SOCIAL STUDIES 7 VIDEO INFORMATION: HISTORY’S TURNING POINTS – 1759 THE BATTLE FOR CANADA The Plains of Abraham, Ste.-Foy, and Montreal

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. For three years the French and British had been struggling for control of North America. Neither side would admit defeat.
2. By 1750, the French had control of much of Canada and the Louisiana territory, while the British controlled the 13 Colonies and around the Hudson Bay. Confrontation was becoming inevitable.
3. France chose the Marquis de Montcalm to lead the troops in North America. Montcalm was a soldier used to the European way of fighting, ie. facing the opponent in the open field. His soldiers did not want to be there, nor did the French settlers (Canadiens) want them there. The governor of Quebec, Vaudreuil, did not appreciate Montcalm’s leadership, nor did Montcalm support Vaudreuil.
4. Though at first the French won several battle vs. the British along the frontier, the British prime minister realized the only way to conquer Quebec was via the St. Lawrence River.
5. In order to gain access to the St. Lawrence River, the British, led by James Wolfe, had to attack and conquer the fortress of Louisbourg first (on present-day Cape Breton Island). In 1758, the British and French fought fiercely, and after 52 days the French surrendered. Louisbourg was overtaken and destroyed. The Fall of Louisbourg gave the British control of the St. Lawrence and made Quebec vulnerable.
6. Quebec had 16,000 men, but only half were professional soldiers. Appeals to Paris for more troops and supplies were largely unheeded.
7. With the coming of winter, Wolfe had to wait till the next year to attempt to capture Quebec. He returned to Louisbourg in spring 1759, and prepared to embark with an army of the best trained soldiers in North America.
8. There was panic in Quebec. Montcalm decided to take a defensive position, and did not expect the British to be able to navigate up the St. Lawrence all the way to Quebec. But the British were excellent navigators, and two weeks after leaving Louisbourg most of the British fleet was within striking distance of Quebec.
9. On July 12, Wolfe began the bombardment of Quebec, eventually reducing the port area to rubble. Montcalm believed they could hold out until winter, when the British would have to leave. But food was running out.
10. Wolfe was confident, but his health was poor. A failed attempt at an attack near the Montmorency River lost the British almost 450 men; this was Wolfe’s darkest hour.
11. Montcalm knew worse was to come, and he ordered all civilians to help defend Quebec. Wolfe, meanwhile, ordered the surrounding countryside to be burned (“scorched earth” policy).
12. Montcalm still waited and prayed, believing he would lose in open battle. Soon it was September, and he knew Wolfe’s supply lines from Louisbourg would be cut.
13. Wolfe knew time was running out. On top of that, Wolfe’s health was failing. The decision was made with his brigadiers to attempt to scale the cliffs upriver (south-west) of Quebec under cover of darkness. Once on the top they’d be on the Plains of Abraham, an easy march on Quebec.
14. Early on Sept. 13 Wolfe’s troops landed at L’Anse au Foulon; British soldiers who could speak French fooled the French sentries into believing an expected supply ship had arrived.
15. After a grueling climb carrying heavy packs 4500 British soldiers assembled a mile from the city walls, taking the French completely by surprise. Montcalm hastily abandoned his defensive strategy, and assembling 5000 men he headed out to the Plains of Abraham. The British lines were all ready for them. The French charged, an undisciplined and disorderly assault, and most missed their targets. The British waited for the order to shoot, which wasn’t given until the French were in range. The fighting continued until it was clear the British had gained the field.
16. Wolfe was hit by a sniper and died shortly after, and Montcalm too, was mortally wounded. Britain won the battle, and with it eventually most of North America.

After the battle on the Plains of Abraham, the French retreated to Montreal while the British took over Quebec. In **April 1760**, before the ice cleared from the river, a French army from Montreal marched to Quebec and engaged in battle again with the British outside Quebec. This was called the **Battle of Ste.-Foy**. This time the French were victorious; however, they were unable to regain control of Quebec since British supply ships arrived as soon as the ice cleared, whereas French ships were forced back to France due to bad weather.

British forces then marched on Montreal, which surrendered in Sept. 1760.

FOR A MORE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE FOR NORTH AMERICA, GO TO YOU TUBE AND LOOK FOR **CANADA: A PEOPLE’S HISTORY, EPISODE 4 – BATTLE FOR A CONTINENT**. THIS PRODUCTION PORTRAYS THE EVENTS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THOSE WHO LIVED THROUGH IT.

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