Q: How many treaties were signed in Canada with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people?  
A: 11

Q: How many of these are in Alberta?

A: 3 treaties 6 (signed in 1876), 7 (signed in 1877), 8 (signed in 1899). Treaty 7 is in Southern Alberta and was created to settle land disputes with the First Nations in order to build a transcontinental railway and bring BC into confederation.

Q: Which tribes signed Treaty 7?

A: The tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy, (Siksika, Piikani (Peigan) and Kainaiwa (Blood)), Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee), the Stoney (Bearspaw, Chiniki, and Wesley/Goodstoney)

Q: Why were there residential schools?

A: Established in the 1880s under Prime Minister Sir John A MacDonald, the goal of the residential school system was to "civilize" Canada's indigenous population (who were imagined as "savage"). In the words of one government official, it was a system designed “to kill the Indian in the child.” As Duncan Campbell Scott, the Deputy Superintendent General of the Department of Indian Affairs between 1913 and 1931 who administered the government's assimilation policy, once noted:

"...the Government will in time reach the end of its responsibility as the Indians progress into civilization and finally disappear as a separate and distinct people, not by race extinction but by gradual assimilation with their fellow-citizens."

Q: How many residential schools were there in Canada?

A: 139, 25 of which were in Alberta

Q: When did the last one close?  
A: 1996

Q: How many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students attended over When did the last one close?

A: First established in 1880, over 150,000 FNMI students attended. Many children stayed at the schools year-round and parents were unable to visit due to the large distance between the schools and parents. (80,000 survivors are alive today)

Q: What occurred if families did not send their children to residential school?

A: Children were forcible taken from families by priests, Indian agents, and the police. If parents hid their children, the parents would be imprisoned

Q: How many died in residential school?  
A: Over 6000 are formally known to have died. That is 1/25 which is higher than Canadian soldiers during the second world war. In many schools, the mortality rate from infectious diseases like tuberculosis or small pox was more than 50%. Perhaps as many as 50,000 children died at residential schools; in many cases, their parents were never told. Death was so common, architects designed for the schools actually contained cemeteries instead of playgrounds.

Q: True or False: Accounts from the Truth and Reconciliation commission include accounts of students being forbidden to speak their language, the punishment for speaking their language or practice their culture was often the insertion of needles into their tongue. Other accounts include students being forced to do manual labour, fed poor quality food including moldy, maggot-infested and rotten foods. Other experiences reported from Survivors of residential schools include sexual and mental abuse, beatings and severe punishments, overcrowding, illness, children forced to sleep outside in the winter, the forced wearing of soiled underwear on the head or wet bed sheets on the body, and the use of students in medical experiments.

A: True

Q: How many sexual assault claims have been resolved?

A: About 32,000 have been formally resolved by an independent assessment process. Another 6000 claims are currently in progress.

Q: True or false, the Canada law that stated that a lawyer would be disbarred if they represented a First Nations, Metis, or Inuit person was not rescinded until 1979.

A: True

Q: What does the “Sixties Scoop” refer to?

A: Sixties Scoop refers to a particular time in history (1960 to the 1980) where many residential schools were closed, replaced with a new practice – Child apprehension, new form of cultural genocide where 1000s of FNMI children were forcible apprehended. In 1951, 29 Aboriginal children were in provincial care in BC (1% of those in care); by 1964, that number was 1,466. Aboriginal children, (34%). By the 1970s, roughly one third of all children in care were Aboriginal with ¾ being placed into non-Aboriginal homes. A 2008 Auditor General of Canada report found that Aboriginal children are still vastly overrepresented in care, citing that 51 % of all children in care in B.C. are Aboriginal, even though Aboriginal people comprise 8 % of B.C.’s population. “In order to educate the children properly

we must separate them from their families. Some people may say that this is hard but if we want to civilize them we must do that.” Hector Langevin - Public Works Minister of Canada, 1883

Q: If you have an aboriginal parent, are you considered aboriginal?

A: Depends. The goal of the Indian Act was to “breed the indian out of the savage”. There was a 2 generation cutoff that discriminates against females. As it exists today the Indian Act sets out two categories of Indian status that a person may possess:  6(1), which means “full status,” and 6(2), which is “half-status.” Those with 6(2) have “half status” because one of their parents does not have status.  Those with 6(1) – or full – status can pass on their status to their children.  Those with 6(2) – or half – status cannot, unless they have children with another person with 6(2) or 6(1); in effect, two “statuses” make a “full status.”

Q: Is status connected to purity of blood then?

A: No, underlying goal is the eventual erasure of the classification "Indian."

The idea was that as individual First Nations people became "civilized," they would lose their status and become "enfranchised" into Canadian society. In the past, a woman with status who married a non-status man would lose her status, and if someone with Indian status served in the Armed Forces, obtained a university degree or became a professional, such as a doctor or lawyer, they would automatically lose their status. If a woman with Indian status married a non-status person, she would lose her status. However, if a man with status married a woman without status, she would gain status.

Q: When did the Canadian Government acknowledge its part in the role

The Government of Canada finally recognized the impact residential school had on Aboriginal people in Canada in 2005.

The following is an excerpt from the Government’s Statement of Reconciliation:

“The Government of Canada acknowledges the role it played in the development and administration of these schools. Particularly to those individuals who experienced the tragedy of sexual and physical abuse at residential schools, and who have carried this burden believing that in some way they must be responsible, we wish to emphasize that what you experienced was not your fault and should never have happened. To those of you who suffered this tragedy at residential schools, we are deeply sorry.”