

*The origin and meaning of the name Canada has been a matter of surmise since the arrival of the first explorer. Jacques Cartier, reporting on his 1535-36 voyage, noted that "kanata" was an Iroquois word meaning town, or cluster of dwellings. Other reports have it that early Spanish or Portuguese explorers, disappointed in not finding gold or other riches, derided the country as "aca nada" or "cà nada" (here nothing) ... The weight of opinion to date, however, favours the Aboriginal origin noted in Cartier's report. Whatever the source, the Constitution Act, 1867, Canada's original constitution, announced that the name of the new dominion would be . . . Canada.*

Source: *Canada: A Portrait* (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-4030XPE), also available from the Statistics Canada website. <<http://www.statcan.ca/>>



*The name **Canada** derives from the Huron-Iroquois word **Kanata**, which means village or settlement. The term was used to describe Stadacona (the current site of Quebec city) by two Amerindians who accompanied Jacques Cartier on his 1535 return voyage from France.*

*We all know the name of our country but have you ever wondered where it is written down? "Canada" as the legal name of our country is found in section 3 of the Constitution Act, 1867 which states "... shall form and be One Dominion under the Name of Canada; ... " ("...ne formeront qu'une seule et même puissance sous le nom de Canada; ...")*

Source: National Library of Canada, Origins of Canadian Words:  
<<http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/8/11/r11-203-e.html>>

*Choosing "Canada" as the new country's name was relatively easy, as was the choice of "Ontario" and "Quebec" for the two halves of the Province of Canada. However, difficulties arose in choosing a designation. The delegates wished it to be a kingdom; the British feared that such a title would anger the United States, and denied the request. An alternative, "Dominion," was suggested by Samuel Leonard Tilley, from a line in Psalm 72 of the Bible: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."*

Source: National Library of Canada, Canadian Confederation, London Conference:  
<<http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/2/18/h18-2085-e.html>>



**Before writing a response in your journal to the name of this new country created by Confederation on July 1, 1867, here are some ideas to consider...**

- How do you think the other provinces may have felt about adopting the name "Canada" for the new country?
- Consider that, although an Aboriginal name was chosen for the new country, no representatives of the Aboriginal peoples were involved in the Confederation discussions.
- Look up the word "dominion" in the dictionary and ask what this word suggests about the new government.