

Francophone References

Francophone A person whose first language is French.

The French The people of France.

Habitant A Francophone farmer in New France.

Canadiens French colonists born in New France.

Canadien(ne) A term that came to be used in the second half of the 17th century as the inhabitants of New France developed a new identity tied to their new homeland and wished to express their distinctiveness from the French of France. Although they continued to be subjects of the king of France, Canadiens were distinguished by their birth in New France. Canadiens developed several distinct colonial characters, including farmers (habitants), who were more independent than their peasant counterparts in France; fur traders, who learned Native ways of traveling, fighting, and surviving in the woods; and nobles, whose military careers were spent leading mixed troops made up of Indigenous peoples, militia, and regular soldiers. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Francophones throughout North America used the term "Canadien" to express their national identity.

When the province of Québec, which at one time included much of present-day Québec and Ontario, was divided into Upper Canada (now Ontario) and Lower Canada (now Québec) in 1791, non-Francophone immigrants began to call themselves Canadians, an English version of the word "Canadien." After World War I, the term "French Canadian" became more prevalent to refer to Francophone Canadiens.

Acadian A Francophone citizen of Acadia; a descendant of the Francophones of Acadia.

French Canadian A term used to describe Francophone citizens of Canada. Since the 1960s, most Francophone Québécois have rejected the use of the term, preferring to identify themselves as Québécois. In light of this, Francophone minorities began to identify themselves as Franco-Albertains, Fransaskois, Franco-Colombiens, Franco-Manitobains, etc.

Québécois A Francophone of Québec origin; a resident of Québec.