

# Stephanie MacLaurin - Robinson-Superior Treaty

## Before Watching the Video

Ask students to think of a time that they have made a promise, commitment or agreement (examples might include agreeing to babysit for a fee, agreeing to do chores for an allowance; ideal examples involve each party giving and getting something in the relationship). Ask if they have ever had a misunderstanding in one of these agreements? Did they agree to babysit two children and there were four when they arrived? Was the pay not what they expected? How would they feel in terms of these misunderstandings?

Many students will not know very much about treaties or will not understand their purpose or content. At its simplest, a treaty is an agreement between sovereign nations. Treaties exist because Indigenous nations were not ever conquered in Canada. Treaties were made to negotiate the sharing or exchange of resources and to outline ways for Indigenous nations and settler nations to live together. An excellent resource to introduce treaties can be found at <https://slideplayer.com/slide/6972799/>

It gives the basics of treaties and their intent in Canada. The slide below is the opening slide in the resource:



After some general discussion about treaties, explain that students will be watching a short video in which Stephanie MacLaurin (Fort William First

Nation) talks about the Robinson-Superior Treaty from the perspective of Fort William First Nation.

Stephanie covers a lot of information quite quickly. You may wish to stop the video occasionally or to give students copies of the video's transcript to help them follow along.

## **After Watching the Video**

Discuss what Stephanie said. What have they learned that they didn't know before? What are they still curious about?

**Activity 1:** After watching the video, have children complete the following activity sheet. It would probably be helpful to play the video a second time. There is also a transcript available.

**Activity 2:** Cut up the vocabulary words and definitions separately. Work with students to match them up.

**Activity 3:** Many treaties and other related events have occurred from the 1600s until the present day. The document found at the following web address is called "Treaties in Canada Education Guide".

[http://education.historicacanada.ca/files/31/Treaties\\_English.pdf](http://education.historicacanada.ca/files/31/Treaties_English.pdf)

The downloadable PDF contains a timeline of all treaties in Canada as well as suggested related activities.

Using the timeline, have children choose one of the treaties to research. Have them fill out the worksheet for Activity 3 using the information they find. A useful resource for treaties in Ontario is found at:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/map-ontario-treaties-and-reserves>

**Activity 1. Stephanie MacLaurin.**  
**Robinson-Superior Treaty 1850**

**Listen to Stephanie's story and answer the following questions:**

**What was the proclamation that led to the Robinson-Superior Treaty? When was it made? By whom?**

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**What did King George want to stop the Ojibwe from doing?**

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**What two groups agreed to the Robinson-Superior Treaty?**

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**Who does Stephanie mean by "The Crown"?**

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**Why was it called the Robinson-Superior Treaty?**

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**Fort William First Nation wanted the Robinson-Superior Treaty. Why did they want the treaty?**

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**Stephanie says the treaty "crowned our sovereignty". What does she mean by that statement?**

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## **Activity 2. Building Vocabulary with Treaties**

Aboriginal Title	The inherent right of Indigenous peoples to land or territory
Assimilation	The process that causes/forces a person or group to become part of a different group, society, country, etc
Crown	The British state in all its aspects within the Commonwealth realms and their subdivisions
Cede	To give up power or territory
Infer	To conclude from evidence and reasoning rather than from explicit statements
Jurisdiction	The official power to make legal decisions and judgements
Marginalize	To treat a person, group, or concepts as insignificant or peripheral; to push people to the edge of society by not allowing them a place in it
Signatory	A party that has signed an agreement, especially a person, group or organization that has signed a treaty
Sovereignty	Supreme power or authority; the authority of a state to govern itself or another state
Treaty	A formally concluded and ratified agreement between countries.

### **Activity 3. Treaty Research**

Research a treaty of your choice. Fill in the following information.

Name of the treaty:
Date of signing:
Geographic region that the treaty covers. (you may use provincial references to help define this)
Which First Nations Communities are involved in the Treaty?
What are some details about the treaty? Where was it signed? Who was there representing the First Nations communities? Who represented the Crown?

#### **Applied thinking:**

It is said “We are all treaty people”. What does this statement mean for Canadians? What does it mean to you personally?

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