Yugambeh Nation

Name: _____

Date: _____

AGES 14 AND UP · MATHEMATICS AND HISTORY

Reverse Modelling

How reverse percentages work. If 40% of a population was lost, the survivors are 60% of the original. So: **original = survivors ÷ 0.6**. If 50% was lost, original = survivors ÷ 0.5.

Work backwards, step by step

Start with 2,500 and work up the table, one row at a time. Round to the nearest hundred.

When	What happened	Population before this
1850s	Survivor count (Gresty)	**2,500**
1840s–50s	Frontier war: about 40% lost	
1829–31	Second smallpox wave: about 50% lost	
1790s–1820s	Fertility gap: about 20% fewer	
1789	First great pox: about 50% lost	

Questions

1. What is your final estimate for the population before 1789?

2. The Reading estimates 9,000 to 15,000 people. How does your answer compare? What assumptions in the model could make the real number higher or lower?

3. Why does the Reading call the 1850s numbers “survivor” numbers, not “starting” numbers?

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