

First Prime Ministers – Key

Name	Time	Accomplishments	Interesting Facts
Sir John A. Macdonald (Conservative)	1867-1873 1878-1891	Key negotiator of Confederation (8 members); obtained cooperation of some French-Canadian and Liberal politicians; pushed the building of the CPR in record time; strengthened independence from U. S.	Great orator, returned to win in a landslide election despite Pacific Scandal and some questionable tactics; made many promises.
Right Honourable Alexander Mackenzie (Liberal)	1873-1878	Formed a government when the Conservatives were forced to resign in 1873 because of the Pacific Scandal. Was defeated by Macdonald in 1878. Proceeded very slowly with the CPR; introduced the secret ballot to Canada.	Had been a stonemason and newspaper editor; opposite personality to Macdonald. Was PM at a difficult time: country was having economic problems, which they blamed on him.
Sir John Joseph Caldwell Abbott (Conservative)	1891-1892	Stepped in as PM when Sir John A. died in office. Began organizing a Trade and Commerce Department during a difficult economic period.	Called "the reluctant PM"; said he was chosen because he was "the least obnoxious." Persistent ill health forced him to retire.
Sir John Sparrow David Thompson (Conservative)	1892-1894	First PM born in Canada (Halifax); very dedicated politician, worked to build the Conservative party; excellent negotiator in trade, fisheries, and shipping.	Died suddenly of a seizure in Windsor Castle in London when he was being honoured as a member of the Privy Council of the Queen.
Sir Mackenzie Bowell (Conservative)	1894-1896	Took office for 14 troubled months after Sir John Sparrow's sudden death; although unpopular at first, he impressed people with his conduct in times of crisis.	Had been a printer and publisher; ran the government from the Senate but resigned as this was not the best arrangement.
Sir Charles Tupper (Conservative)	1896	In office only three months; was one of the Fathers of Confederation—had convinced Nova Scotia to join the nation; led party in an election at a time when Conservative morale was low.	Was a strong supporter of Confederation and remained Opposition Leader until 1900.
Sir Wilfred Laurier (Liberal)	1896-1911	First French-Canadian PM; firm belief in Canada's greatness; promoted English-French relations and international relations.	Suffered from ill health; was a Catholic but did not believe the church should interfere with government.

(For columns three and four, these are suggested points only. Additional activities are proposed re: Macdonald and Laurier.)