**Reasons for Confederation - Quick Summary**

During the early 1860s, politicians and citizens of British North America recognized six   
reasons for Confederation.

1. Political Deadlock   
Canada West and Canada East had an equal number of representatives in the Legislative Assembly. Each group took opposite sides in discussions, leading to political deadlocks. Few changes could be made due to the bitter conflicts between the two groups.   
  
2. American Expansion   
The people of British North America were worried about an American invasion. They felt that if they united, they would have a better chance of defending themselves and keeping their land.   
  
3. A railway from east to west was needed.   
Each colony had its own railway system at this time, however, they were all in financial difficulty and unable to expand. To add to the problems, the St. Lawrence River froze in the winter, halting transportation and the Gaspé mountains made it almost impossible to get goods to the Atlantic colonies.

4. Great Britain wanted to break some ties.   
Great Britain was beginning to wonder if New France was of any use to them. Only some politicians saw the raw materials and a market for manufactured goods to be of use to Great Britain. Others saw it as a place to move to if war erupted. Great Britain encouraged Confederation in order to make the Canada's more self-sufficient, but still loyal to Britain.   
  
5. Cancellation of the Reciprocity Treaty   
Between 1854 and 1865, there was a freetrade agreement between the British North American colonies and the United States. Very low tariffs (taxes) were added to agricultural products and raw materials when they were sold across the border. In 1865, the United States ended this free trade so the colonies   
thought that by joining together they would increase their prosperity and increase free trade amongst themselves.

6. Expansion to the West   
Canada West and Canada East began looking for more available arable land and land for settlement. Present-day Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta were still available. The two Canadas needed to expand but were required to act quickly as the threat of American expansion into these western lands was a pressing possibility.