. All years of all periodicals are not archived, but there are certainly a lot. I recommend setting aside a chunk of time to explore these, since it takes a while to sift through and find the gold – that is, the advertisements or articles that can be used in class.

The Canadian Encyclopedia. "Immigration." http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/immigration. Clear information on migration to Canada and immigration out of Canada, with authentic images. The rest of the site was also useful for other background information.

Donald Patriquin. "Vive la Canadienne."  

The Encyclopedia Brittanica. www.brittanica.com. Solid background information for all historical research, including links to images and videos. Videos can be used to enrich background knowledge (in English) if necessary, but even better is to play them with the volume off and use as prompts for teacher explanation or
for description practice.

Encyclopedia of French Cultural Heritage in North America. http://www.ameriquefrancaise.org/en/. This resource exists in French and English and has lots of images, videos, and audio clips to enrich the class multimedia timeline.


Background on France and information on reasons for immigration from France.


The Virtual Museum of New France; Canadian Museum of Civilisation.


http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/QuebecHistory/encyclopedia/Econhistcan.htm Very thorough resource on the economic history of Québec, which gives insight into the immigration and migration patterns into and out of Québec over time. In particular, I found the discussion of the progress of the fur trade and the creation of railways useful. Also, lyrics to a patriotic song from 1835 were found here, see Classroom
Connected Support Resources

/curriculum/units/2012/2/12.02.02.x.html. A unit I wrote that explores the foundation skills of introducing oneself to be expanded on here.

Classroom Resources

Advertisement, Wrigley gum. See upper right-hand corner of page 3.


Article, in French, on the Acadian Expulsion, written for children. (Don't forget to look for the little yellow arrow at the lower right hand corner of the article, for more pages of information!)

Lyrics to À la claire fontaine as a traditional French children's song, with video links

http://www.mamalisa.com/?t=es&p=141&c=22

Lyrics to Ô Canada! Mon Pays! Mes Amours! 1835, Georges-Étienne Cartier.
http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/encyclopedia/CartierOCanada.htm

Lyrics, Video, Images, Sheet Music, and Information on O Canada!
http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/emc/o-canada

Map of Eastern Canada/Northern United States (Maritime Provinces). French
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nouvelle-%C3%89cosse.png

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/65/Nouvelle-France_map-fr.svg

Map of United States. French.
Music, Various Artists, from Smithsonian Folkways Recordings: *Mademoiselle, Voulez-Vous Danser?: Franco-American Music from the New England Borderlands*. CD can be ordered or downloaded; individual songs may be downloaded as well. Lyrics and extensive, very informative liner notes may be downloaded for free independent of purchase.

Video of *À la claire fontaine* sung traditionally, with images relating to the fur trade.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VpAGW3QBG-k

Video of *À la claire fontaine* from *The Painted Veil*, 2006.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MlhGuT7mN4&feature=player_embedded

Video of *O Canada*. French. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0Y3LOs1m2o

Video of *Canard! Mon Pays! Mes Amours!* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZc7lwSvmrY

Video of *Vive la Canadienne*, Traditional http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9i1tE5nBv8

Video of *Vive la Canadienne*, March – WWII. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqn_QGMS4Yg

Video of *Vive la Canadienne*, 1972. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KHxdreP8rA

Video, with Quiz, about The Seven Years War. French.
http://www.brainpop.fr/histoiregeoadsociete/histoiremondiale/guerreduconquete/

**Notes**

(1) That unit may be consulted in the teaching of the current unit, as they are strongly connected. See [Connected Support Resources](#). Be sure not to use the passport format in this context, as passports were not required until the mid-twentieth century. But the language and role-play information may certainly be used!

(2) There is a succinct list of people who probably had encountered Canada before Cartier here:
http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/QuebecHistory/encyclopedia/HistoryofAcadia.htm. For simplicity’s sake we will leave it at Cartier. Also, Information from this section synthesized from the source above as well as the following:
http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/411492/New-France,

(3) For a list of other Kings of France, see http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/215768/France/276893/Major-rulers-of-France.

(5) Information from this section synthesized from the following sources:
http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/QuebecHistory/encyclopedia/HistoryofAcadia.htm,

(6) See Classroom Resources .

(7) The article is split into five sections: Introduction, History, Daily Life, Culture, and Resources.

(8) Information synthesized from: Brault, Gerstle, Ramirez, and www.immigration-online.org,
http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/quebec-since-confederation,
http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/frncdns/docs/jackson.pdf,

(9) http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/quebec-since-confederation

(10) Gerstle, page 22

(11) http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/general-article/grant-panic/

(12) Brault, Map 1 (opposite page 1)

(13) See Von Prisk for an English language lesson on push and pull factors of migration. The activity detailed here is a variation on one indicated in that lesson.

(14) http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Du-Ha/French-Americans.html#ixzz2aBd4ijmP.

(15) Gerstle, page 22

(16) Brault, pages 13-14


(20) See Classroom Resources for information. This is quite a gem!

(21) The search function at FamilySearch is easily navigated, but it pulls from the database at Ancestry. If you have an Ancestry account or wish to pay for one, you can access PDFs of original documents and more. Otherwise, I recommend the FamilySearch option. https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1803785; http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1075.

(22) The age will vary depending on the year being examined; that is why birth years are given.

(23) For "round" numbers (those ending in 0) you say l'an ... as in l'an 2010. To refer to a century's-worth of years, as in "the 1900s," you say Les années 1500.

(24) Alternatively, may use Je cherche - I am looking for.
Again, it may be helpful to refer to the unit listed in Connected Support Resources.

Ramirez, page ix

Be sure to tell students that although some Anglo Canadians may have spoken French, most in fact did not; for the purposes of this unit everyone will speak French, even as they are saying that they speak a different language.

Ramirez, pages xii-xiii

Appendix A - Standards

This unit is written in accordance with the 2005 Connecticut World Language Curriculum Framework, which expands on the National Standards for Language Learning, commonly referred to as the 5 Cs of World Language Learning. It addresses the following standards: Interpersonal Communication standard 1.2.B- Describe various objects and people; Interpretive Communication standards 2.2.B- Comprehend short conversations and 2.8.B- Recognize and respond appropriately to questions, statements, or commands; Presentational Communication standard 3.3.B- Write short informal notes describing or providing information about someone or something, and Cultural Competency and Understanding standard 4.6.B- Recognize simple themes, ideas, or perspectives of the target culture.

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