

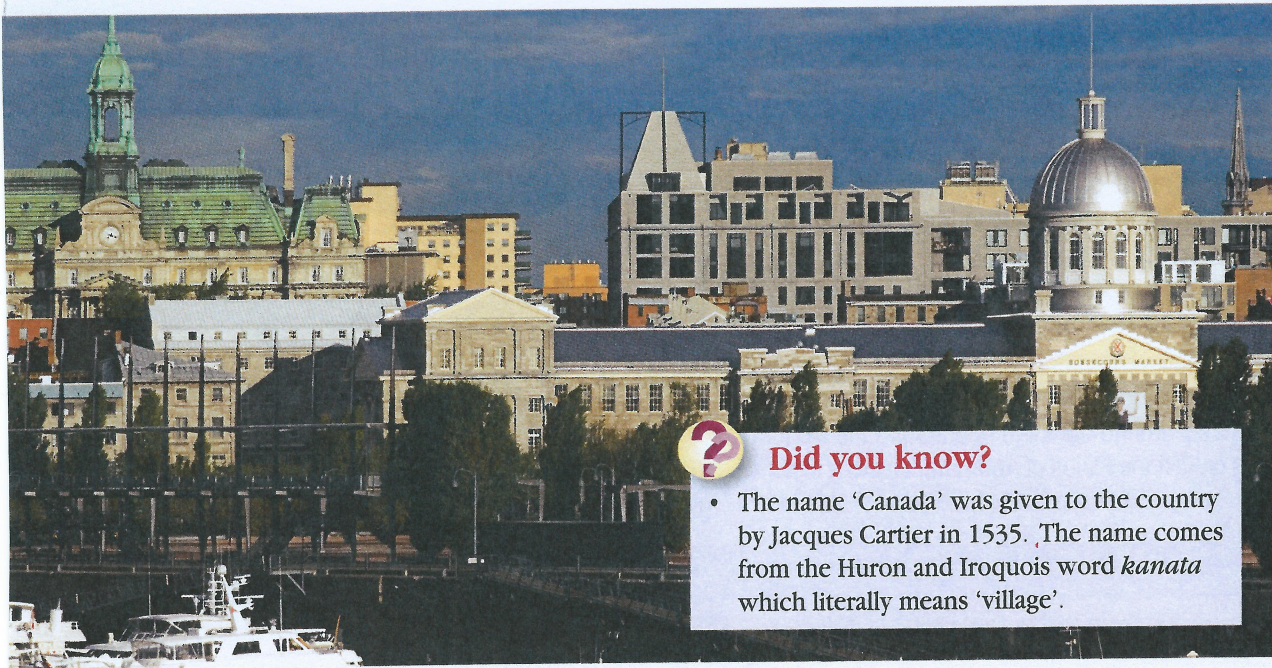
# Canada, a bilingual country

## PEOPLE AND LANGUAGES

In some ways Canada is many nations in one. Today the original inhabitants, the Inuit people and First Nations, make up less than 4% of the population, while about 50% of Canadian people are descendents of British and French immigrants who settled in the country in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. A wave of immigration in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries brought people from many other European nations such as Germany and Italy. This trend has continued into the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Canada is one of the few countries in the world that still has significant immigration programmes. Since the 1970s most immigrants have come from Asia. Canada is a bilingual country. French and English are the official languages with equal status in the Parliament, Federal Institutions and Federal Courts.

## MONTREAL

Most of French-speaking Canadians live in the west of the country, in the province of Quebec. Montreal, located in Southern Quebec, is the second largest French-speaking city in the world. French is spoken at home by about 57% of the population, compared to less than 19% who speak English. Up until 1760 Montreal was a French colony called Ville-Marie. Its current name comes from a hill, Mont-Royal, in the city. The French settlers called this hill Mont Réal. Today Montreal is a large city with a population of 1,812,723 inhabitants. It is an important centre of commerce, finance, industry, technology, culture and world affairs.



### Did you know?

- The name 'Canada' was given to the country by Jacques Cartier in 1535. The name comes from the Huron and Iroquois word *kanata* which literally means 'village'.

## Warm up

- 1 What are the two official languages in Canada? Why?

## Reading

- 2 Read this page and answer the questions.

- 1 Who were the first inhabitants of Canada?
- 2 Where did most of the settlers in the 16<sup>th</sup> century come from?

- 3 Where do the majority of French-speaking Canadians live?
- 4 Where is Montreal?
- 5 What is its population?
- 6 What is the official language in Montreal?
- 7 What was the original name for the city of Montreal?
- 8 What percentage of the population speak French at home?