The Growth of Canada

A Rich Land
Canada’s resources include trees, minerals, and fish. The boreal forests that cover the north have long been important to its economy. In the 1800s, teams of men lived in shacks in the woods, cutting timber from dawn to dusk. When the Haida found gold in 1851, they set off a series of gold rushes in British Columbia and later in the Yukon. People also discovered coal, oil, natural gas, and copper. Canada’s fisheries supplied thousands of people with jobs catching, cleaning, and canning cod, sardines, lobsters, and salmon.

Railroads
To connect British Columbia with the rest of the nation, Canada began to build a transcontinental railroad. Laborers from China did much of the hard and dangerous work. The finished railroad allowed western farmers to get their crops to eastern markets and helped Alberta and Saskatchewan grow large enough to become provinces. When a new type of fast-growing wheat was discovered, wheat production on the prairie grew. So did the number of people living on the prairie.

Industries Grow
In the late 1800s, industrialization changed the way people lived and worked. People moved from rural areas to cities to take jobs making goods, such as tractors, steel, cars, and paper. Cities grew and needed more food and workers. Canada encouraged farmers and laborers from Europe to immigrate. Today, Canada’s strong economy, which includes manufacturing industries and the production of lumber, wheat, fish, and hydroelectricity, has created prosperity for its people.