

**Subject Area & Grade:** Social Studies (Grade 4)

**Curriculum Link (ON):** B3.5 identify Canada's provinces and territories and their capital cities, and describe them with reference to their location and some of the peoples who live in them (*e.g., New Brunswick, which is in Atlantic Canada, is the only bilingual province and has a large Acadian population; Toronto, which is the capital of Ontario, has a large immigrant population, which includes people from China, South Asia, Europe, and Latin America as well as Indigenous Canadians; the majority of people in Nunavut, in Arctic Canada, are Inuit*)

**Learning Goal:** Learning about the geographic diversity of the Black Battalion members and what it reveals about Black communities in Canada during that period.

**Lesson Activity:** Check the following website (<https://www2.yrdsb.ca/community/museum-board-archives/no-2-construction-battalion-map>), as a class or in pairs/small groups with their tech. device, that shows where Black soldiers who served in the No. 2 Construction Battalion came from.

Explore the map and explain that each dot represents a Black Battalion soldier that served in the Black Battalion. Try and find all the Black Battalion soldiers who served from each province and territory.

On the provided table, have students record the number of members from each province/territory.

## **Answer Key**

### **The number of Black Battalion members in each province/territory**

British Columbia - 6

Alberta - 14

Saskatchewan - 0

Manitoba - 3

Ontario - 66

Quebec - 4

Newfoundland and Labrador - 0

New Brunswick - 15

Nova Scotia - 85

Prince Edward Island (PEI) - 0

Yukon Territory - 0

Northwest Territories - 0

Nunavut - 0

Please note that every effort was made to count accurately. However, the numbers of Black Battalion members in each province/territory may not be exact, and not every member was mapped.

## Discussion Questions:

- **Were there members who served from every province/territory? No**
- **Which province or territory had no representation? Why might that be?** (e.g., there were no established Black communities; harsher climate, making them less attractive for early settlers, especially those seeking agricultural opportunities; early Black settlers were drawn to areas with greater economic opportunities - Saskatchewan and the northern territories were less developed economically at that time, offering fewer opportunities for employment or land acquisition.)
- **Which province/territory had the most soldiers? Why do you think that is?** (e.g., proximity to the U.S. border, making migration easier; large Black populations settled in Ontario and Nova Scotia because established Black communities already existed in those areas; greater economic opportunities, such as farming in Ontario or working in industries along the Atlantic Coast in Nova Scotia; Black settlers often concentrated in provinces with more accessible resources and existing networks.)
- Black people also came from the USA and the British West Indies. Name some of the states and countries you see where they came from. **Why do you think so many came from the U.S. and the British West Indies to serve in the Canadian military?** (limited opportunities in their own countries; a sense of duty and patriotism; migration and community networks)

<b>Province/Territory</b>	<b>Number of Black Battalion members</b>
British Columbia	
Alberta	
Saskatchewan	
Manitoba	
Ontario	
Quebec	
Newfoundland	
New Brunswick	
Nova Scotia	
Prince Edward Island	
Yukon Territory	
Northwest Territories	
Nunavut	

