

# Wilfrid Laurier

*Canada has been modest in its history, although its history, in my estimation, is only commencing. It is commencing in this century. The nineteenth century was the century of the United States. I think we can claim that Canada will fill the twentieth century.*

- Sir Wilfrid Laurier, January 18, 1904

What was Laurier's background? When did he become Prime Minister?	What were the most important questions to Laurier as Prime Minister?
What were some of his leadership qualities?	List and explain two of Laurier's most important accomplishments as Prime Minister.
What was the main reason he was defeated in 1911?	Note an interesting story or detail about Laurier.
Do you think Laurier proved to be right about his vision of Canada, based on what you know about Canada's growth to 1914?	
Sources:	

<p>What was Laurier's background? When did he become Prime Minister?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Born Québec, practiced law in Montréal</li> <li>- Liberal party member, defended Louis Riel in Parliament</li> <li>- First French-Canadian PM, from July 11, 1896 - October 6, 1911</li> <li>- respected British liberal tradition</li> <li>- remained as Leader of Opposition after defeat in 1911</li> </ul>	<p>What were the most important questions to Laurier as Prime Minister?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Canadian unity; respect for diversity</li> <li>- Making Canada known and respected on international stage</li> <li>- francophone-anglophone relations: he believed in two identities, French-Canadian and English-Canadian</li> <li>- developing economy (free trade with US, developing agriculture, immigration)</li> <li>- although Catholic, believed in separation of church and state</li> </ul>
<p>What were some of his leadership qualities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong orator</li> <li>- Persuasive to anglophones and francophones alike</li> <li>- Very optimistic and positive</li> <li>- Good negotiator; had a "sunny ways" compromise approach</li> <li>- Future oriented</li> <li>- Charismatic personality</li> </ul>	<p>List and explain two of Laurier's most important actions as Prime Minister.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Settled Manitoba Schools question by a compromise that allowed some French and some Catholic instruction in MB, without creating separate schools</li> <li>- Creation of Yukon Territory 1898; settlement of Alaska Boundary Dispute 1903</li> <li>- Maintained Canadian independence from Britain in matters of international relations</li> <li>- Construction of a second transcontinental railway 1903</li> <li>- Immigration policies encouraged settlement and development of the West</li> <li>- Creation of Saskatchewan and Alberta 1905</li> <li>- Formed Department of External Affairs 1909; developed relations with other countries</li> </ul>
<p>What was the main reason he was defeated in 1911? Free trade with US</p>	<p>Note an interesting story or detail about Laurier. e.g., accepted the traditional knighthood reluctantly; was at times criticized by Catholic Church because of his views on role of Church</p>

The above are suggested guidelines, and may be expanded or varied.