

Opening of the Gordie Howe International Bridge (August 18, 2026)

TEACHING GUIDE

What? The opening of a massive bridge between the United States and Canada.

Who? Canada and the United States, who built it together, and Gordie Howe, a legendary hockey player after whom the bridge is named.

Where? Between Windsor, Ontario, and Detroit, USA.

When? The opening took place on July 27, 2026, after more than ten years of construction.

Why is it important? Because it's the busiest land border in North America, and you can now cross it on foot or by bicycle.

For this activity, your goal will be to learn more about the Gordie Howe International Bridge.



OBJECTIVES

- Understand why a new bridge was built between Canada and the United States
- Locate the bridge on a map and identify the surrounding waterways
- Compare two structures based on their dimensions and era
- Calculate a difference and a ratio between two numbers
- Learn about the life of Gordie Howe and understand why the bridge is named after him



SUBJECTS

- **Geography / History**
 - Watercourses and the Great Lakes
 - Comparison of two bridges (then and now)
 - Portrait of a Canadian personality
- **Mathematics**
 - Subtraction (difference between two years)
 - Multiplication and ratios (proportions)
- **English**
 - Reading informational texts
 - Understanding details
 - Technical vocabulary (bridges, hockey)



COMPETENCIES

- Read and interpret a map
- Perform calculations (subtraction, proportions)
- Search for and interpret information
- Compare two elements according to common criteria
- Answer multiple-choice questions



DURATION

- Approximately 60 minutes



GETTING STARTED

- Ask the students if they know about hockey and Gordie Howe Bridge.
- Ask them if they know what a cable-stayed bridge is.
- Locate Windsor and Detroit on a map.
- Discuss: Why is a new bridge sometimes built next to an old one?
- Show a picture of the Gordie Howe Bridge

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STEP 1 — Connecting Canada and the United States. Exploration of the area around the bridge using Google Earth. Answers to four geography questions.

Q1 — The Detroit River

Q2 — Lake Huron and Lake Erie

Q3 — Zug Island

Q4 — Belle Isle

STEP 3 — Who Is This Mysterious Gordie Howe?

Reading of a biographical sketch and answers to four multiple-choice questions.

Q7 — In Saskatchewan

Q8 — Four

Q9 — 52 years old

Q10 — His two sons

STEP 2 — A New Bridge to the Rescue.

Comparison of the Ambassador Bridge and the Gordie Howe International Bridge. Completion of a table and answers to two math questions.

THE AMBASSADOR BRIDGE AND THE GORDIE-HOWE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE — COMPARISON		
	Ambassador Bridge	Gordie-Howe International Bridge
Year of Opening	1929	2026
Total Length	2,300 m	2,500 m
Span	560 m	853 m
Total Height	118 m	220 m

Q5 — 97 years

Q6 — Approximately 1.5 times



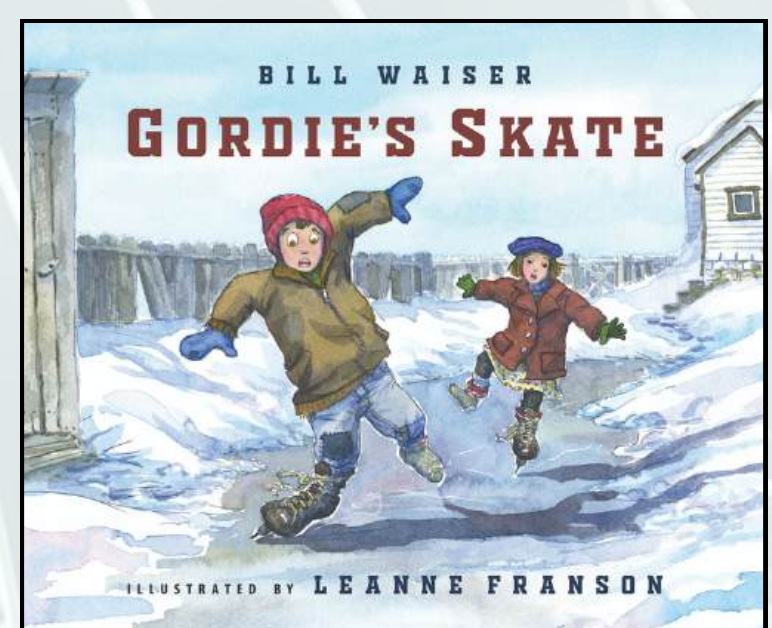
WRAPPING UP

- Conduct a group review of what the students have learned.
- Discuss what surprised them the most (the bridge, Gordie Howe, the numbers).
- Ask: Why is a bridge named after a person?



FURTHER EXPLORATION

 Bill Waiser & Leanne Franson. *Gordie's Skate*. ThistleDown Press



Q1 — 22 years (2026 – 2004)

Q2 — About 1.4 times ($1176 \div 853 \approx 1.4$)

Q3 — 13 years (2025 – 2012)

Q4 — Open response. Expected track: it holds another record — the height of its pylons (343 m), long the highest in the world, even if its span is not the longest.

Q5 — About 12 football fields ($1,176 \div 100 \approx 11.76$, rounded to 12)

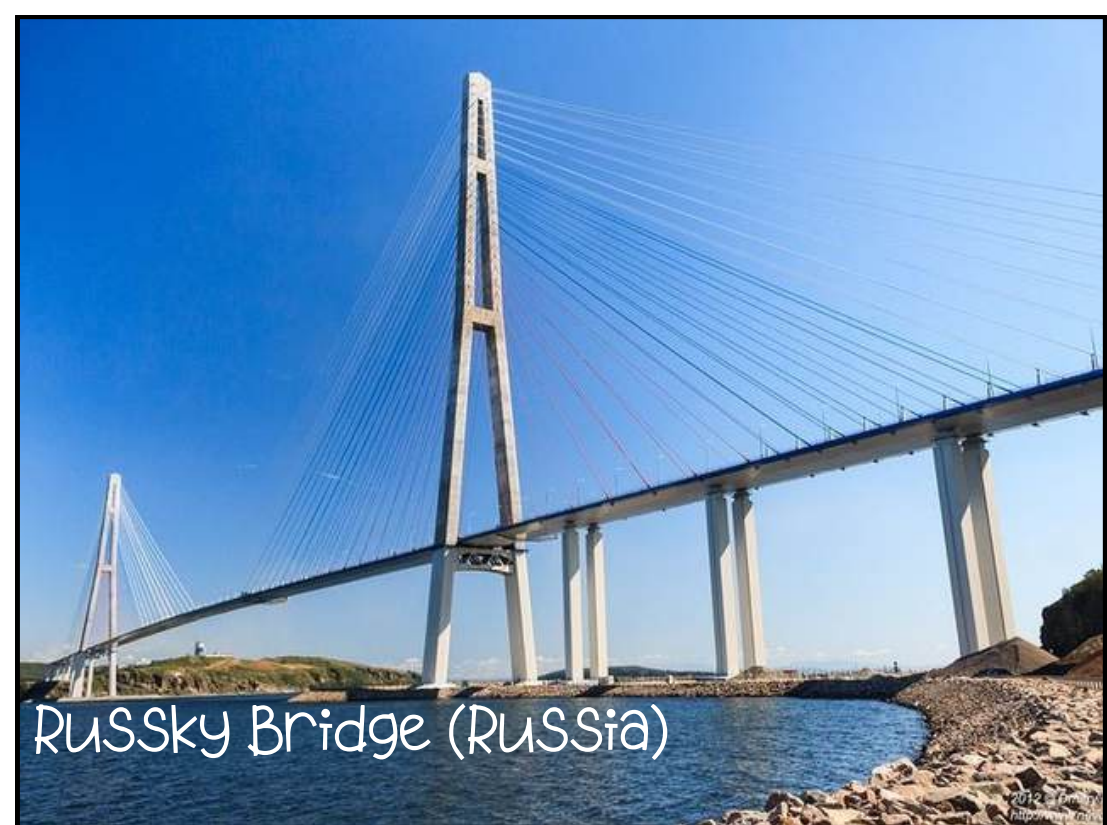
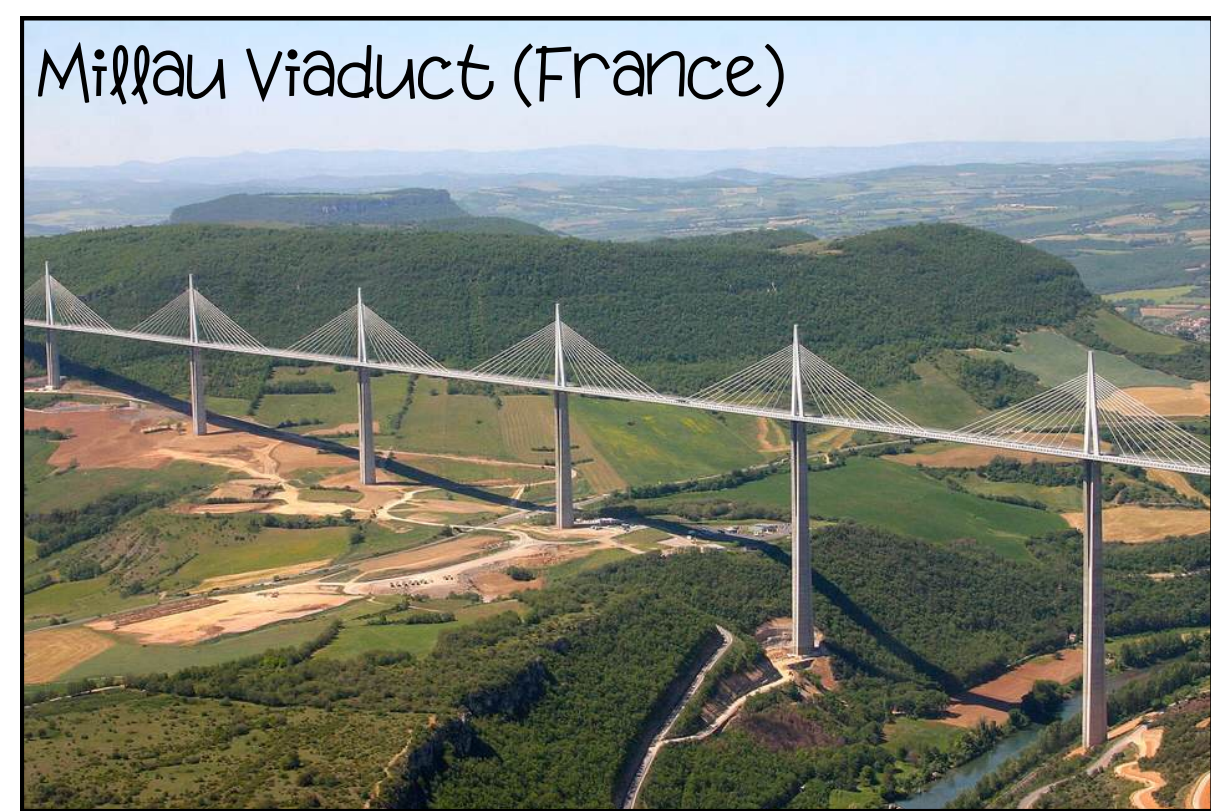
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Spectacular cable-stayed bridges!

The Gordie Howe International Bridge, which you just saw, is a **cable-stayed bridge**. This type of bridge is often used **when there are large distances to span over a river or a deep gorge**.

The Gordie Howe Bridge is impressive... but it's far from being the largest cable-stayed bridge in the world! Discover the true champions of cable-stayed bridges!



Bridge	Country	Year	Main span	Pylon height	Status
Changtai Bridge	China	2025	1,176 m	352 m	World record for main span
Russky Bridge	Russia	2012	1,104 m	321 m	Former record for main span (2012–2025)
Gordie Howe International Bridge	Canada / U.S.	2026	853 m	220 m	Longest in North America
Millau Viaduct	France	2004	342 m (by deck)	343 m	Not the longest — but for a long time considered the tallest bridge in the world

Q1 — Looking at the table, how many years separate the oldest bridge (Millau) from the newest (Gordie Howe)?

Q2 — Approximately how many times the span of the Changtai Bridge is that of the Gordie Howe International Bridge?

Q3 — For how many years did the Russky Bridge hold the world record for span before losing it to the Changtai Bridge?

Q4 — The Millau Viaduct does not have the longest span in the table. Why is it still considered a "record" bridge?

Q5 — The span of the Changtai Bridge (1,176 m) is roughly equivalent to how many football fields placed end to end? (A football field is approximately 100 m long.)