

Hiawatha



Hiawatha is an important figure in the precolonial history of the **Haudenosaunee** (Iroquois) of present-day southern **Ontario** and upper New York (ca. 1400–1500s) – we are unsure of the exact time period...

Major contributions to Canadian history:

-The Hiawatha character will recount the legend & story of the three prominent figures who brought together the Confederacy of the five nations (Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga, Mohawk, and Seneca), also called *The*

Iroquois League or *Great Law of Peace*.

➤ **Deganawida : The Great Peacemaker**

- An outsider, taught the laws of peace
- Helped to heal Hiawatha's grief through the *Ceremony of Condolence**
- Unified the Five nations (Iroquois League)

➤ **Hiawatha : Onondaga Warrior**

- Wanderer
- Self-exiled, following the loss of his wife and children due to blood feuds
- Disciple of Deganawida

➤ **Atotarho : Onondaga War Chieftain**

- Aggressor
- Possessor of powerful dark magic

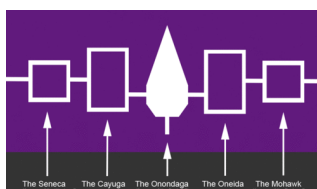
Important terms and definitions:

→ **Ceremony of Condolence:** Led by Deganawida, this ceremony enabled Hiawatha to heal after the loss of his wife and daughters

→ **“Wampum”:** Belt; purple and white beads made from shells. Conveys the unity of the five nations. Hiawatha created a wampum and wore it around his neck to remember the ritual of the ceremony.

Bound on strings, wampum (139kb/1sec) beads were used to create intricate patterns on belts. These belts are used as a guide to narrate Haudenosaunee history, traditions and laws, The origins of wampum beads can be traced to Aionwatha, commonly known as Hiawatha at the founding of the League of Five Nations. Archeological study however, has found it to have been used long before the union of the nations.

Most commonly made from the Quahog, a round clam shell, the word wampum comes from the Algonquin term for the shells. While it is called Ote-ko-a in the Seneca (198kb/2sec) language, wampum is the most widely recognized term. For the Haudenosaunee, wampum held a more sacred use.



Wampum served as a person's credentials or a certificate of authority. It was used for official purposes and religious ceremonies and in the case of the joining of the League of Nations was used as a way to bind peace.

Source: HAUDENOSAUNEE CONFEDERACY:

<http://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/wampum.html>

→ **Most prevalent translations of the name Hiawatha:**

He who combs & He who has lost his mind, but seeks to find it

**He who combs meaning: Atotarho was persuaded to join — possibly by the combined force of the followers and/or the offer of a leadership role in the new confederacy. Hiawatha combed the snakes out of Atotarho's hair.

→ **Chief sachem:** Great Chief

→ **Haudenosaunee:** Iroquois

VIDEO LINK (FOR A GENERAL IDEA OF THE HISTORY):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79RApCgwZFw>