

Literacy in Canada



Try This:

- Open the interactive map “Newspapers by County, 1891.”
- Minimize your browser window, and resize it so it fits a quarter of your screen.
- On the ZOOM/PAN toolbar, click on the Zoom in button and use it on the map to zoom in to southern Ontario, Québec and the Maritimes.
- Open a new browser window, and then open the map “Public Libraries, 1779-1891.”
- Repeat the steps, above, for the Public Libraries map. Compare the two maps side by side.



Notice ...

- Montréal and Toronto were major centres of independent political thought in Victorian Canada.
- Québec (province) newspapers beyond Montréal reflected traditional two-party politics.
- Virtually everyone within Canada’s settled area in 1891 had access to a newspaper.
- There is a strong visual correspondence between the presence of newspapers and of public libraries.



Consider!

- Freedom of the press flourished in Victorian Canada.
- One can imagine that it was common practice to read the newspaper at the public library.

These are just a few of the questions that these maps and data can address.

If you have ideas for other questions, please use our Feedback page to send them in, and they may be posted on the website in the future.

