

WE LEARN TOGETHER

*A resource guide for bringing Canadian
Indigenous culture into the classroom.*

AN INITIATIVE OF





Northern Quebec Cree Nation youth Group, at WE Day. Photo source: WE Archives.

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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This booklet is an introduction to WE Schools programming and resources, which will help you bring aspects of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture into your classroom. With feature articles on best practices for incorporating Indigenous materials into the classroom and the impact of the Sacred Circle leadership program, this guide provides tips for ways to change your classroom. In addition, we've provided lessons and resources from WE Schools programming on topics including reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples, creating inclusive community spaces, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Finally, we offer a reading list for your students and yourself. We are committed to honouring the rightful place of Indigenous Canadians in Canadian education. Please join us by respectfully incorporating First Nations, Métis and Inuit materials, practices and learnings into the classroom.

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All art in this resource is created by Karuna Dewan.

Dear Educator,

Welcome to the WE Movement. We are so glad you've joined us on our mission to inspire, educate and empower students to find their place in the world. At WE, we're committed to making this world a better place, but we can't do it alone. We need great educators to inspire the next generation of compassionate leaders.

When a senior First Nations chief visited our programming in Kenya, it wasn't the infrastructure and facilities that caught his attention. Rather, it was the leadership development, facilitation and programs that students were involved in. He challenged us to rethink the typical Canadian interventions for Indigenous youth. The need is not for a handout and charity programs, but a hand up that empowers and enables Indigenous youth to become the "heroes of their own stories."

We believe every student has the power to change the world. And we've learned one of the most effective ways to engage students is to help them see themselves in what they are learning. Whether that is the history they are studying, the music they are listening to, the issues affecting them or the books they are reading. We had our team put together this package to help you bring First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, history, music, issues and literature into your classroom. With articles on best practices and unique programming, lesson plans and resources, this package is designed to reach all students with a particular interest in Indigenous Canadian heritage. We believe all Canadians will be better connected to each other and to their country when we highlight the role and cultures of First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

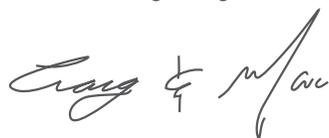
We are so grateful to our friends and champions who have supported the development of programming and resources for communities and educators that tell the stories of First Nations, Métis and Inuit. We would like to highlight the longstanding commitment of the Terence and Svea McKillen Foundation. Their guidance and mentorship has been unwavering and we are grateful for their support in developing this resource as a component of our programming.

We would like to thank Charlene Bearhead, Education Lead at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. As well, for their continued support and guidance, we would like to thank Lucie Santoro, Director of Administration and Media Relations and Dr. Carlana Lindeman, Education Program Director from Martin Family Initiative for their contributions.

This is an exciting time to be an educator. Tomorrow's greats are sitting right in front of you. Together, we have the power to reignite the fundamental purpose of education: moving students to want to learn, and preparing them with the life skills to better the world and forge their own paths to success.

Thank you for having the courage, heart and passion to bring WE into your class. We are honoured and encouraged to work with such a gifted and enthusiastic group.

We are stronger together,



Craig and Marc Kielburger
Co-Founders, WE



Best practices for teaching Indigenous culture, history and issues

In a climate of change, when Canada is ready to acknowledge its dark history of the treatment of Indigenous Peoples and seek reconciliation, teachers are poised to help create the biggest shift in national and generational mindset. "There is a lack of relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples," says Charlene Bearhead, Education Lead at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR). "Remember that First Nations, Métis and Inuit kids were in residential schools and were taught that their ways were less than, [while] non-Indigenous kids were also taught [and shown] that First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples were less than." She says that silence has "kept people apart."

But, Bearhead points out, "we have the opportunity and the evidence, the chance to change the history of this country now so that our grandchildren are looking at this period of time as the foundational shift."

With the diversity of the Indigenous peoples, as well as the cultural specificities and nuances that are spread among First Nations, Métis and Inuit across Canada, the following is a list of best practices to help teachers tackle the important learning and conversations in which students need to be immersed. Here, Bearhead offers advice on how to teach about First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, history and issues in classes made up of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

To teach the truth, we have to learn the truth.

"We all have a responsibility to teach the truth," says Bearhead. "It's one of the things we can all do." She recognizes that many teachers are afraid of getting it wrong, fear doing something disrespectful or inappropriate, or feel that they don't have the right to teach about topics like residential schools. "We teach about the Japanese internment but we do not have Japanese heritage," Bearhead reminds. "[Or about the] Holocaust, but we may not be Jewish."

It's all about relationships and connections.

Research, reach out and form relationships. Bearhead says that the question of how to connect with and make relationships with Indigenous Peoples is one of the most frequent she receives. "There are First Nations, Métis and Inuit people everywhere, and many school divisions have First Nations, Métis and Inuit facilitators or coordinators," she says. "But because the discussion hasn't been around, you are likely working with or know someone who [identifies] as First Nations, Métis and Inuit

There may not be a community, but there are people among us."

Bearhead further suggests that, especially when teaching about culture, it's important to bring in Indigenous storytellers, knowledge keepers, Elders, scientists and so on.

While that may not always be possible, there are resources teachers can access that have documented the history in ways that are authentic. The NTRC provides stories shared by survivors, films-and more related to residential schools.

Teach in authentic and respectful ways.

A key aspect of learning and teaching is to credit for where the teaching comes from and to trace where the teaching came from. "It's a basic protocol of asking Elders, communities, etc., 'Can I teach this and how do I teach this?'" says Bearhead. "If you've been to a powwow, you don't have to bring one of the dancers back to share it. You can talk to people and then come back and share what that experience was for you."



Absolutely ensure a safe and respectful environment.

Bearhead underscores that a safe space is a must for both Indigenous students—whose stories and contributions are “honoured as their truth”—and for non-Indigenous students—who may feel uneasy asking questions for fear of offending others. “The benefit is that that’s the opportunity for reconciliation and relationship-building right there,” says Bearhead.

Ask critical thinking questions.

Indigenous knowledge should not be restricted to Indigenous Peoples. All students can benefit from rich learning experiences incorporating learnings from Canada’s First Nations, Métis and Inuit. If teachers go through deep critical thinking with their students, the discussion is all the more rich.

Additional Resources

- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation – www.nctr.ca
- A Truthful Narrative: Bringing First Nations, Métis and Inuit contributions to the world into the K-12 curriculum – www.cca-ace.ca/education-canada/article/truthful-narrative
- Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) Survey on Teachers’ Perspectives on Aboriginal Education in Public Schools in Canada – www.ctf-fce.ca/Research-Library/CTF-Survey-Teachers-Perspectives-on-Aboriginal-Education-Summary-Report-web.pdf
- Canadian Museum for Human Rights – humanrights.ca
- The Martin Family Initiative – www.TheMFI.ca



Youth participating in Sacred Circle programming. Photo source: WE Archives.

Sacred Circle empowers Indigenous youth to lead change in their communities

In a Toronto coffee shop in the neighbourhood of Cabbagetown, where the WE Movement is headquartered, Talitha Tolles, 24, and Mischa Hamara, 33, talk about their experiences as facilitators of WE's Sacred Circle program.

"From my perspective, growing up with Indigenous teachings provides such a sense of community," says Tolles, who is Métis. "Providing programming just for Indigenous groups helps reinforce the sense of community and offers pride. Working with young people and sharing my culture. Working with so many different First Nations, Métis and Inuit people who want to make a difference continues to inspire me and motivate me daily."

Offered since 2009, Sacred Circle aims to educate and empower Indigenous youth between the ages of 10 and 18, whom identify as having First Nations, Métis and Inuit ancestry whether they are on-reserve, off-reserve, rural, urban, or non Status—to explore a leadership role in their community. The program philosophy is centred on cultural elements such as the Seven Grandfather Teachings and the medicine wheel as a guide. Woven throughout is WE's theory of change that emphasizes issues education, skills development and action planning.

As facilitators of the program—four years for Tolles and seven for Hamara—they have led the delivery of the three-day program across Canada.

"We are not experts in Indigenous education and culture," says Hamara, underscoring that he and Tolles serve as facilitators not leaders of these discussions and conversations by delivering the program in partnership with Indigenous People. Schools and community members create their own connections with Elders and other leaders to enhance cultural aspects of Sacred Circle. "We're not there to drive the content, but to facilitate the process through which young people can learn from each other. It's what makes it comfortable for me to do this."

He says when the group consists of only indigenous youth, they recognize the similarities in challenges they are experiencing. "It creates a safe space, an atmosphere of comfort for youth to share their life experiences, especially when talking about root causes," says Hamara.

A non-Indigenous Canadian, Hamara acknowledges that he needs to build trust and ensure that youth understand he's not there to "impose my thoughts and ideas," and approaches each session with a sense of curiosity and a willingness to learn. "We ask young people to be vulnerable," says Tolles, "and the response we see is different for each individual."

The program is delivered through experiential activities and, allowing youth to help drive the content of the program based on their life experiences, and through storytelling.

"Action planning resonates, as it gives them a sense of purpose in shaping their communities," says Tolles. "When talking about leadership, we use Indigenous examples—including my own story that I share by establishing my Métis identity and talking about the obstacles I've overcome, which motivates them and let's them know that they too can make a difference."

80% OF STUDENTS FEEL
CONNECTED
TO THE **POSITIVE**
ROLE MODELS IN THEIR
COMMUNITY



77% are more
AWARE 
of **SUPPORT SYSTEMS**
available to assist
them in their **FUTURE**

72% PLAN TO INCREASE THEIR
INVOLVEMENT
IN THEIR
COMMUNITY



74% FEEL AN INCREASED
CONNECTION
TO THEIR **COMMUNITY**
AND **CULTURE** 

Outcomes Indigenous youth experienced after participating in Sacred Circle programming, 2013 survey.

The framework for the Sacred Circle program is focused on two timeless principles: the Seven Teachings (honesty, humility, truth, wisdom, love, respect and bravery) and Dr. Martin Brokenleg's Circle of Courage (belonging, mastery, independence and generosity). These universal teachings empower everyone to act locally and globally. The Sacred Circle program aims to use these principles as a lens to explore and develop leadership with students, in the following ways:

- Building trust and community (*belonging*)
- Communication and contribution (*mastery*)
- Exploring independence and leadership (*independence*)
- Taking action and celebrating (*generosity*)

WE's Theory of Change

- Issues Education – Identify and explore issues that affect communities, with a deeper dive on root causes.
- Skills Development – Identify personal strengths, develop transferable leadership skills, critical thinking and communication skills, and learn how to apply them to social change.
- Action Planning – Provide mentorship, tools and tangible steps for youth to build detailed and realistic action plans that help connect their strengths and skills to enacting change on issues.

Spotlight on a Sacred Circle speaker

Talitha Tolles joined WE's leadership team in 2013 as an Indigenous programming facilitator. Focusing on WE's signature program Sacred Circle, she toured Canada from coast to coast meeting Indigenous youth of all nations, ages and backgrounds. During this time, she also had the opportunity to spread awareness of Indigenous history, tradition and culture through the WE Stand Together campaign. Tolles' work has been invaluable to WE, the youth who have participated in the programs and to Tolles' herself. "I've met the most beautiful people who have shared their experiences with me and taught me what it means to be a young, confident, resilient Indigenous woman. Canada's Indigenous Peoples have so much to teach us and it's time for all Canadians to listen."

All leadership programs are scalable and can be facilitated over one or multiple days.

Contact us at weschools@we.org for more information on adapting this program to your school or group's schedule.

"IT'S EXCITING TO SEE THAT EACH KID WALKS AWAY KNOWING THAT EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE A LEADER, NO MATTER THEIR RACE AND AGE"

– Talitha Tolles



Talitha Tolles speaking at WE Day Toronto. Photo source: WE Archives.

Inspiring youth to lead change

In partnership with the Cree School Board and with the support of the Terence and Svea McKillen Foundation, WE Schools programming has been implemented into nine Cree schools located across the vast James Bay region of northern Quebec. Here are examples of Cree youth who are the heroes of their own stories.

Students from the Waapihtiwewan Eeyou School participated in WE Create Change, a WE Schools campaign that encourages youth to collect coins to help families in developing communities supported through Free The Children's WE Villages model. Students chose to support the Water Pillar and raised \$150, enough to provide six people with access to a source of clean water for life.

After reading Ishmael Beah's novel *A Long Way Gone* about the war in Sierra Leone, students from the Maquatua Eeyou Community School decided to raise funds to support the WE Villages Education Pillar in Sierra Leone. With an initial goal of \$1,000, students hosted a school dance, organized a bonfire by the waterside, held bake sales and sold tie-dye scarves that the students made. During these fundraisers, students spread the word and their knowledge by explaining the effects of the war to their peers and other members of the community. Their hard work was rewarded when they surpassed their goal.

Wemindji School students spent several months fundraising to take a ME to WE Trip to Nicaragua. Through bake sales, take outs, penny socials, letter writing and securing sponsorships from local business and the Cree Nation of Wemindji, students raised \$90,000. Fifteen Cree youth and five of their teachers travelled to Nicaragua and worked in the rural community of El Trapiche as part of a local construction crew. They helped to build a garden behind the preschool to provide nutritious snacks for students. The group learned about education on a global scale as well as the effects from a lack of education. They also participated in various workshops that explored the cultural similarities and differences between their community and communities in Nicaragua, including the history of colonialism in Nicaragua.

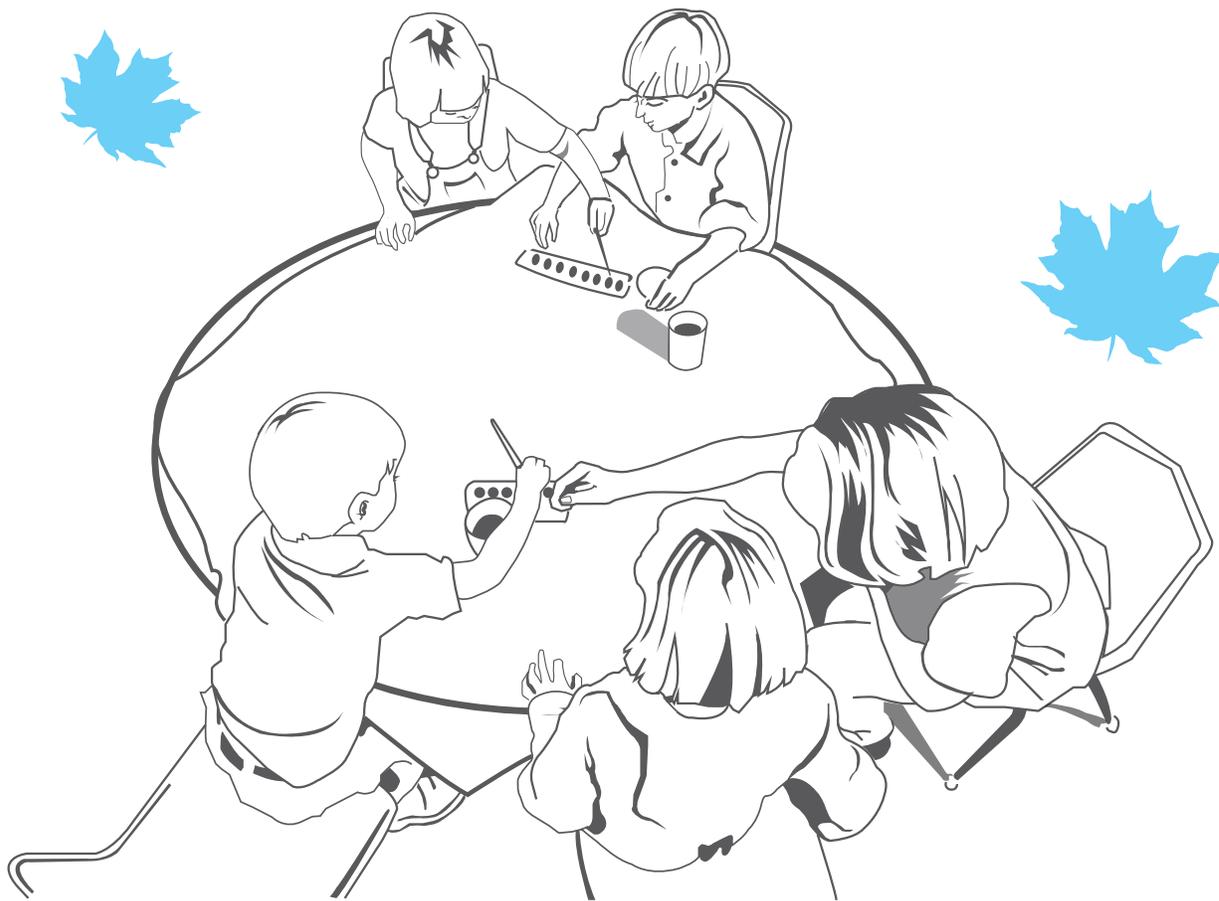


Cree students participating in WE Schools programming. Photo source: WE Archives.



Reconciliation

of Indigenous and non-Indigenous People



To celebrate Canada's 150th birthday, we're reflecting on our country's past and shaping our vision for its future by bringing experiential service-learning into classrooms and empowering students to become active local, national and global citizens. As a part of our lesson packages, teachers are invited to explore the ways in which students can apply their knowledge of issues that are important to Canada.

WE Learn Together

WORDS WITH MEANING

THEME: Reconciliation

SUBJECT: English

GRADE LEVEL: Grades 7 to 8

WE LEARNING FRAMEWORK SKILLS:



LESSON PACKAGE OVERVIEW:

Students will begin their learning with a study of how the use of language affects our understanding of people and events. Students will then investigate the concept of perspective as it relates to storytelling by analyzing Canadian Indigenous short stories. The study is intensified as students analyze the effects of using positive and negative language. Students will explore the implications of using the wrong words at the wrong time in order to create a language guide for individuals to follow as they pledge to become more thoughtful and considerate individuals, both with their words and actions.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

- ▶ How can we use language in a way that helps us to heal and understand each other as we create the path toward reconciliation?

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:

Students will be able to:

- Investigate and express ideas noting the importance of word choice and connotation
- Experiment with language, form, techniques and elements
- Create original texts focused on the topic of reconciliation
- Action plan and take action on a current issue to create awareness within local and national communities

WORD BANK

Characters—the people who appear in a story

Conflict—a struggle of opposing forces in a story

Connotation—the positive and/or negative associations a word has beyond its literal meaning

Context—the words and sentences that surround a word or phrase and affect how it's understood

Denotation—the dictionary definition of a word

Descriptive language—language that helps create a detailed image of a person, place or object

Diction—someone's style of speech and language choice

Elements (of the short story)—five features that are common to short stories

Ethical—morally good or correct

Equitable—fair or just

Framing/slant—the personal perspective or point of view in a piece of writing or speech

Impact—a positive or negative effect

Inclusive language—words and expressions that apply to all people, regardless of race, gender, sexuality or disability without prejudice or discrimination

Language—the system of words and meanings people use to communicate

Nicknames—informal names people use to show familiarity with one another

Perspective—the point of view of the person narrating a story

Plot—the events that happen in a story

Semantics—the study of the meaning of words and language

Setting—the physical location in which a story takes place

Theme—the topic or larger idea expressed by a story

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Computer with Internet connection, speakers, projector and screen
- Printed copies of the following short stories (enough that each student will have one short story):
- "Bear Paws", by Karen McBride: <http://goo.gl/i86RJw>
- "The Frog Girl", by Trevor Jang: <http://goo.gl/u2lfcp>
- "Changes", by Sarina Bouvier: <http://goo.gl/4u4UZ4>
- "Incomplete", by Eliza Christie: <http://goo.gl/p6gDCU>

Suggested Assessment for Learning:

You know your students best—their learning styles and preferences, skill levels, and knowledge. You are also best positioned to anticipate the habits of mind that will make this lesson package successful.

In this lesson package, teaching strategies include collaborative group work, class discussion, independent reflection and suggestions for demonstration of learning include written reflection, exit tickets and student-generated discussion. Please make any accommodations or modifications that serve your students.

Lesson 1:

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE LANGUAGE

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

Investigate and Learn

1. Show students the image from the following site: goo.gl/CFAHFa.
2. Tell students that dihydrogen monoxide is a chemical that is responsible for the deaths of many people, and is often found in poisonous products like bleach. Despite those facts, this chemical is often found in food products and juice boxes given to children.
3. Ask students, now that they have seen this image and they have these facts, will they be more concerned about the amount of dihydrogen monoxide they consume?
4. Then tell them that dihydrogen monoxide is the chemical name for water (H₂O) and that the words you use and the way in which you frame them can have a profound impact on your audience. This is called "connotation."
5. Ask students how words can be used in positive ways. How would the advertiser of a product want to describe something? How would a movie critic describe a movie they didn't like? What other times might a writer want to choose words to fit a certain tone?
6. Show students the following video about connotation and denotation goo.gl/rrY2nX.
7. Tell students that word choice is very important, because even words that are synonyms can take on different meanings depending on the context. Explain that when writers are choosing a word, they aren't just looking for its direct meaning, but also its indirect meaning.
8. Create a chart on the board with two headings: positive and negative. As a class, come up with a list of words with the same denotations as the following but opposite connotations. Write them on the chart. If they are having trouble thinking of words, refer them to a thesaurus:
 - Bright
 - Cheerful
 - Spacious
 - Smart
 - Clean
9. Next, on the same chart, come up with words with the same denotation but the opposite connotation as the following:
 - Cluttered
 - Shy
 - Boring
 - Brash
 - Brazen
10. Break the class into four groups. Two groups will focus on finding positive descriptions and two groups will use negative descriptions.
11. Ask groups to describe the classroom that they're in, as accurately as they can, using only positive or negative terms. The goal here is not to lie, but to accurately describe things as negatively or positively as they can. Have them try to use as many senses as possible to describe the room.
12. When the students are done, have them share their responses with the class. If the students do well, the room being described should not sound identical at all, despite being the same room.
13. Ask students which room they would rather work in. What about the negative language really set the scene? What about the positive language?
14. Ask: Was it easier for you to come up with positive or negative examples? Were some people better at giving negative examples, and some better at positive examples? Why do you think one might be easier than the other? Discuss with students. Lead them to understand that personal experiences will often shift the way in which we use language, whether it's through experiences or the media we consume.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING SUGGESTION: Now that students have an understanding of positive and negative language, have them describe one room in their house twice, once using positive terms and the second time using negative ones. Each description should be one paragraph long. Like with the classroom, the goal is to be as accurate as possible in their descriptions, but to change the tone of the piece using descriptive language.

15. After the descriptions, have students briefly reflect on the process:
- How did you enjoy the process of writing from both perspectives?
 - Was it easier to write positively or negatively?

Lesson 2:

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE THROUGH STORIES

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

1. Remind students that in the previous lessons they looked at the power of language. The words we use to describe a place or a person can have a profound impact on how we view that place or person, or even on how that person views him or herself. In this lesson, students will examine the power words have in telling a story and how short stories are constructed.
2. Ask students: What elements do we expect to see in a story? Are there parts that are universal to all stories? Generate discussion and ask students to offer their responses.
3. Tell students that while there are many elements that stories have in common, there are five to focus on: plot, conflict, character, setting and theme. Show students the following video about the five elements of a short story: goo.gl/KdKIMO. Explain to students that all of these elements are important. Determine how effective the story is and will show the style of the author.
4. Explain that theme is important and is often linked to the culture of a writer. The types of stories someone from the United States would write, for instance, might be focused on elements closely connected to their history, with an emphasis on individual liberties, the power of rebellion and the cultural "melting pot." A Canadian writer, on the other hand, might tell stories connected to Canadian history, with an emphasis on cooperation, the land and the cultural "mosaic." This is because writers often tell stories that reflect the realities in which they grew up.
5. Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group a different element of the short story: plot, character, conflict, theme and setting. Show students the following Ojibway short story about the creation of the world: youtu.be/cX4GJTtSigY.
6. Assign each group one of the following four stories: *Bear Paws*, *The Frog Girl*, *Changes*, *Incomplete*. As they read, ask them to look for and record the common elements in a story:
 - Who or what is the main character?
 - What is the setting?
 - What is the kind of conflict? (Person versus person? Person versus nature? Person versus self?)
 - What is the plot?
 - What is the theme?
 - What words did the author use to affect the mood of the story?

7. After students are done reading the story, have them compare notes with their group members.

ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING SUGGESTION: Ask students what we can learn about a culture by reading stories from that culture. What can the themes expressed in the stories of a culture tell us about that culture? Discuss with the class and ask students to share their answers.

8. Divide the class into new groups made up of students who read different stories. Tell students that the four stories were all award-winning pieces written by young Indigenous Canadians, ranging in age from 16 to 25.
9. Ask the students to compare notes. What were the stories about? Did the stories have any common themes or concepts? How were the stories different? What did you learn about First Nations, Métis and Inuit People from reading these stories? Ask students to discuss their answers to these questions and share them with the class.

ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING SUGGESTION: Ask students to think back to the first lesson about the use of language. In a journal entry, ask students to reflect on the ways language was used in the stories they read and the ways in which language is used to describe Indigenous people in general. What changes will the students make to ensure that the language they use to describe others will always be respectful? What happens as a result of using positive language to describe others? How can they use positive language as a way of creating positive change in the world?

Lesson 3:

WORDS THAT HURT

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

1. Explain that nicknames exist because we think we're being funny or endearing. The words we use often have more power than we realize and can change the way the people we're describing view themselves or are viewed by other people.
2. Remind students about the power of language, as discussed in the last lesson. Through that lesson, they were able to use the power of language to shape the way in which they saw their classroom.

ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING SUGGESTION: Ask students what happens if we use the power of descriptive language to negatively describe people in the same way that we would negatively describe a physical object? Students will share their answers and experiences with the class. This discussion could very easily get personal and tense. Please tread carefully and watch the reactions of students in the room.

3. Explain that the language we use to describe each other can have a powerful effect. In the same way that describing a classroom changes the way we think about that room, describing a person in a negative way can make that person feel negatively about themselves and others.
4. Explain that the effects of negative nicknames often go unnoticed. Some negative language is even built into our culture. There are professional sports teams that use terms and cheers that draw on stereotypes from Indigenous cultures. In media, Indigenous Peoples are often depicted as having addiction issues, or being involved with gangs. When the media depicts people this way, it can not only change the way other people think of Indigenous Peoples, but it can also change the way Indigenous Peoples feel about themselves.
5. In recent years, there has been a greater effort by most Canadians to find ways to communicate in more inclusive ways that are respectful of diversity. However, many people still find that acceptance is an uphill battle and much more work must be done before Canadians can consider themselves a part of a truly inclusive society.
6. In groups of four or five, have students brainstorm how they would like to be described. What positive language would you use to describe yourself or your friends? What language would hurt you if it was used to describe you? How can we make sure that the language we use to describe someone is not hurtful?
7. Have groups share their responses with the class. Try to lead students to the understanding that it is important to find words that those being described are comfortable with. The only way to do that is to engage in a conversation with them.

Lesson 4:

USING THE RIGHT WORDS, THE RIGHT WAY

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

1. In the previous three lessons students have learned about the powerful impact of language. Language shapes the way that people see themselves and the world around them and can sometimes change the way people see themselves. Language can work in a subtle way. Words that have a technically correct denotation can have a devastatingly negative connotation. It's because of that power that we need to be very careful about the words we choose to use.
2. Ask students: "Can we hurt someone with our words without meaning to do so?" Explain that language isn't always used to do harm but the effect may be harmful. Often, people who otherwise mean well can use language that ends up hurting others and are unaware of the impacts.
3. Terminology that we use when discussing individual groups is sometimes potentially very hurtful, depending on the connotation and the context in which the words are used.
4. Show the following web page to students: goo.gl/JmnDj. As a class, carefully discuss the terms listed on the page and the reasons why they might be considered offensive.

EDUCATOR'S NOTE: Be very careful to explain the implications behind the terminology found here and why it might be considered offensive. In particular, examine the "Other general guidelines" near the bottom of the page. Rushing through this particular discussion could have a negative effect.

5. On the board, create a chart with three columns: Avoid, Why, and Instead. Split the class into six groups. In the "Avoid" column, write the six following terms.
 1. Canada's Indigenous Peoples
 2. Huts, camps
 3. Tribe
 4. Costume
 5. Rituals, rites
 6. Scattered, roaming
6. Assign each of the six groups one of the above terms and have that group consider why the term should be avoided (Why column) and what term with a more positive connotation could be used in its place (Instead column). When completed, have each group fill out the chart on the board with their responses and then discuss them as a class.

Action Plan

7. Ask students: Is there a “golden rule” that could be used to guide people when using language so that they don’t accidentally hurt other people? Brainstorm as a class and record workable answers on the board. Do not erase the results of the chart created in the brainstorm section.
8. Redistribute the class into new groups, made up of at least one member of each of the original six groups. Ask each group to create a poster, asking people to think carefully about the language they use when talking about others. That poster should include the chart that the class has created, as well as a “golden rule” that the group can agree upon. The golden rule should be a rule that people could keep in mind when choosing inclusive language and could guide them in choosing better language.

Take Action

9. When the posters are complete, share them with other classrooms around the school and invite other teachers to put them up on their walls as a guide for their students.

Lesson 5:

USING LANGUAGE FOR GOOD

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

1. Now that students have taken action, take it a step further and invite your entire school to celebrate inclusive language.
 - Invite members of your school to share their messages of inclusive language.
 - Designate one wall in the school to collect people’s responses to the posters or their messages about inclusive language. Take photos of the responses.
 - Encourage students to challenge errors found in textbooks, literature and the media regarding the misuse of phrases and ideas.
 - Invite interested students to each reflect on the project and produce a version of their work that can be printed.
2. After the posters have been up for about a week, ask the class to reflect on what effect the posters have had on the school community. Provide students with the following questions:
 - How have people reacted to the posters?
 - Do you notice any changes in the way people think about the language they use?
 - Have you changed the way you use language?
 - How can language be used as a force for good in peoples’ lives?
3. Document the success of the event by sharing your accomplishments with others (e.g., through your school’s newsletter, social media or with another class).

4. Challenge those you shared with to learn about and take action on an issue that will help raise awareness about reconciliation efforts. Challenge them to try one or both of the following to further commit to being a part of moving toward reconciliation:
 - Take the WE Are Canada Pledge. If interested, visit WE.ca for more information and to take the pledge.
 - Start the WE Stand Together campaign. Incorporate the sharing of statistics related to reconciliation on social media, in the school newsletter and in school announcements.

Report and Celebrate

REFLECT:

5. As a class, reflect on the learnings and experiences from the Action Plan and Take Action sections. Think about the measurable goals that were set for the Take Action section and, using the evidence collected, reflect on how well these goals were achieved through the action.
6. Record the goals on the front board and ask students to reflect through a written, verbal or visual response. Within the reflection, students should link the evidence collected in the Take Action section and directly align this to the measurable goal. Does this evidence demonstrate success?
7. Ask students to reflect further to understand the deeper impact of the Take Action section and to consider how they can ensure their efforts have lasting impacts:
 - How will we ensure that our efforts will continue into next year?
 - How can we check that our efforts to use language to heal and create inclusive communities has changed our actions that show respect for others?
 - How will we continue to seek feedback from others about ways we can show respect through language toward all community members, regardless of cultural backgrounds?
 - How does the use and promotion of positive language build inclusiveness within a community?
8. Through the local action implemented by students and the process of reflection, students should understand the importance of kindness and the impact of words.
9. Ask students to consider if their efforts connected to these lessons are just applicable to their community. Is the use and misuse of language when referring to First Nations, Métis and Inuit People a local issue or could it extend to other communities in Canada and around the world?
10. Encourage students to think about how as an individual they are able to make their school community kinder and inclusive for all people.
11. Ask students: As Canadians and citizens of the world, how can you share these lessons with others globally, now and in the future?

WE Learn Together

RECONCILIATION THROUGH MUSIC—EXPRESSION, SHARING, REFLECTING

THEME: Reconciliation

SUBJECT: Music

GRADE LEVEL: Grades 9 to 12

WE LEARNING FRAMEWORK SKILLS:



LESSON PACKAGE OVERVIEW:

Students will gain an understanding of how music is used to work toward reconciliation, first by comparing and contrasting traditional and contemporary First Nations powwow music and Inuit throat singing, then by researching international examples of music. They will consider the cultural influences and significance of contemporary music and how it works toward reconciliation.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

- ▶ How is reconciliation achieved through traditional and contemporary musical expression?

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:

Students will:

- Understand how First Nations and Inuit contemporary musicians are using music for reconciliation by communicating the meaning of specific art forms
- Understand the impact of music to influence and encourage change
- Research how examples of cultural traditions, including music, are used to help people with reconciliation
- Use advocacy to increase awareness of how music helps people move toward reconciliation by making connections between the cognitive and affective domains
- Explore the various ways First Nations and Inuit People share their thoughts and ideas through customary celebrations
- Develop artistic, technical and critical skills as they explore musical expression
- Recognize that active participation in the arts is essential to building culture and expressing and exploring personal identity, especially with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit People

WORD BANK

First Nation—An Indigenous Canadian community officially recognized as an administrative unit by the federal government or functioning as such without official status

Indigenous—Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native

Inuit—The members of an Indigenous People of northern Canada and parts of Greenland and Alaska

Powwow—A First Nation ceremony involving feasting and dancing

Reconciliation—The restoration of friendly relations: the action of making one view or belief compatible with another

Renaissance—A revival of or renewed interest in something

Throat singing—A friendly competition or game between two women who are facing each other. One woman begins with short rhythmic patterns of husky chanting and low grunting, made through inhalations and exhalations. The second woman layers another rhythmic pattern on top. The two women continue trying to outlast the other. A single rendition usually lasts between one and three minutes.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Computer with Internet capabilities, speakers, projector and screen
- Library or computer lab access
- *Art and Trauma in Africa: Representations of Reconciliation in Music, Visual Arts, Literature and Film* Edited by: Lizelle Bisschoff, Stefanie van de Peer

Suggested Assessment for Learning:

You know your students best—their learning styles and preferences, skill levels, and knowledge. You are also best positioned to anticipate the habits of mind that will make this lesson package successful.

In this lesson package, teaching strategies include collaborative group work, class discussion and independent reflection, and suggestions for demonstration of learning include written reflection, exit tickets and student-generated discussion. Please make any accommodations or modifications that serve your students.

Lesson 1:

RECONCILIATION THROUGH MUSIC IN CANADA

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

Investigate and Learn

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING:

On reconciliation, ask students:

- What is reconciliation?
- What does it mean to you?
- What are some examples of reasons for reconciliation (e.g., reconciliation from Indian Residential Schools, reconciliation from Apartheid in South Africa, etc.)?
- What does it mean to people in your community, in your country or around the world?

1. Tell students: Recently, Indigenous musicians have received recognition in Canada for their unique styles that mix traditional and contemporary music. A trio of DJs from Ottawa named A Tribe Called Red (image: i.huffpost.com/gen/1238928/images/o-A-TRIBE-CALLED-RED-facebook.jpg) won the 2014 Juno Award for breakthrough group of the year for their powwow step music. Additionally, throat singer Tanya Tagaq (image: theloop.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/tanya_tagaq.jpg) from Cambridge Bay (Ikaluktuutiak), Nunavut, won the 2014 Polaris Music Prize, which honours, celebrates and rewards creativity and diversity in Canadian recorded music. Today we will listen to traditional powwow, powwow step, traditional throat singing and solo throat singing to compare and contrast their musical elements, dynamics and styles.

EDUCATOR'S NOTE: The next section of the lesson asks students to listen to different types of First Nations and Inuit music, both traditional and modern. To save time, consider using the jigsaw instructional method or divide students into groups and have them report back to the class.

2. Introduce students to powwow music. Tell students that traditionally, powwow music is performed only at powwows, a ceremony where food, music and dancing are shared. Each First Nation has their own distinct traditions. However, some common threads are found throughout. Four to 12 men or women sit in a circle around a large bass drum. The musicians strike the drum in unison in fixed rhythmic patterns while they sing songs that are initiated by one of them. Pitch

levels fall throughout the song, which last about five minutes. In some First Nations, women's participation was traditionally restricted to supportive roles. They would stand in a circle behind the men and sing an octave higher than the men.

3. Divide the class into three groups and watch and listen to the top five songs on "Top 5 songs to get you in the mood for the powwow trail": www.bandmine.com/news/95/top_5_songs_to_get_you_in_the_mood_for_the_powwow_trail/46022.
(Assign one of the music examples to each group and give the link and questions. Note: any of the five videos will work as an example. However, the third example is only audio and less traditional in style. The fourth and fifth examples show how a female supports the music.)

EDUCATOR'S NOTE: This exercise connects/links to prior knowledge of music concepts. Ask students:

- a. Describe what you saw and heard.
- b. What were the instrument(s) used?
- c. How did singing complement the instrument(s)?
- d. What was done in unison?
- e. What was performed individually?
- f. Describe the tempo, rhythm, dynamic and pitch.

4. Now introduce students to the music of A Tribe Called Red. Show students a performance of A Tribe Called Red joined by a hoop dancer from CBC's Studio Q: youtube.com/watch?v=mEZIUVFkHyk.

Ask students:

- a. Describe what you saw and heard.
- b. What were the instrument(s) used?
- c. Describe the tempo, rhythm, dynamic and pitch.
- d. What were the similarities between traditional powwow music and A Tribe Called Red's "The Road"?
- e. What music styles did the DJs' mix incorporate?

5. Show students CBC's The National's "Only in Canada" segment on A Tribe Called Red: youtube.com/watch?v=zOS3wP-8VFW.
6. Take chart paper and cut it into eight pieces for students to write down their answers. Assign three of the following questions per group and ask them to record their responses on each piece of paper. Once completed, re-assemble the chart for comparison discussion.
 - a. Who are A Tribe Called Red?
 - b. What do they want people to get from listening to their music?
 - c. What started electric powwow?
 - d. Why did they want to create a space for urban Aboriginals?
 - e. How do they push musical boundaries?
 - f. How do they want to change how First Nations cultures are seen?
 - g. How does the "music speak for them"?
 - h. Has your perspective of First Nations powwow music changed? Explain.

7. Introduce students to traditional Inuit throat singing. Throat singing is a friendly competition or game between two women who are facing each other. One woman begins with short rhythmic patterns of husky chanting and low grunting, made through inhalations and exhalations. The second woman layers another rhythmic pattern on top. The two women continue trying to outlast the other. A single rendition usually lasts between one and three minutes.

Share an example with students "Inuit Throat Singing" icor.ottawainuitchildrens.com/node/25.

Ask students:

- Describe what you saw and heard.
- What were the instrument(s) used?
- What was done in unison?
- What was performed individually?
- Describe the tempo, rhythm, dynamic and pitch.

8. Introduce students to Tanya Tagaq. Play a song from Tagaq's album "Animism," music.cbc.ca/#!/blogs/2014/5/FirstPlay-Tanya-Tagaq-Animism. (Note: "Umingmak" and "Rabbit" are good example tracks to share with students.)

Ask students:

- Describe what you heard.
- How did Tanya Tagaq use her voice and breathing?
- What instruments accompanied Tagaq's throat singing?
- Why do you think these instruments were chosen?
- How do they complement and enhance Tagaq's throat singing?
- Describe the tempo, rhythm, dynamic and pitch.
- What other music styles does Tagaq incorporate?
- What were the similarities between traditional throat singing and Tagaq's version?
- How has Tagaq changed throat singing?
- In an interview about her music, Tagaq said "I like to live in a world that's not supposed to be." How does this come through in her music?
- Has your perspective of Inuit throat singing changed?

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING: After each group completes their set of questions have students answer the question: How can this example of either traditional or contemporary music work toward reconciliation efforts taking place here in Canada?

Students may consider:

- What is the message in the music?
- What emotions does the music evoke?
- Why do you think it can help restore relationships?
- Why is music a more effective tool than another medium (e.g., book or movie)?



ENRICHMENT:

Research and select one example of music in which the theme of reconciliation plays a role. Ask students to explain, orally or in writing, how the example is a part of a social movement that is working toward reconciliation. As with the contemporary First Nations powwow and Inuit solo throat singing examples shared, the example of music students select should honour traditional music in a new way. The example should be a recorded piece that can be shared with the class and can be from anywhere in the world. If necessary, provide students with a few examples, which may include but are not limited to the following:

- Hip hop lyrics as a tool for conflict resolution in the Niger Delta
- Moroccan music festivals as local art against global terrorism
- Jazz, folk, R&B and gospel during the American civil rights movement

Provide students time to research and select their example and write the explanation that links the example of music to reconciliation.

Have students share and describe their examples of reconciliation through music.

Lesson 2:

DISCOVERING RECONCILIATION THROUGH MUSIC AROUND THE WORLD

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

Action Plan

- Begin the next class by having students reflect on their learning from the previous lessons. Return to the essential question. Ask students: How is reconciliation achieved through musical expression, both traditional and contemporary? Provide students with five to seven minutes to practise think-pair-share.
- Ask students if they would like to further commit to being a part of moving toward reconciliation by taking the WE Are Canada Pledge. If students are interested, visit WE.ca for more information and to take the pledge.
- Tell students that they will have the opportunity to celebrate and raise awareness of traditional and contemporary music by creating and implementing an advocacy-based action plan for educating others about an issue to increase visibility and follow up with an action that focuses on enacting change.
- Ask students to brainstorm ideas for possible actions they may take as a class to promote reconciliation through an advocacy-based action. Record ideas on the front board or on chart paper.

5. The following example actions are focused on reconciliation in Canada, but the actions students take may be globally focused. Whenever possible, invite groups from the wider community. Possible actions may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Organize a dance that features contemporary Indigenous music.
 - b. Create a musical piece that fuses together traditional Indigenous music with contemporary music.
6. As a class, discuss the pros and cons of each action, narrow down the choices and select one action for the class to commit to. Complete or select multiple actions for groups to take action on.
7. Once an action has been selected, set goals for the action. Create a timeline with roles and responsibilities.

EDUCATOR'S NOTE: Remember to collect evidence and data of the action to use later. Collecting evidence and data also works as in-the-moment reflection, ensuring students are actively participating. Before the action takes place, review the goals set earlier and find evidence that students may collect to help them measure whether they met the goals or not. Evidence may be quantitative or qualitative.

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING: Have students reflect on their learning and experiences. In a written, verbal or conversational reflection response, ask students to use specific examples to answer the essential question: How is reconciliation achieved through musical expression, both traditional and contemporary? Encourage students to go deeper by using the following questions:

- a. Using music as the method of reconciliation, what components of powwow step or solo throat singing help the artist(s) and listeners move toward reconciliation?
- b. What did you take away most from listening to or experiencing reconciliation-related music?
- c. How are stories that help move people toward reconciliation shared through music?

Lesson 3:

TAKING ACTION THROUGH MUSIC

SUGGESTED TIME: 75 minutes

Take Action

1. Before interacting with members of the wider community, review classroom guidelines on etiquette and respect.
2. Using one-on-one discussion with students and by observation, ensure students are actively participating and collecting data throughout the Take Action section.

Report and Celebrate

3. Post stories and examples of students' work toward reconciliation on social media to share the impact students are having with #WEStandTogether or focus on written stories that may be shared in community newspapers, websites or blogs. Collect completed student media release forms when necessary. Blank forms can be found at WE.org/we-at-school/we-schools/educator-resources.



Integrating First Nations, Métis and Inuit content into curriculum

Every day is a chance to start a conversation for a stronger Canada. Strengthen ties between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians in your community through learning and dialogue. Use the following lessons and resources to bring Indigenous rights, history, cultures and experiences into the classroom. Make daily connections and help bring all Canadians together to take a stand for a more inclusive Canada.

Lessons cover many topics across school subjects and levels.

The Martin Family Initiative (MFI) supports a variety of educational projects designed to provide Indigenous Canadians with the opportunities they need to succeed. WE Schools is honoured to partner with MFI in the local campaign WE Stand Together. This campaign creates connections and opens dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.

AN INITIATIVE OF



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Martin Family Initiative
Initiative de la Famille Martin

■ GRADES 1-3: MATH

PATTERNS AND THE MÉTIS SASH



Purpose: Students will explore and identify different types of patterns through examination of the Métis sash.

Estimated time: 35 minutes

Special materials: Multi-colour crafting bits such as small pom-poms, pasta, beads, or markers, colouring pencils or crayons

Activity:

1. Begin the lesson by introducing students to the Métis sash. Display a photo of the Métis sash and explain its significance. The Métis sash was used in the past both as traditional clothing and as a means to hold tools. Today, the sash is used as a symbol of honour and presented to those who have done a great act of service to the Métis Nation. More information on the Métis sash can be found here: <http://www.louisrielinstitute.com/the-sash.php>.
2. Ask students to identify the patterns that they see in the image of a Métis sash.
3. Use the following questions: What colours do you see? What shapes do you see? What patterns do you see?
4. Instruct students to write down what they think the pattern rule is for one row on the sash. A pattern rule assigns each colour a letter of the alphabet. For example, red = A, blue = B, a pattern of red, blue, red, blue would have a pattern rule of ABAB. Ask them to share with a partner.
5. Have pairs come up and point to/identify the pattern rule that their partner wrote down.
6. Tell students that they will make patterns similar to the Métis sashes they have seen. Since finger weaving requires high level dexterity and fine motor skills, students can glue together multi-colour crafting bits such as pom-poms, noodles, etc. in a pattern on grid paper. They also have the option of colouring in their rectangles with markers or gluing on different coloured beads. Cut out and give each student a 4 x 12 block piece of grid paper.
7. Divide students into four centres. At each centre, have one of the following patterns written out for students to copy with crafting bits on one row of twelve on their grid paper.
 - Centre 1: ABABABAB
 - Centre 2: AABAABAAB
 - Centre 3: ACCCACCCA
 - Centre 4: ABBABBA

Students will continue to each station until their sash pattern has been completed.

8. Have students come together to share their patterns. Each group can stand in front of the class and present their sash. It would be ideal if one student from each group could identify one line of pattern in their sash (since all four centres will be on rotation, each sash will look different between the four groups), say which pattern it was and why (e.g., the first line follows the pattern ABABABAB because it shows red, blue, red, blue, etc.).

Extension:

- a. Students can make up their own patterns and have classmates colour in or design the pattern they have created.
- b. Have a local expert come in and do a sash weaving demonstration for the kids.

Educator's note: A person who is Métis, historically, was born to a European father and First Nations mother. Today Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Indigenous Peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry and is accepted by the Métis Nation. www.metisnation.ca

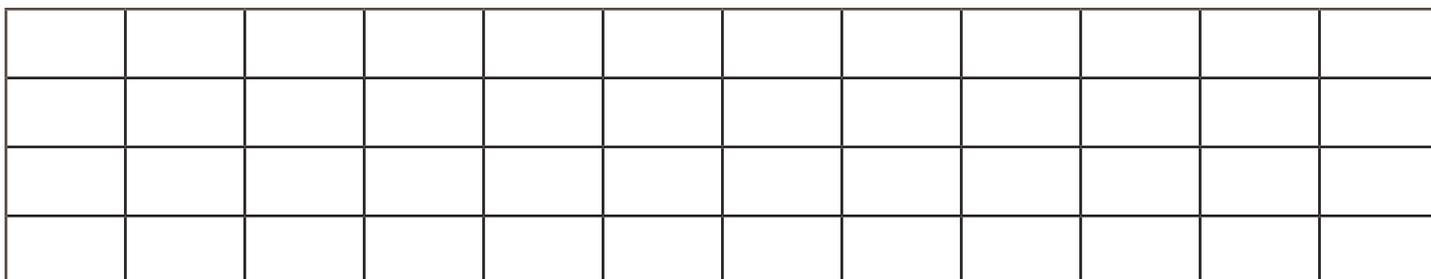
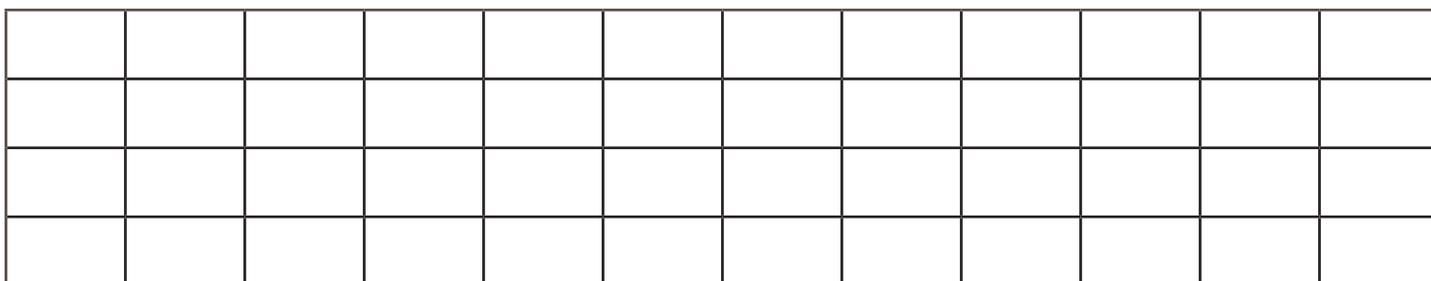
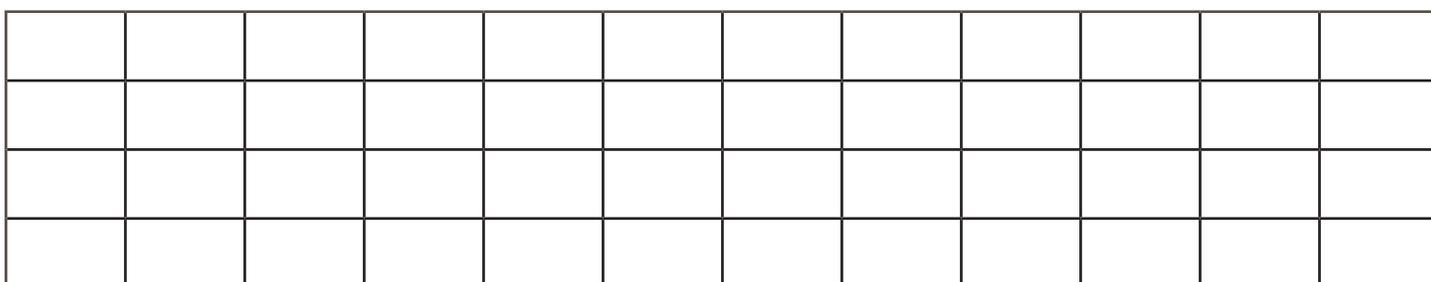
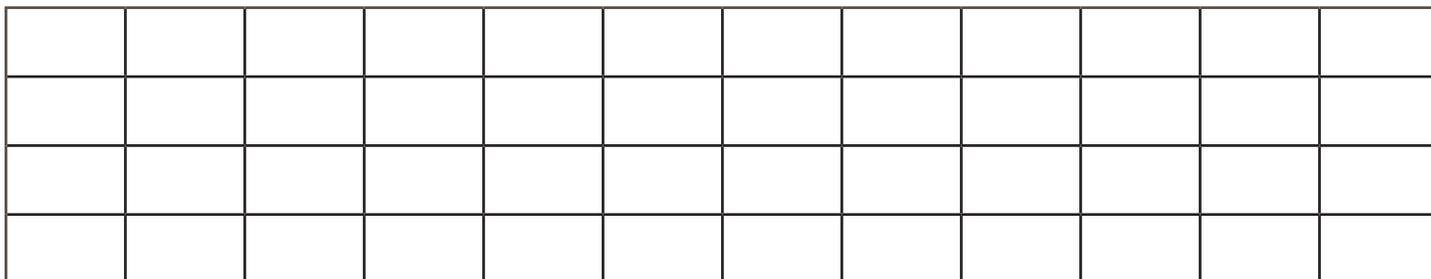
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to the lesson plan, share these resources with students:

- Métis Nation BC: Overview for the Order of the Sash: www.mnbc.ca/pdfs/order_of_the_sash.pdf.
- Louis Riel Institute: The Sash: www.louisrielinstitute.com/the-sash.php.

BLACKLINE MASTER

MÉTIS SASH PATTERN GRID



■ GRADES 4-6: HEALTH

HOLISTIC HEALTH: APPLYING THE MEDICINE WHEEL



Purpose: Students will learn about the Medicine Wheel, a holistic health model used by some Indigenous Peoples. Students will learn about and discuss “health equity” and “social determinants of health,” and the influence these have on themselves and Indigenous populations. Students will create a personal Medicine Wheel that reflects aspects of their life positively contributing to their mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Estimated time: 50 minutes

Curriculum relations: Determinants of Health, Integration of Mental Health

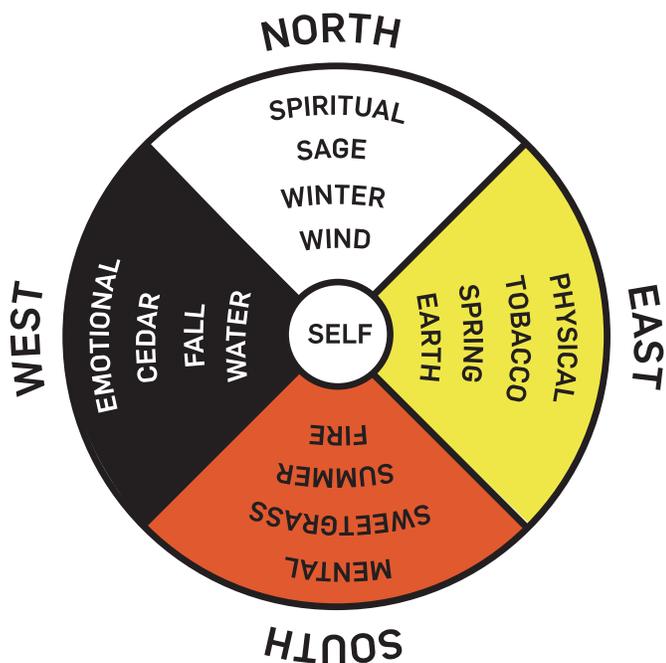
Activity:

- To begin, show students a video on health equity. “What Is Health Equity?” produced by the Health Equity Institution <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPVwgnp3dAc> (3:24 minutes).
- After the video, use the following discussion questions to begin a conversation on health and wellness:
 - What are health inequities? What are health disparities?
 - What are the three types of social conditions or causes that contribute to health inequities?
 - How can attending school influence health?
 - How can a neighbourhood influence health?
 - What can we do to make a positive difference for everyone’s health?
- Write the following definitions of “social determinants of health” on the board:
 - The conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness. These conditions are shaped by a wider set of forces: economics, social policies, and politics. Source: World Health Organization (WHO).

If necessary, break down the term further:

 - Social:** Your interactions with the environment around you (your friends, family, places and different systems such as gender, race, religious affiliations, etc.).
 - Determinants:** Affectors or indicators. A factor that influences something else, for example, the foods you eat and physical activities you do are factors that affect and determine your health.
 - Health:** Your level of physical, emotional, spiritual and mental well-being.
- In pairs, have students brainstorm and record a list of social determinants of health that affects someone’s health and well-being.
- Bring the class back together and have students share the factors. Create a master list on the board for students to reference. Factors may include ideas related to the following categories:
 - Income
 - Education and literacy
 - Unemployment, job security
 - Employment and working conditions
 - Early childhood development
 - Food insecurity
 - Housing
 - Social exclusion
 - Social support network
 - Personal health practices and coping skills
 - Stress
 - Access to health services
 - Geographic location
 - Gender
 - Race
 - Disability
 - Access to clean water
- Have a brief discussion on social determinants of health using the following discussion questions:
 - Which factors do you think affect children the most?
 - Were any of the examples surprising?
- Introduce holistic health and the Medicine Wheel.
 - Holistic health focuses on the four parts of a person’s well-being: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.
 - The Medicine Wheel dates back to stone circles found in North America from the earliest of times and its concept and teachings continue to be relevant today. The circle is a powerful symbol that accounts for and acknowledges every aspect of existence in its four quadrants.
 - Traditional knowledge teaches that good health requires a balance of all four parts. The symbol of the Medicine Wheel demonstrates this holistic health model: it is circular, each element is equal and interconnected, and factors influence one another.
 - An imbalance in any area may negatively affect your overall health. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to all kinds of health, not just the physical health of your body.

8. Show students the image of the Medicine Wheel below.
Source: goo.gl/RLj84Y.



9. Explain the meaning of each section and the importance of the number four. Four is a prominent number in the culture of some Indigenous Peoples:
- Four sacred medicines: tobacco, sage, sweetgrass, cedar
 - Four seasons: winter, spring, summer, fall
 - Four directions: North, West, East, South
 - Four elements of being a human being: mental, emotional, physical, spiritual
 - Four stages of life: childhood, youth, adult, elder

Ensure students understand the representation of the four elements of each human being and the four main factors that influence your holistic health and well-being (mental, physical, emotional and spiritual).

10. Distribute Blackline Master: My Medicine Wheel to each student or have students draw or make their own Medicine Wheel with construction paper and markers. Instruct students to fill in their Medicine Wheel with factors that positively influence their mental, physical, emotional and spiritual (or social) health. For example: Mental: friendship, Physical: playing soccer, Emotional: sketching, Spiritual: reading.
11. If time allows, bring students back together to share their Medicine Wheels with the class and discuss different ways to positively promote each category of holistic health and how to overcome the obstacles too.

Extension: Students may select one or two of the social determinants of health and research more in-depth how they affect Indigenous populations. Newspapers, news magazines, TV news, online news outlets, government sites and organizations offer a wealth of information that address Indigenous Peoples health and the factors involved in negatively or positively promoting well-being.

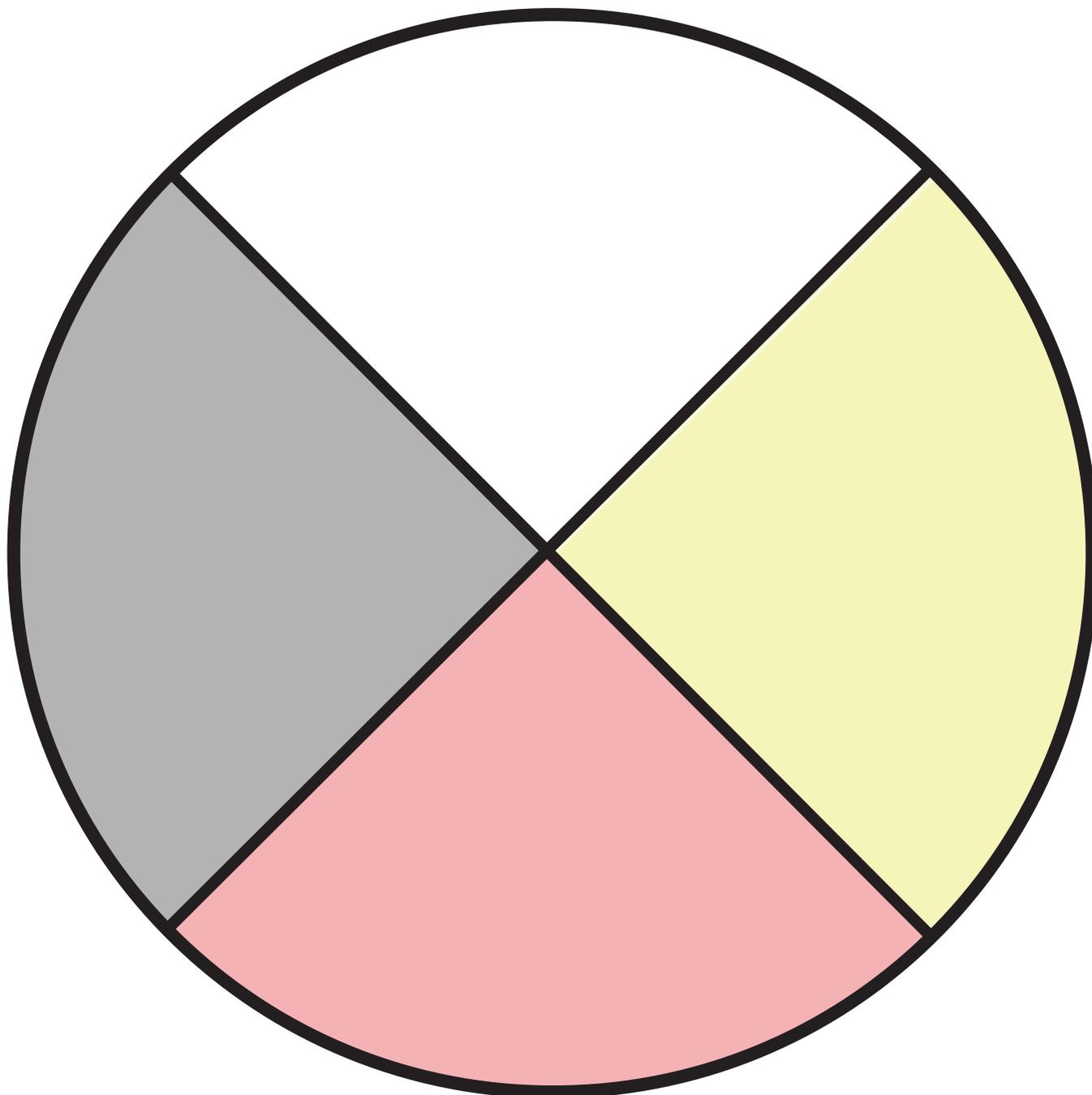
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to the lesson plan, share these resources with your students:

- Holistic Health & Medicine Wheel
www.naho.ca/blog/2011/07/25/holistic-health-and-traditional-knowledge/
connectability.ca/2010/11/10/wikwemikong/
- Social Determinants of Health
www.who.int/social_determinants/en/
www.thecanadianfacts.org/
www.med.uottawa.ca/sim/data/Aboriginal_Health_Determinants_e.htm
www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXcSjTcrskM
- Alternative Medicine and Therapies
www.alive.com/health/aboriginal-medicine/
www.med.uottawa.ca/sim/data/AlternativeTherapy_e.htm
www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/traditional-healing

■ BLACKLINE MASTER
MY MEDICINE WHEEL

Legend: WHITE = Spiritual Health YELLOW = Physical Health RED = Mental Health BLACK = Emotional Health



■ GRADE 7-8: THE ARTS

PHOTO ANALYSIS BEFORE AND AFTER

Purpose: Students will examine effects of residential schools on the physical appearance of a young boy through photo analysis. They will then insert themselves into the photo, thus taking on a new perspective through creative writing.

Instructional method(s): Photo analysis, class discussion

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Activity:

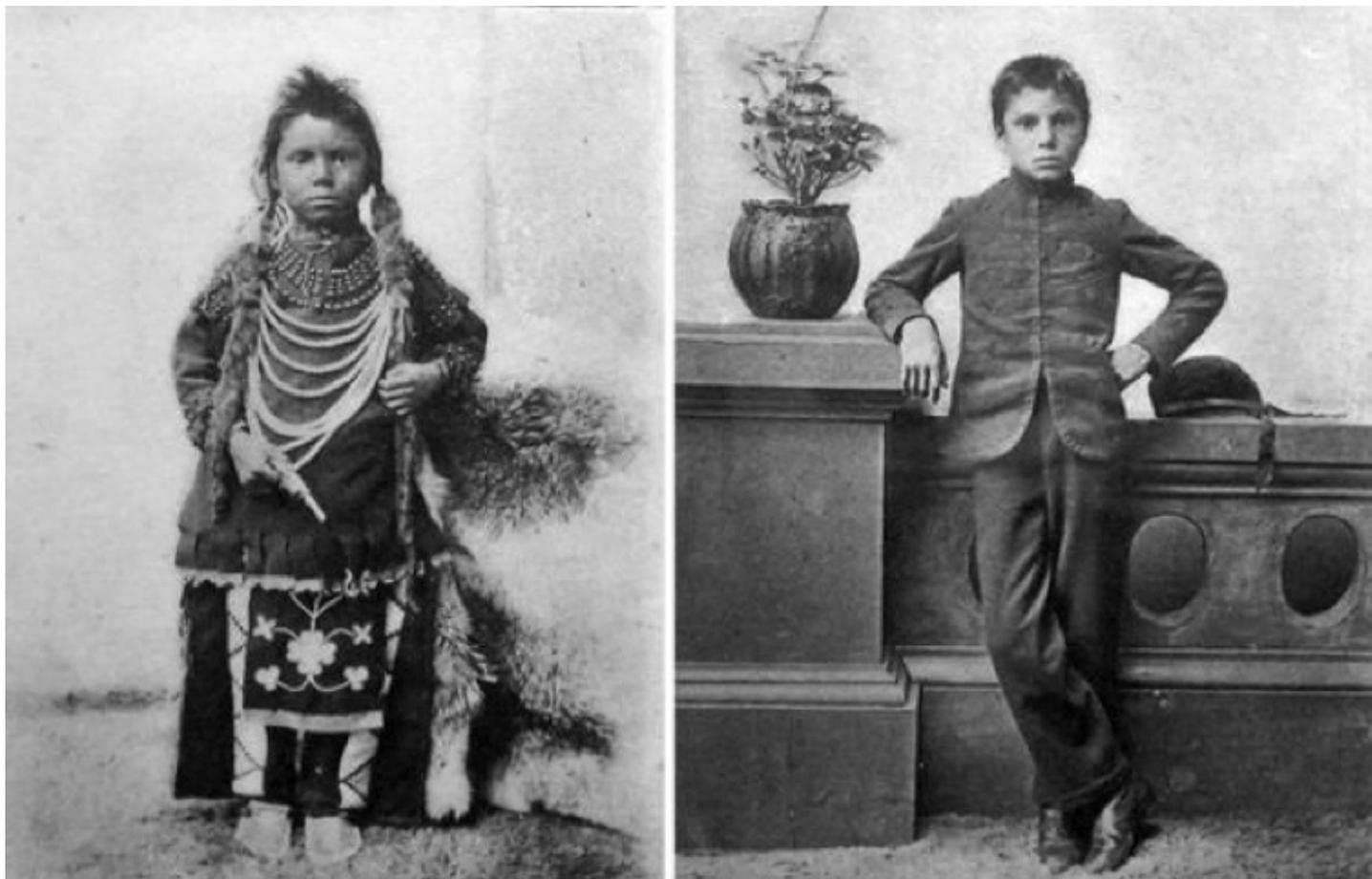
1. Begin the class by asking students a few questions about photography:
 - a. What is a photo?
 - b. Why do people take photos?
 - c. What is the purpose of a photo?
 - d. When are photos taken?
 - e. How are photos shared?
 - f. How have photo taking and sharing changed over time?
2. Continue the conversation by asking students how long they typically look at photos. What do they focus on? Tell students that while people typically look at photos quickly and focus on the people they know in the photos, if we look closely, there is a lot that we can learn from photographs. To practise looking at photos for information, they will examine some well-known photos from 1874.
3. Ask students how they would look at a photo to get information from it and to gain insight into the context around the photo. Write their suggestions on the board. Through the conversation, ensure the following are covered:

How to be observant and analyse a photograph:

 - Examine every possible aspect of the photo (break it down into sections covering the rest of the photo while focusing on one area, then once all areas have been examined, take another look at the whole photo).
 - Think about the people, places and things in the photo. Ask questions like what are the values represented in the photo?
 - Start with the obvious and move to the less obvious.
 - Catalogue the information you see. Create an "I see..." list then draw and record conclusions from these observations.
 - Ask questions about the photo and come up with tentative answers.
4. Divide the class into two groups. Ensure that there is adequate physical space between the two groups so they cannot see each other's photo. Distribute the before photo of Thomas Moore to one group and the after photo to the other group.
5. Instruct students to follow the process of analysing the photo. Allow them 15 to 20 minutes to complete the exercise. Ask the groups to select two or three representatives from the group to share their photo with the other group and explain what they learned from it.
6. Have the class return to their seats. Ask students if they had seen either of the photos before. Tell students that the boy is the same in each photo, but that one was taken before he entered the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan while the other was taken while he was attending. Together, these photos have gained notoriety as a visual reminder of the effects of residential schools on young children. Through the forced attendance of residential schools many children lost connection with their heritage.
7. Now that students have examined the photos on their own and considered them with more context, ask students:
 - What are residential schools?
 - Other than the physical differences in dress and personal appearance students were required to adhere to, what were children often required to do? (E.g., change their name, speak exclusively in English or French, live apart from their families, etc.)
 - When the photos are placed side-by-side, what do you see?
 - Are you shocked or surprised by the transformation?
 - Has your impression of the photos changed? How so?
 - Has your impression of residential schools changed? How so?
8. To compile and reflect on their reactions to the photos, have students write a short journal entry from the perspective of the student in the photo, the parent or loved one who may have taken the first photo or the school administrator who may have taken the second photo. Encourage students to empathize with the persona they take on in order to fully appreciate the situation.
9. Ask a few students to share their journal entries with the class. Post the completed journal entries along with the photos in the classroom or hallway to share the story of Thomas Moore with the larger school community.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Justice Murray Sinclair describes residential schools at WE Day
www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmZy3LB8CDM



Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874,
Source: Library and Archives Canada NL-022474.

■ GRADES 9-12: COMPUTER STUDIES

USING TECHNOLOGY TO DESIGN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY SPACES



Purpose: Students will discover how the University of Saskatchewan is creating inclusive learning space with the First Nations Medicine Wheel as the foundation and what it means to students who use the space. Students will then design their own inclusive community spaces.

Estimated time: 150 minutes

Special Materials: Grid paper, art supplies, or computer software/ Apps such as Minecraft

Activity

- Begin by distributing printed copies of the articles or the url links to students. If students are working on computers or tablets, they may watch the video individually, otherwise show the news clip to the class once they have finished reading the articles.
 - Hill, Andrea. "Student centre lauded as symbol of reconciliation." thestarphoenix.com/news/localnews/student-centre-lauded-as-symbol-of-reconciliation.
 - "Indigenous students share thoughts on new Gordon Oakes Redbear Student Centre." CBC News. www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/3-indigenous-students-on-new-gordon-oakes-redbear-student-centre-1.3438024
- Provide students with the following questions to be answered independently or with a partner:
 - What is the purpose of a community space?
 - Why is a community space that truly serves its community important for community members?
 - How does the Red Bear Student Centre serve the community? Reference specific examples from the article in your answer.
 - What is the significance of having Indigenous architect Douglas Cardinal design the space?
 - What role does the architect play in creating a community space?
 - List some of the specific design details mentioned in the Star Phoenix article that makes the Red Bear Student Centre friendly for Indigenous ceremonies.
 - How does the Red Bear Student Centre show the university's commitment to reconciliation?
- Tell students that, just as the University of Saskatchewan and Douglas Cardinal collaborated to create the Red Bear Student Centre, they will be creating spaces that will serve their community using grid paper, art supplies or computer software/ Apps such as Minecraft. Minecraft is used as the example program in the rest of the lesson.
 - Ask students who consider themselves experts in Minecraft to raise their hands. Record their names on a list. Next have students who are familiar with the program raise their hands. Record their names in a new column on the list. Finally have students who are not familiar with the program raise their hands, list their names in a third column. Using the lists, divide the class into groups of two to four students so that there is a mix of students who are proficient, familiar and beginning with Minecraft.
 - Encourage students to conduct research to gain a better understanding of how the Red Bear Student Centre works as a community space as well as other community centres' successes and failures. They will want to consider what their community needs are and how they may fulfill those needs with their community centre. Inclusivity should be a key component.
 - Students should create a plan keeping the following considerations in mind:
 - How will your community space serve the community?
 - Where will it be located?
 - How will it be accessible to all community members?
 - How does your community space welcome Indigenous Peoples? Non-Indigenous people? People who are new to Canada?
 - As the architects, what do you need to know about the community before you begin designing?
 - How will you honour the traditional lands where the community space is located?
 - How will the community space be used? Consider daily uses and occasional uses.
 - How can you include members of the community including different groups such as Elders, parents, teenagers, children, etc. in your planning and developing of designs? (Conversations on needs and ideas, integrating feedback presented in the virtual space, etc.)
 - Students will be assessed on:
 - Creativity of space
 - Inclusivity of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people
 - Level of completeness
 - Group interactions
 - Community involvement (this may be set as a bonus depending on the time available to allot to this project)
 - Before students enter the Minecraft world, review school or class policies and expectations on responsible use of online technology. Groups should now be ready to begin building their community spaces in Minecraft.

9. Set a due date. What is not finished in class will need to be assigned for homework. On the due date have groups present their community spaces to the class. Students should answer or touch on the following aspects of their spaces:
- What is the purpose of your community space?
 - How does it benefit the community?
 - Explain why you chose specific details including, but not limited to:
 - Location/setting
 - Materials used
 - Look and feel
 - Architectural details
 - What events might be held in the space and how is it designed to serve/facilitate these events?
 - How does it reflect and honour the land and people who have lived there in the past?
 - How does it look forward to the future of the community?
10. Have students complete personal reflections by answering the following questions in paragraph form.
- What challenges did you come across while building the community space with your teammates? How did you overcome them?
 - How do you feel about the work you accomplished? Explain.
 - How does your community space reflect a commitment to reconciliation?

Extension: Invite relevant leaders of the community in to allow groups to present and share their community spaces and ideas to see if they can be taken from the virtual world and implemented into the community.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to the lesson plan, share these resources with your students:

- CBC News. "Indigenous students share thoughts on new Gordon Oakes Redbear Student Centre." CBC News www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/3-indigenous-students-on-new-gordon-oakes-redbear-student-centre-1.3438024
- Hill, Andrea. "Student centre lauded as symbol of reconciliation." Saskatoon StarPhoenix. thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/student-centre-lauded-as-symbol-of-reconciliation



WE Articles



Giving a voice to the world's most fascinating untold global and social issues, the following articles are written by Craig and Marc Kielburger. Each article is accompanied by on-topic elementary and secondary classroom resources. The following articles and resources explore the role of Indigenous Canadians through an on-stage portrayal of Canadian history, Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and innovative schools and teaching methods emerging from First Nations schools in British Columbia.

AN INITIATIVE OF



CANADA'S UNWRITTEN SMASH HIT HISTORY MUSICAL

BY CRAIG AND MARC KIELBURGER



Gord Downie performing a song from *Secret Path* at WE Day Toronto. Photo source: WE Archives

When we heard about Wexford Collegiate School in Scarborough [receiving a cease and-desist letter](#) for their unlicensed production of *Hamilton*, we got to wondering. First, about heartless intellectual property lawyers. Second: why would a group of Canadian students risk a takedown notice to perform an American history musical?

What about Canada's own history?

Don't get us wrong- we dig *Hamilton* mania. [The hip-hop musical](#) recounts the American Revolutionary War with a diverse cast playing America's founding fathers as they deliver rapid-fire verses about politics, love, war and social justice. The show won a GRAMMY and [eleven Tony awards](#) this year, and is constantly sold out (unless you're willing to sell a kidney to pay for resale tickets). Craig found this out during an unsuccessful attempt to secure seats on his last trip to New York.

We also discovered that kids can't get enough of *Hamilton*. They connect with the language of rap and hip-hop. They see themselves in the diverse cast. A new generation is finding themselves hooked on American history that also reflects the present.

Canada may have beaten America to the stage in releasing a smash-hit history musical. [Billy Bishop Goes to War](#), released in 1978, recounts the life of World War I pilot Billy Bishop, and is one of Canada's most widely-produced pieces of theatre.

But there are a few elements in *Hamilton* that Billy Bishop is missing.

"*Hamilton* goes beyond American history," says Albert Shulz, creative director of Toronto-based theatre company [Soulpepper](#). "It's a cultural revolution of new voices on the Broadway stage, which has been so dominated by mainstream white culture."

Shulz, like many Canadians, wants to see diversity on the Canadian stage and screen. [Soulpepper](#) just helped CBC launch *Kim's Convenience*, [the first Canadian sitcom led by Asian actors](#). The show, which premiered October 11, is based on a play [Soulpepper](#) first ran in 2012.

"We have to make sure that the faces on our stage represent the faces in our community," says Shulz.

Diversity could be the key to helping more Canadians see themselves in their own history.

Maybe it's time we took a page from the *Hamilton* playbook and tried retelling our our stories in a way that represents our country today, with new casts, and music that resonates with young people. These are our future leaders, and they have the most to learn from our past.

The next big musical might come from an Indigenous artist, portraying the resurgence of Indigenous culture in the aftermath of residential schools, suggests Shulz.

Canada has so many stories worth telling. Imagine a hip-hop remix of

the coded gospel songs used to plan escapes and share directions on the Underground Railroad to Canada. Or a memoir musical (memoirsical?) about Nellie McClung and the Famous Five updated with Adele style power ballads about the rights—and voices—of women.

Imagine an actor belting this out to the tune of "Rolling in the Deep."

*Stoke the embers burning in this land
Rise up like wildfire, in all daughters
command*

*Finally we see what must be done
No more waiting, the revolution's come*

We probably shouldn't be the ones to write it, but you get the idea.

And let's not be afraid to show the darker moments in our history. The [racism endured by former slaves in Canada](#). The internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. The exploitation of Indigenous Canadians.

Gord Downie's haunting new multimedia project, *Secret Path*, about the death of 12-year-old Chanie Wenjack during his escape from a residential school could inspire other adaptations. They would help keep Wenjack's legacy alive Downie performed a song from *Secret Path* at WE Day, one of the most moving moments we've had on the stage.

This is our history, and it's our duty to learn from and re-tell it. Let's reimagine these these narratives to show all the diversity and creativity of Canada today Because these stories belong to all of us, and every one of us has a part in telling them.

CANADA'S UNWRITTEN SMASH HIT HISTORY MUSICAL



Gord Downie performing a song from *Secret Path* at WE Day Toronto. Photo source: WE Archives

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- *Hamilton: An American Musical* is a musical created by composer Lin Manuel Miranda that tells the life of American founding father Alexander Hamilton through hip-hop and rap. It debuted in New York in 2015 and quickly became a Broadway success. The musical is widely acclaimed for its powerful lyrics and its depiction of American history using a racially diverse cast—something rare in the history of Broadway. ([New York Times](#))
- Lack of diversity has been a longstanding problem in American theatre. Since the Tony Awards (awards for outstanding work in American theatre) were founded in 1947, 95.3 percent of all nominees have been white. For the Academy Awards, the rate is 96.4 percent. ([Forbes](#))
- *Billy Bishop Goes to War* was created by John Gray and Eric Peterson, and is one of Canada's most popular and widely produced musicals. It debuted in Vancouver in 1978 and depicts the life of Billy Bishop, a fighter pilot in the First World War. The musical questions the nature of heroism and the sacrifices made over the course of history. ([Canadian Theatre Encyclopedia](#))
- Indian Residential Schools were a system of boarding schools that the government

set up and sponsored between the 1880s and 1996, when the last school closed. During this time, an estimated 150,000 Indigenous children were taken from their families and indoctrinated with lessons about Western and Christian ways of life. Many children were abused and forced to give up their Indigenous culture. Many more died because of deplorable living conditions. ([University of British Columbia](#); [CBC](#))

- The Underground Railroad was an extensive, secret network of escape routes and hiding places that African American slaves used to make their way from the United States to Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia during the 1800s. Guides who knew the routes were called conductors, and helped slaves find shelter and safe houses along the way. ([Black History Canada](#))
- Nellie McClung was a Canadian politician, writer and suffragette who fought for the rights of women in Canada. She and her colleagues, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Emily Murphy, Louise McKinney and Irene Parlby, became known as the Famous Five after they won the Persons Case, a landmark legal case that recognized women as "qualified person" who could serve in the Senate. ([The Nellie McClung Foundation](#))

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allows them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

Core Skill Sets:    

These icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at www.we.org/we-at-school/we-schools/learning-framework/.

KEY TERMS

American Revolutionary War—the conflict that occurred from 1775 to 1783 in which 13 British colonies revolted against Great Britain and declared independence as the United States of America

Residential schools—a system of schools set up by the Canadian government and run by religious institutions that forcibly removed Indigenous children from their homes and tried to indoctrinate them to replace their Indigenous culture with Western Christian ways of life

Underground Railroad—a series of secret escape routes and hiding places African American slaves used to escape to Canada during the 1800s

Internment—the imprisonment of a large group of people without a trial

Elementary Resource

THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- Themes: Education and Local Issues
- Course Connections: The Arts, Language, Social Studies, History

MATERIALS

- Front board
- Paper and writing utensils
- Computer/tablet with Internet access and video capability

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Investigate Canadian historical narratives
- Create art work for a historical narrative from a diverse lens to think critically

DISCUSS

1. In your opinion, are young Canadians excited about their own history? Why or why not?
2. Does Canadian popular culture and mainstream media accurately reflect the cultural diversity in the country?
3. What perspective does history typically come from? Does this make history unapproachable?
4. The Global Voices article states "we have to make sure that the faces on our stage represent the faces in our community." How will a shift in creating historical narratives with a diverse cultural and artistic perspective allow all Canadians to want to engage with our histories?
5. Why is it important that stories, like the Chanie Wenjack story, are being put into the spotlight? What does this historical story mean for Canadians today?
6. What stories or what cultural groups would you like to see represented on Canadian stages and in the media?
7. How can we better represent the Indigenous perspective of Canadian history on stage and in the media?

DIVE DEEPER

1. Read the Global Voices article "Canada's unwritten smash hit history musical" and discuss the following questions with students. Share the video "Hamilton Clips: Hip Hop Musical About Making of America" www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOdWU-EnOEK (1:30).
 - a. Why was the historical musical Hamilton well received by Canadian and American youth alike?
 - b. How was the musical relevant for youth? What changes did Hamilton make compared to traditional musicals to be more engaging and relatable?
 - c. Why is history so often unappealing to youth? What would help to make it more appealing?
 - d. Why is it important to see yourself present within Canadian history?
2. As a class, brainstorm a list of relevant historical stories that students find interesting. Have a discussion about the key event or person in your local history to learn why students found this story appealing. Ask students: How do you relate to this story on a personal level?
3. In groups of three or four, ask students to explore one event or person from Canadian history they find appealing. Students

should use textbooks, the Internet and oral stories to collect information about the event or person.

4. Ask students to write a short story, song, poem or play about the historical events with relevant factual information. Students will have the opportunity to present and share their piece with the rest of the class.
5. To reflect on the process of creating the historical art form, ask students to explore the following reflection questions:
 - a. How is the historical story they are presenting relatable for youth in communities from across Canada whether rural, urban, central, northern, eastern or western Canada?
 - b. What can they add into the creation of the art form to engage youth to want to discover more about Canadian history?
 - c. What makes a historical event or person relevant for youth?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Hamilton Broadway Musical www.hamiltonbroadway.com

Gord Downie's *Secret Path* www.secretpath.ca



Secondary Resource

THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- Themes: Education, Indigenous Canadians, Local Issues, Values and Ethics
- Course Connections: The Arts, English and Canadian and World Studies

MATERIALS

- Front board
- Paper and writing utensils
- Computer/tablet with Internet access and video capability

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Investigate Canadian historical narratives
- Explore the need to make Canadian history more relevant for youth
- Create art work for a historical narrative from a diverse lens to think critically

DISCUSS

1. In your opinion, why aren't young Canadians excited about their own history?
2. Does Canadian popular culture and mainstream media accurately reflect the cultural diversity in the country?
3. What perspective does history typically come from? Does this make history unapproachable?
4. Do you think it is more important for theatrical productions to be historically accurate or representative of our culturally diverse society (when they don't align)? Explain.
5. The *Global Voices* article states "we have to make sure that the faces on our stage represent the faces in our community." How will a shift in creating historical narratives with a diverse cultural and artistic perspective allow all Canadians to want to engage with our histories?
6. Why is it important that stories, like the Chanie Wenjack story, are being put into the spotlight? What does this historical story mean for Canadians today?
7. What stories or what cultural groups would you like to see represented on Canadian stages and in the media?
8. How can we better represent the Indigenous perspective of Canadian history on stage and in the media?

DIVE DEEPER

1. Read the *Global Voices* article "Canada's unwritten smash hit history musical" and discuss the following questions with students. Share the video "Hamilton Clips: Hip Hop Musical About Making of America" www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOdWU-EnOEK (1:30).
 - a. Why was the historical musical *Hamilton* well received by Canadian and American youth alike?
 - b. How was the musical relevant for youth? What changes did *Hamilton* make compared to traditional musicals to be more engaging and relatable?
 - c. Why is history so often unappealing to youth? What would help to make it more appealing?
 - d. How can the historical narrative change from being male white dominated to culturally diverse?

- e. Why is it important to see yourself present within your own local histories?
2. As a class, brainstorm a list of relevant historical stories that students find interesting. Have a discussion about the key event or person in your local history to learn why students found this story appealing. Ask students: How do you relate to this story on a personal level? Do you see yourselves in Canadian history? What is your interest level in history? Would you spend time outside of school reading, watching documentaries or films or listening to podcasts in your personal time to learn more?
 3. In groups of three or four, ask students to explore one event or person from Canadian history they find appealing. Students should use textbooks, the Internet and oral stories to collect information about the event or person.
 4. Ask students to write a short story, song, poem or play about the historical events with relevant factual information. Students will have the opportunity to present and share their piece with the rest of the class.
 5. To reflect on the process of creating the historical art form, ask students to explore the following reflection questions:
 - a. What makes a historical event or person relevant for youth?
 - b. How is the historical story they are presenting relatable for youth in communities from across Canada, whether rural, urban, central, northern, eastern or western Canada?
 - c. What can you add into the creation of the art form to engage youth to want to discover more about Canadian history?
 - d. How can you ensure that the dramatic art form is historically accurate and represents the true story while honouring a diverse perspective and society?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Hamilton Broadway Musical www.hamiltonbroadway.com

Gord Downie's "Secret Path" www.secretpath.ca



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION IN CANADA

BY CRAIG AND MARC KIELBURGER



(From left) The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair, Chief Wilton Littlechild and Dr. Marie Wilson are the commissioners who oversaw the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). Photo credit: TRC.

Day after day, victims of apartheid recounted their stories of unimaginable suffering. The sheer weight of horror drove Archbishop Desmond Tutu to break down and weep.

In the 1990s, we watched with admiration as Archbishop Desmond Tutu united his nation after apartheid through a truth and reconciliation process. It was a communal affair—the hearings were televised near daily, and millions tuned in. The hearings were discussed over water coolers. When Tutu wept, blacks and whites across South Africa cried with him. It was a country-wide catharsis that helped South Africa transition more peacefully.

As Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) releases its final report about the residential school system for Indigenous children, we wonder, where is Canada's catharsis? With little media coverage up until the release of the final report, and even less public engagement, Canada has had no such emotionally transformative moment.

Tutu taught us that, where there has been harm to a group of people within a nation, reconciliation comes from people, not acts of parliament. And Canada needs reconciliation. The last residential school only closed in 1996. All First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities still suffer from their impact.

So what can Canadians do to foster reconciliation?

Struggling to answer this question, we

turned to Indigenous leaders Justice Murray Sinclair, chair of the TRC, and Perry Bellegarde, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations. And for a younger voice, Wab Kinew, First Nations musician, author and media personality.

Their response was unified: non-Indigenous need to educate ourselves and reach out.

Launched in 2008, the TRC laid bare the sordid 200-year history of Canada's residential schools for Indigenous children. According to a newly revealed estimate by the TRC, 6,000 Indigenous died in residential school. The TRC recorded the stories of 6,750 survivors and their children and grandchildren.

It's a history that Sinclair says Canadians have been taught very little about. And much of what we did learn in school was misinformation based on stereotypes. When Craig defended Thomas King's *The Inconvenient Indian* on the annual national book debate, Canada Reads, we were shocked to discover how little we really knew—like the fact there were laws in place up to 1961 that required Indigenous to give up their status if they wanted to vote. We're pleased to see change happening. Across Canada, youth are increasingly learning about these issues in school. But what about adults? "The challenge of education lies with the older generation," says Kinew.

It's not hard to be better informed, if you're willing to put in the time. You can watch

the videos of survivor testimony on the Commission website, and read *The Inconvenient Indian* or first-person accounts such as *They called me Number One: Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School* (Talonbooks, 2012).

And movies like Jeff Barnaby's 2013 film *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* capture the Indigenous experience of residential schools.

Bellegarde suggests we all reach out to interact and learn about the Indigenous Peoples who shaped history in our communities. Even in big cities like Toronto or Montreal, there's a reserve within 100 kilometres of most neighbourhoods. Many reserves, he tells us, welcome requests to visit and learn about their community and culture.

There are 117 Indigenous friendship centres in Canada, from Victoria to St. John's, where you can learn about local Indigenous Peoples, discover events you can participate in, and even volunteer opportunities where you can help out. "How do you build a relationship? By participating," says Bellegarde. Without mutual understanding we can never achieve reconciliation. In sharing their painful stories through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Indigenous Peoples aren't trying to make us feel guilty.

They are reaching out a hand to us.

If Canada truly wants reconciliation—if the TRC process is to mean anything the responsibility lies now with all of us to take that hand. Let's make the effort to learn about and understand the people with whom we share this land.

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION IN CANADA



(From left) The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair, Chief Wilton Littlechild and Dr. Marie Wilson are the commissioners who oversaw the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). Photo credit: TRC.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- In the 1600s, French missionaries tried, but failed, to open boarding schools for First Nations children. Parents were opposed to sending their children away, and the children who did end up in these schools would run away to reunite with their families. (TRC)
- In 1883, the federal government of Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonal'd passed a law to officially establish a system of residential schools. One of MacDonal'd's ministers, Hector Langevin, was quoted saying: "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." (TRC)
- At least 139 different residential schools across Canada have been identified over the history of the residential school system, which spanned from the 1800s until 1996, when the last one closed. More than 150,000 Indigenous children — First Nations, Inuit and Métis—attended these schools throughout this period in history. (TRC)
- Many of the children who attended these schools were subjected to physical and sexual abuse, as well as harsh conditions. When a government doctor, Peter Bryce,

conducted an investigation of residential schools in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories in 1907, he found a series of health problems and widespread disease throughout the majority of schools (Bryce: [Report on the Indian Schools of Manitoba and the NWT](#)).

- A new study has raised the estimate of the number of children who died in residential schools from 4,000 to more than 6,000. An Indigenous child in a residential school had a higher risk of dying than a Canadian soldier during World War II. (CBC)
- Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, says that the residential schools were part of a "cultural genocide" committed by Canada to try and eliminate Indigenous languages and culture. (APTN)
- In 2007, the Canadian government, Canadian church organizations, and Canadian Indigenous Peoples signed the Residential Schools Agreement. This agreement included an official apology to Indigenous Peoples for the establishment of residential schools, compensation payments to survivors of residential schools, and the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to record the testimonies of Indigenous Peoples about the residential schools and their impact on peoples' lives. (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada)

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allows them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

Core Skill Sets:    

These icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at www.we.org/we-at-school/we-schools/learning-framework/.

KEY TERMS

Reconciliation—To bring people or groups of people back together by fixing the problems that caused the anger or division between them

Residential schools—A system of schools set up by the Canadian government and run by religious institutions that forcibly removed Indigenous children from their homes and tried to indoctrinate them to replace their Indigenous culture with Western Christian ways of life

Elementary Resource

THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- Themes: Education, Local Issues, Politics, Canada's Indigenous Peoples
- Course Connections: The Arts, Language, Social Studies

MATERIALS

- Front board
- Writing utensils

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in writing, orally or visually.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express and defend a position on an issue.

DISCUSS

1. What do you know about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC)? What do you know about residential schools in Canada?
2. How have residential schools affected generations of Indigenous People?
3. Is this an issue relevant to Indigenous People only or to all Canadians? Why? Do you think it is important that all non-Indigenous Canadians know about the history of residential schools? Why or why not?

DIVE DEEPER

Tell students you will be reading a poem titled, "I Lost My Talk" by Rita Joe. Ask students to close their eyes and allow themselves to feel the emotions and imagine the setting that Rita expresses through her words.

"I Lost My Talk" by Rita Joe: www.greens.org/s-r/05/05-32.html

After reading the poem, hold a class discussion using the questions below:

- What subject is being addressed in this poem?
- What do you think "my talk" refers to? (e.g., language, heritage, etc.)
- What emotions are being expressed in this poem? What made you feel this way? What is Rita's attitude toward the subject?

Share with students that "I Lost My Talk" touches on the experiences that many Indigenous children faced while attending residential schools. For more than 100 years, Indigenous children across Canada were removed, often forcibly, from their homes and placed in residential schools. These government-funded, church-run schools were set up to remove Indigenous children from the influences of their families, traditions and culture, and to assimilate them into the dominant Canadian culture.

Ask students to imagine how they would feel if they were taken away from their families and driven hundreds of kilometres away to school at a young age. Ask for a few volunteers to share their responses.

Inform students that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was formed in 2008 to learn and record the truth about what happened in residential schools, educate Canadians about this time in our history and bring forward a process of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Between 2008 to 2015 the TRC documented the stories and testimonies of residential school survivors to ensure that this history is preserved.

On the TRC website, there is a series of videos to share with students. The clip entitled "It's Time for Reconciliation" articulates the impact of residential schools on Indigenous Peoples and provides the release date of all the documents the TRC has gathered over the years. www.trc.ca/

Write the following on the board: (provide definitions as needed)

Road to Reconciliation

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Truth | 3. Mutual Understanding |
| 2. Healing | 4. Respect |

Organize the class into groups of two to three students and provide each group with a sheet of chart paper. Have groups lay out their sheets in a landscape orientation and draw a long road in the middle of the sheet from one end to the other (horizontally). Label this main road "Reconciliation." Then ask students to draw four side roads stemming from the main road (see example below). Have them label each side road with one of the four terms above (in the same order as they are listed). Next, ask students to brainstorm how each term can lead to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Have them record their responses on the appropriate road.



Allow groups to present their work and then hold a class discussion using the questions below:

- What role does truth play in the process of reconciliation? Do you think truth should be the first step in this process? Why or why not?
- How can these steps change the future of Canada as a nation? Is it important to learn about and understand the history, cultures and experiences of our Indigenous People to strengthen Canada? Explain.
- Do you think reconciliation can be achieved? What can we do to foster reconciliation?

Extension: Share with students that June 21 is National Aboriginal Day and the month of June is National Aboriginal Month. It is a special month to celebrate the unique heritage, culture and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis People in Canada. Check out the link below to find events near your school and give students an opportunity to build a relationship with First Nations, Métis and Inuit People. www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100013248/1100100013249

Secondary Resource

THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- Themes: Education, Local Issues, Politics, Canada's Indigenous Peoples
- Course Connections: The Arts, Canadian and World Studies, English, Social Sciences and the Humanities

MATERIALS

- Front board
- Writing utensils

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in writing, orally or visually.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express and defend a position on an issue.

DISCUSS

1. What do you know about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC)? What do you know about residential schools in Canada?
2. How have residential schools affected generations of Indigenous People in Canada?
3. Is this an issue relevant to Indigenous Peoples only or to all Canadians? Why? Do you think it is important that all non-Indigenous Canadians know about the history of residential schools? Why or why not?
4. How can education and participation play a role in this process of fostering reconciliation?

DIVE DEEPER

Tell students you will be reading a poem titled, "I Lost My Talk" by Rita Joe. Ask students to close their eyes and to allow themselves to feel the emotions and imagine the setting that Rita expresses through her words.

"I Lost My Talk by Rita Joe": www.greens.org/s-r/05/05-32.html

After reading the poem, hold a class discussion using the questions below:

- What subject is being addressed in this poem?
- What do you think "my talk" refers to? (e.g., language, heritage, etc.)
- What emotions are being expressed in this poem? What made you feel this way? What is Rita's attitude toward the subject?

Share with students that "I Lost My Talk" touches on the experiences that many Indigenous children faced while attending residential schools. For more than 100 years, Indigenous children across Canada were removed, often forcibly, from their homes and placed in residential schools. These government-funded, church-run schools were set up to remove Indigenous children from the influences of their families, traditions and culture, and to assimilate them into the dominant Canadian culture.

Inform students that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was formed in 2008 to learn and record the truth about what happened in residential schools, educate Canadians

about this time in our history and bring forward a process of reconciliation between Indigenous People and non-Indigenous Canadians. From 2008 to 2015 the TRC documented the stories and testimonies of residential school survivors to ensure that this history is preserved.

On the TRC website, there is a series of videos to share with students. The clip entitled "It's Time for Reconciliation" articulates the impact of residential schools on Indigenous Peoples and provides the release date of all the documents the TRC has gathered over the years www.trc.ca.

Write the following on the board: (provide definitions)

Road to Reconciliation

1. Truth
2. Healing
3. Mutual Understanding
4. Respect

Organize the class into groups of two to three students and provide each group with a sheet of chart paper. Have groups lay their sheets in a landscape orientation and draw a long road in the middle of the sheet from one end to the other (horizontally). Label this main road "Reconciliation." Then ask students to draw four side roads stemming from the main road (see example below). Have them label each side road with one of the four terms above (in the same order as they are listed). Next, ask students to brainstorm how each term can lead to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Have them record their responses on the appropriate road.



Allow groups to present their work and then hold a class discussion using the questions below:

- What role does truth play in the process of reconciliation? Do you think truth should be the first step in this process? Why or why not?
- Why are truth, healing, mutual understanding and respect side roads rather than simple checkpoints on the main road to reconciliation? What do the side roads represent that a checkpoint does not? (e.g., the side roads represent a journey in themselves whereas a checkpoint is a short stop in a long journey.)
- How can these steps change the future of Canada as a nation? Is it important to learn about and understand the history, culture and experiences of Indigenous People to strengthen Canada? Explain.
- Do you think reconciliation can be achieved? What can we do to foster reconciliation?

Extension: Share with students that June 21 is National Aboriginal Day and the month of June is National Aboriginal Month. It is a special month to celebrate the unique heritage, culture and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. Check the link below to find events near your school and give students an opportunity to build a relationship with Indigenous People.
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INNOVATIVE FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS FIND THE KEY TO SUCCESS

BY CRAIG AND MARC KIELBURGER



(Students in the iCount school in Moricetown, B.C. (Photo: iCount))

In the small First Nations community of Moricetown, in central B.C., teens haunt the convenience stores and gas bars, their lives adrift. Locals call them “phantoms.” Cain Michell, then 14, was one of them.

The twisting yet hopeful path he has followed is important to trace, after the [recent failure to agree on a national strategy](#) for addressing the education crisis afflicting First Nations communities.

Cain’s struggles with school began in Grade 7 when he had to leave the primary school in Moricetown and endure a make a 45-minute bus ride to a junior high school in Smithers, where most of the students were non-Indigenous. Cain was overwhelmed in a much larger school, thrown into classes with little to say about Indigenous history or traditions. By the end of Grade 8, failing most classes, he just walked away.

The Grade 8 dropout chose friends over school, and attended house parties that lasted for weeks. He seemed to be following his mother, an addict, into the drug dens of Vancouver.

Cain’s life changed when Moricetown teachers Tom and Lorna Butz came knocking in 2012, offering Cain the chance to come out of the shadows at the new high school they had founded for local First Nations youth: [iCount](#). The iCount program keeps its students engaged in education by weaving local

First Nations culture through the curriculum. The students get classes in their language Wet’suwet’en—and traditional skills like hunting and canoe building. Community Elders are often invited in to help teach.

“When I first got there, I knew it would be fun,” Cain told us. “Elders came and taught us our language, and drumming. We went out picking huckleberries.”

On one memorable day, an elder poked his head into the classroom and invited the students to come watch hunters skinning a moose, prompting a spontaneous field trip to learn how to clean and dress an animal.

Core subjects like math and science are individually tailored to the interests and abilities of each student with practical lessons linking the subject material to the student’s career goals. For example, if a youth is interested in carpentry, their math work will have practical bent towards the math used in the carpentry trade.

Entering its third year, iCount is successful and growing. All 27 students from last year are returning, and there is a lineup of new youth wanting to attend because of what they’ve heard from friends. The school has had to hire another teacher and three teaching assistants to accommodate the influx. Last year the school moved out of its one room in the community centre and

took over the entire top floor. Now Lorna Butz says they are seriously considering building their own dedicated building.

iCount isn’t the only Canadian school initiative successfully attracting Indigenous youth back into the classroom. Last year we visited Oskayak High School in Saskatoon. Principal Craig Schellenberg said that since the school undertook a rejuvenation project five years ago, putting a greater influence on First Nations culture in the curriculum, the graduation rate has risen to more than 60 students a year from three. In May, Oskayak was [recognized with a national award for teaching innovation](#).

Meanwhile, back in Moricetown, RCMP Constable Kimberly Delwisch, who has been policing in the area for 15 years, has seen a noticeable decrease in vandalism and other youth-related crime, and an upswing in youth voluntarism and participation in community life. “These kids are thriving. I see a positive change. It’s like night and day.”

As for Cain, now 16, he told us he is earning A and B grades, and his once empty future is filled with the goal of becoming a firefighter.

Cain’s story highlights some of the critical problems facing Indigenous youth across Canada: communities that lack schools and a curriculum disconnected from Indigenous cultures. Individual initiatives like the iCount school in Moricetown are proof that successful outcomes for Indigenous education are possible.

INNOVATIVE FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS FIND THE KEY TO SUCCESS



Students in the iCount school in Moricetown, B.C. Photo: iCount

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects.

Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. The activity is structured to introduce students to the issues, then allows them to explore and apply their learnings. Students are encouraged to further reflect on the issues.

Core Skill Sets:    

These icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop using this resource. Learn more about the WE Learning Framework at www.we.org/we-at-school/we-schools/learning-framework/.

KEY TERMS

First Nations—Canadian Indigenous Peoples, not including Inuit or Métis

Curriculum—The collective word for all the courses and subjects one studies in school

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Starting in the 1800s, many Indigenous children were taken away from their families and placed in residential schools run by churches or the government. Children were taught to forget their culture and language. At the peak of the residential school system in 1949, approximately 8,900 Indigenous youth were in these schools. Conditions were often unhealthy and punishments harsh. As many as 6,000 children are believed to have died from disease and abuse.
- The “Indian Act” is a Canadian law that has existed since 1867. It sets out the legal rights of and restrictions on Indigenous Peoples. Most First Nations, Métis and Inuit organizations believe the “Indian Act” is repressive and partially responsible for many of the problems facing their communities today.
- In Canada, managing the public education system is the responsibility of each province. However, under the Indian Act, all matters concerning First Nations reserves—including education—fall under the responsibility of the federal government.
- In 2005, the Liberal government under Paul Martin signed the Kelowna Accord with Canadian First Nations, Métis and

Inuit organizations, promising new funding for education. However, Martin was soon after defeated by Stephen Harper in the 2006 election and the new Conservative government did not follow through.

- Since 1972, some First Nations, like the Mi’kmaq Kina’matnewey in Nova Scotia, have succeeded in signing agreements with federal and provincial governments to set up their own independent school systems. According to the Assembly of First Nations, the graduation rates at these Indigenous-run schools are at least twice as high as the rates at government-run schools on reserves.
- On February 7, 2014, Prime Minister Stephen Harper made an announcement at a First Nations high school on the Kainai reserve in southern Alberta. He announced that his government would introduce education legislation. When the legislation was introduced, many First Nation leaders criticised it saying the government would still have too much control over education, so legislation was put on hold.

THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- Themes: Education, Canada's Indigenous Peoples, Child Rights, Employment, Local Issues
- Course Connections: The Arts, Language, Social Studies, History, Geography, Science and Technology, Math, Health and Physical Education

MATERIALS

- Computers with Internet capabilities
- Course syllabus
- Paper and writing utensils

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in writing, orally or visually.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express and defend a position on an issue.

MAP IT

Have students locate the different locations mentioned in the article to gain an understanding of the expanse and involvement of this issue.

- Moricetown, British Columbia
- Smithers, British Columbia
- Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

DISCUSS

1. Why is education important?
2. What does education mean to you? (Consider the following: access to education, opportunities, education locally, nationally and globally, etc.)
3. What do you know about the education crisis occurring in First Nations communities?
4. Why is First Nations education a federal responsibility while all other education in Canada is under the jurisdiction of the provinces and territories?
5. Why did Cain struggle in school?
6. Explain the significance of the name "iCount."
7. What makes iCount different?
8. What is the effect on students when First Nations culture is incorporated into the curriculum? (Higher graduation rate, more community involvement, less crime, etc.)
9. Why is it so important to weave First Nations culture into education?

DIVE DEEPER

In honour of the new school year, have students help make a plan for better involvement and engagement in their learning. Following the model of iCount, ask students to come up with a plan to integrate aspects of Indigenous culture into the classroom. Break into groups of three to four students. Instruct the groups to brainstorm and record a list of ways they can bring their culture into their lessons. Students may use the following questions to guide their brainstorming session:

- What is culture?
- What makes your culture unique?
- How are aspects of your culture already reflected in the school's curriculum and community?
- How can it be better intertwined in your daily lessons, class or school activities?
- Who can help? (e.g., Elders in the community, parents, family members, etc.)
- How can they help?

Another part of the iCount education model is tailoring individual lessons to the interests of the students. Given that in most schools and classrooms there are limited resources and many students with diverse interests, ask students to brainstorm ways to make lessons more applicable to their goals and interests. Students may use the following questions to guide their brainstorming session:

- What would you like to be when you grow up?
- What are the courses, lessons and information that will help you in your occupation of interest? (e.g., will you need public speaking skills, should you work on artistic expression, will leading group activities and understanding group dynamics be important to you?)
- How might lessons better reflect your interests and goals? (e.g., how can you gain more comfort in your public speaking? How can you communicate better artistically? How can you take more of a leadership role in your class?)

Hold a class discussion to share the ideas of students. Look for ways to incorporate their ideas into daily lessons. Create a plan with students to ensure their cultures, interests and goals are met alongside course objectives and curriculum expectations.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Shawn Atleo visits iCount School in Moricetown.

www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=5E69fyjpol4

Secondary Resource

THEMES AND COURSE CONNECTIONS

- Themes: Education, Canada's Indigenous Peoples, Child Rights, Employment, Local Issues
- Course Connections: The Arts, English, Canadian and World Studies, Science, Career Studies, Math, Health and Physical Education, Native Studies, Social Sciences and the Humanities, Technological Education, Business Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies

MATERIALS

- Computers with Internet capabilities
- Course syllabus
- Paper and writing utensils

SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
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DIVE DEEPER

In honour of the new school year, have students help make a plan for better involvement and engagement in their learning. Following the model of iCount, ask students to come up with a plan to integrate aspects of Indigenous culture into the course. Distribute the course syllabus or ask students to refer to the course syllabus. Break into groups of three to four students. Instruct the groups to brainstorm and record a list of ways they can bring their culture into their lessons.

Students may use the following questions to guide their brainstorming session:

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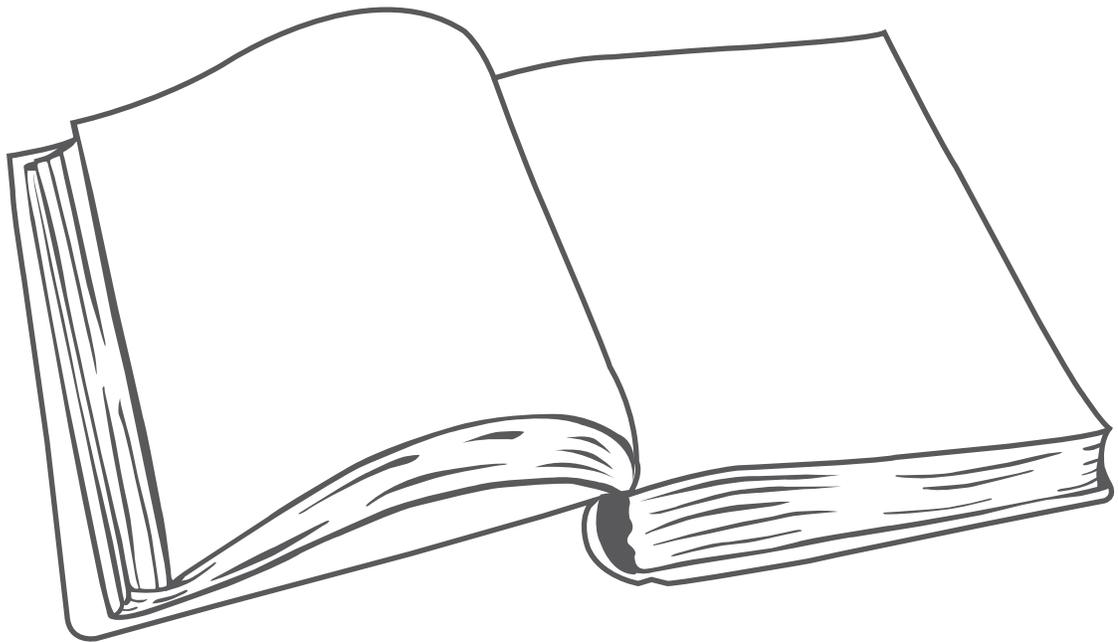
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Shawn Atleo visits iCount School in Moricetown.

www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=5E69fYjpol4

Suggested Reading



For a reader, books open up new perspectives, new experiences and new truths. Reading is educational and emotional. Use the following reading list to learn more to help Indigenous students see themselves in texts and to help non-Indigenous students learn more about their country and its history.

AN INITIATIVE OF





Students participate in WE Stand Together. Photo source: WE Archives.

Reading List

The list is organized by level and alphabetically by the author's last name.

Grades 1 to 3

When I was Eight by Christy Jordon-Fenton, Margaret Pokiak Fenton, Gabrielle Grimard (Illustrator)
February 2013 Annick Press Fiction

Bestselling memoir *Fatty Legs*: for younger readers. Olemaun is eight and knows a lot of things. But she does not know how to read. Ignoring her father's warnings, she travels far from her Arctic home to the outsiders' school to learn. The nuns at the school call her Margaret. They cut off her long hair and force her to do menial chores, but she remains undaunted. Her tenacity draws the attention of a black-cloaked nun who tries to break her spirit at every turn. But the young girl is more determined than ever to learn how to read.

Based on the true story of Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, and complemented by stunning illustrations, *When I Was Eight* makes the bestselling *Fatty Legs* accessible to younger readers. Now they, too, can meet this remarkable girl who reminds us what power we hold when we can read.

Not My Girl by Christy Jordon-Fenton, Margaret Pokiak Fenton, Gabrielle Grimard (Illustrator) January 2014 Annick Press Fiction

Margaret can't wait to see her family, but her homecoming is not what she expected. Based on the true story of Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, and complemented by evocative illustrations, *Not My Girl* makes the original, award-winning memoir, *A Stranger at Home*, accessible to younger children. It is also a sequel to the picture book *When I Was Eight*. A poignant story of a determined young girl's struggle to belong, it will both move and inspire readers everywhere.

Grades 4 to 8

Storm Child by Brenda Bellingham January 1985 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

In the warm springtime of 1831, Isobel Macpherson cools her feet in the flowing water of the North Saskatchewan River. Nearby, York boats move northward in procession, carrying furs to the trading posts on Hudson Bay.

Soon, however, the skies began to darken for Isobel. The daughter of a Scottish father and a Peigan First Nation mother, her heart is pulled in two directions. She hates that her father has returned to Europe and so moves to live with her Peigan grandparents; there she longs for her European education and her old friends. Caught up in the ongoing struggles between the Peigan and their Cree adversaries, Isobel struggles to stay alive. At the same time she must learn to listen to her heart, and to take the best from both of her worlds. Set against a vivid portrait of the Canadian West in the 1830s, *Storm Child* recounts one young woman's fierce struggle to understand who she is.

Looks like Daylight by Deborah Ellis October 2013 Groundwood Books Non-fiction

After her critically acclaimed books of interviews with Afghan, Iraqi, Israeli and Palestinian children, Deborah Ellis turns her attention closer to home. For two years she traveled across the United States and Canada interviewing Indigenous children. The result is a compelling collection of interviews with children aged nine to eighteen. They come from all over the continent, from Iqaluit to Texas, Haida Gwaii to North Carolina, and their stories run the gamut some heartbreaking; many others full of pride and hope.

As one reviewer has pointed out, Deborah Ellis gives children a voice that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to express so readily in the mainstream media. The voices in this book are as frank and varied as the children themselves.

Jordin Tootoo by **Melanie Florence** September 2010
James Lorimer and Company Non-fiction

Hockey is a relatively new sport in Canada's North. It wasn't until 2003 that Jordin Kudluk "Thunder" Tootoo became the first Inuk to play in an NHL game. Although hockey is a rough sport to begin with, Jordin Tootoo is known for having to "fight his way through." Jordin has had more than his fair share of fights both on and off the ice. He's had to overcome the social problems that are associated with the North, fight his way through the discrimination and culture shock he encountered after leaving Rankin Inlet and moving to Alberta to play in the Juniors, and see his way through the grief of losing his NHL-bound older brother and hero, Terence Tootoo, to suicide in 2002.

This new biography explores the struggles and accomplishments of the most recognized role model for young Indigenous people today.

At Risk by **Jacqueline Guest** November 2004 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

Tia is spending the summer working at a special ranch designed to "scare straight" at-risk youth. She tries to bond with Sage, a street kid who has been given one last chance to get her life together. But Sage resists Tia's overtures, and when money goes missing, all fingers point to the troubled teen. *At Risk* combines a satisfying mystery plot with a sympathetic portrayal of teens grappling with dark pasts and uncertain futures.

Free Throw by **Jacqueline Guest** September 2011 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

When his mother remarries, suddenly everything changes for Matthew Eagletail: new school, new father, five annoying new sisters, even a smelly new dog. Worst of all, if he wants to play basketball again, he'll have to play for the Bandits and against his old team.

A Goal in Sight by **Jacqueline Guest** November 2002
James Lorimer and Company Fiction

Aiden is the roughest player on his Calgary hockey team, as likely to be in the penalty box as on the ice. When he hits another player after a game, however, he's charged with assault and sentenced to one hundred hours of community service. He's bored and annoyed when he's forced to help Eric, a blind player with the Calgary Seeing Eye Dogs. In time, his new team shows him hockey is more fun on the ice than in the box.

A Goal in Sight is the story of an unlikely friendship that teaches a troubled kid the value of fair play.

Hat Trick by **Jacqueline Guest** September 2010 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

Leigh Aberdeen is one of the top players on her Alberta hockey team, the Falcons. But as a Métis and the only girl on the team she's different—and not everyone is happy about that. To top it off, she doesn't think her mother wants her to play hockey, so Leigh hasn't told her about the Falcons.

Soon she's getting threatening messages on the phone, the Falcons' captain tries to get her kicked off the team, and her mother wants Leigh to go to a dance recital on the same night as the finals. When the pressure becomes too intense, Leigh has to face some hard decisions.

Hat Trick is a suspenseful, action-packed story about a young woman who learns the price of living a double life—the hard way.

Lightning Rider by **Jacqueline Guest** January 2000 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

When January Fournier arrives at the Foothills Hospital in Calgary, her brother Grey is barely clinging to life in intensive care after a horrible motorcycle crash. She's devastated—but things get worse when the police accuse Grey of a string of bike thefts, claims he's in no condition to dispute. Jan decides she's the only person who can uncover the truth and sets out to find the real thief. Soon, however, she finds her efforts blocked by a police officer who's determined to see Grey convicted. In pursuit of the truth Jan has to pilot her own bike through the twisting switchbacks of Kananaskis County, with both her fate and that of her brother hanging on the edge of disaster.

Lightning Rider is the story of a young Métis woman's determination to see her brother vindicated—whatever the cost.

Rink Rivals by **Jacqueline Guest** October 2001 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

When twin brothers Evan and Brynley Selkirk move with their family from the remote Cree community of Whapmagoostui to bustling Calgary, their worlds turn upside down. In place of the grey, frigid waters of Hudson Bay, they see the downtown canyons of a modern city. Bryn, a musical prodigy, trades piano practice for hockey practice to impress a new girlfriend; Evan, the family hockey hero, starts running with a bad crowd and neglecting the game. As the brothers' lies get them in deeper and deeper trouble with their parents, they have to rely on each other to gain the courage to do what's right.

Rink Rivals is an action-packed account of how sport can help young people find the courage to confront sudden and radical changes in their lives.

Rookie Season by **Jacqueline Guest** January 2000 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

Leigh Aberdeen is determined to win the hockey championship with a new, all girls team, the Chinooks. So when the coach adds a know-it-all boy to the mix, Leigh is furious.

To make matters worse, the team goalie—Leigh's best friend—starts mysteriously dropping out from practices just as the Chinooks show they can win.

With humour, action, and suspense, Jacqueline Guest weaves these threads together to their surprising conclusion.

Soccer Star! by **Jacqueline Guest** May 2003 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

Samantha Aqsarniq Keyes is used to a life on the move. Her military family has been transferred across Canada, and she's grown up with stories of her Inuit ancestors exploring the far north. For Sam, soccer has been the one constant in her life. But now that she's thirteen, her home base isn't the only thing that's changing. Sam longs to show up Carly, her school's reigning soccer star, but Sam's new interest in theatre is taking up a lot of time. Does she have the time to practise her sport and be the lead in the school play? And just how far will she go to prove to her parents that she can handle more than one extracurricular activity?

Soccer Star! is a novel about big ambitions and tough choices.

Triple Threat by **Jacqueline Guest** January 1999 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

Matthew Eagletail can't wait until his online friend John Salton flies from San Francisco to Bragg Creek, Alberta for a summer visit. John is almost as big a basketball fan as Matt is, and dreams of being the first coach in the NBA to use a wheelchair. When Matt's sister Jazz tells them about the upcoming Rocky Mountain Summer Basketball League in Calgary, they decide immediately to get a team together. Unfortunately, so does Matt's archrival, John Beal. Soon the Bobcats and the Mean Machine are fighting it out on the court, determined to win by any means necessary. It's too close to call, until Matt and John get some crucial advice from an unexpected source.

Triple Threat is a basketball novel that smokes down court with hard-hitting action and suspense.

War Games by **Jacqueline Guest** October 2008 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

Ryan Taber's father is about to deploy for his first tour of duty with the Canadian army in Afghanistan. Ryan lives his days on an army base in Alberta, and spends his evenings at the CyberKnights cafe, playing his favourite video game, Desert Death. At CyberKnights, Ryan meets the Desert Death ultimate champion and becomes entangled in a world of danger and deceit that begins to resemble the very real circumstances his father is facing overseas.

Wild Ride by **Jacqueline Guest** June 2005 James Lorimer and Company Fiction

In this sequel to *Lightning Rider*, January and her family have taken in an RCMP summer student as a boarder. When Willow Whitecloud pulls up on her Kawasaki ZX-10R, January takes an instant liking to her. Willow becomes both a friend and a spiritual guide, who helps January connect with her Indigenous heritage. But January is shocked when a number of clues suggest that her mentor may be involved in illegal activity that threatens the natural world she has taught January to respect.

Fatty Legs by **Christy Jordan-Fenton, Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, Liz Amini-Holmes** (Illustrator) September 2010 Annick Press Non-fiction

The moving memoir of an Inuit girl who emerges from a residential school with her spirit intact. Eight-year-old Margaret Pokiak has set her sights on learning to read, even though it means leaving her village in the high Arctic. Faced with unceasing pressure, her father finally agrees to let her make the five-day journey to attend school, but he warns Margaret of the terrors of residential schools. At school Margaret soon encounters the Raven, a black-cloaked nun with a hooked nose and bony fingers that resemble claws. She immediately dislikes the strong-willed young Margaret. Intending to humiliate her, the heartless Raven gives gray stockings to all the girls—all except Margaret, who gets red ones. In an instant Margaret is the laughing stock of the entire school. In the face of such cruelty, Margaret refuses to be intimidated and bravely gets rid of the stockings.

Although a sympathetic nun stands up for Margaret, in the end it is this brave young girl who gives the Raven a lesson in the power of human dignity.

Complemented by archival photos from Margaret Pokiak Fenton's collection and striking artwork from Liz Amini Holmes, this inspiring first-person account of a plucky girl's determination to confront her tormentor will linger with young readers.

A Stranger at Home by **Christy Jordan-Fenton, Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, Liz Amini-Holmes** (Illustrator) August 2011 Annick Press Non-fiction

Travelling to be reunited with her family in the arctic, 10-year-old Margaret Pokiak can hardly contain her excitement. It's been two years since her parents delivered her to the school run by the dark-cloaked nuns and brothers. Coming ashore, Margaret spots her family, but her mother barely recognizes her, screaming, "Not my girl." Margaret realizes she is now marked as an outsider. And Margaret is an outsider: she has forgotten the language and stories of her people, and she can't even stomach the food her mother prepares. However, Margaret gradually relearns her language and her family's way of living. Along the way, she discovers how important it is to remain true to the ways of her people—and to herself.

Highlighted by archival photos and striking artwork, this first-person account of a young girl's struggle to find her place will inspire young readers to ask what it means to belong.

Lacrosse Warrior: The Life of Mohawk Lacrosse Champion Gaylord Powless by **Wendy A. Lewis** April 2008 James Lorimer and Company Non-fiction

Gaylord Powless was playing lacrosse by the age of three. His father was a famous player who taught Gaylord everything he knew. But Gaylord's tremendous skill and native ancestry made him a target on and off the lacrosse

The Moons Speak Cree: A Winter Adventure by **Larry Loyie and Constance Brissenden** February 2013
Theytus Books Fiction

Learning the universal lessons of Indigenous culture, young Lawrence rides his father's long toboggan pulled by four eager dogs, invents a sliding machine that really works from his grandfather's old steamer trunk, reconnects with his older brother and learns the secrets of winter survival from his parents and grandparents.

Based on Larry Loyie's traditional Cree childhood, the story teaches deeper lessons: respect for culture and history, the effect of change on Indigenous people and the importance of being good to animals.

Catching Spring by **Sylvia Olsen**
April 2004 Orca Books Fiction

The year is 1957, and Bobby lives on the Tsartlip First Nation reserve on Vancouver Island where his family has lived for generations and generations. He loves his weekend job at the nearby marina. He loves to play marbles with his friends. And he loves being able to give half his weekly earnings to his mother to eke out the grocery money, but he longs to enter the upcoming fishing derby. With the help of his uncle and Dan from the marina his wish just might come true.

A Different Game by **Sylvia Olsen**
April 2010 Orca Books Fiction

In this sequel to *Murphy and Mousetrap*, Murphy and his three friends, Danny, Jeff and Albert, are making the transition from the tribal elementary school to the community middle school. They are all trying out for the middle school's soccer team, and they're pretty confident that "the formidable four" will all make the team. But once the tryouts begin, Albert, the tribal-school superstar, plays like a second stringer. Murphy's new friend, Molly, is determined to help the boys find out what's wrong with Albert, but when they discover the truth, they realize that Albert is playing a whole different game.

Murphy & Mousetrap by **Sylvia Olsen** April 2005 Orca Books Fiction

Murphy's mother has just moved him and their cat, Mousetrap, back to the reserve in Port Alberni. Although he belongs to the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation, Murphy is sure that he won't fit in, and he worries about Mousetrap, who has always been an indoor cat. When a bunch of local boys drag him to their soccer practice, put him in goal and pelt him with balls, he believes that his worst fear has come true. However, he seems to be discovering a new talent at the same time. And perhaps he has misjudged. Being a light skinned city boy thrust onto reserve far from the city is not easy, but maybe Murphy has what it takes.

Lightfinder by **Aaron Paquette**
June 2014 Kegeedonce Press Fiction

Aisling is a young Cree woman who sets out into the wilderness with her Kokum (grandmother), Aunty and two

young men she barely knows. They have to find and rescue her runaway younger brother, Eric. Along the way she learns that the legends of her people might be real and that she has a growing power of her own.

Nowhere Else on Earth by **Caitlyn Vernon**
October 2000 Orca Books Non-fiction

You don't have to live in the Great Bear Rainforest to benefit from its existence, but after you read *Nowhere Else on Earth* you might want to visit this magnificent part of the planet. Environmental activist Caitlyn Vernon guides young readers through a forest of information, sharing her personal stories, her knowledge and her concern for this beautiful place. Full of breathtaking photographs and suggestions for ways to preserve this unique ecosystem, *Nowhere Else on Earth* is a timely and inspiring reminder that we need to stand up for our wild places before they are gone.

This book has a dedicated website with teacher and student resources, photo gallery and book excerpts: www.greatbearrainforest.ca. *Nowhere Else on Earth* free teacher's guide: digital.orcabook.com/teachersguides-nowhereelseonearth.

Shannen and the Dream for a School by **Janet Wilson**
(Illustrations) October 2011 Second Story Press
Non-fiction, Grades 4-8

It is 2008, and thirteen-year-old Shannen and the other students at J.R. Nakogee Elementary are tired of attending class in portables that smell and don't keep out the cold winter air. They make a YouTube video describing the poor conditions, and their plea for a decent school attracts attention and support from community leaders and children across the country. Inspired, the students decide to turn their grade-eight class trip into a visit to Ottawa, to speak to the Canadian government. Once there, Shannen speaks passionately to the politicians about the need to give Indigenous children the opportunity to succeed. The following summer, Shannen is nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize. Tragically, Shannen was killed in a car crash in 2010, and was not able to see the dream of her school fulfilled. Her family, friends and supporters continue to honor her memory as they work for equality for children in Indigenous communities everywhere



Grades 9 to 12

Un/Inhabited by Jordan Abel

April 2015 Talonbooks Poetry

The second book by the award-winning Indigenous writer, *Un/Inhabited* is a study of the intersections between language and the land. Using the search function on his computer, Jordan Abel searched through 91 western novels on the Project Gutenberg website—an online archive of works in the public domain—for words relating to land, territory and ownership. He then manipulated these source materials, removing words and juxtaposing found sentences to create a powerful new text that serves as a comment on public spaces.

The Red Files by Lisa Bird-Wilson May 2015 Nightwood Editions Poetry

This debut poetry collection from Lisa Bird-Wilson reflects on the legacy of the residential school system: the fragmentation of families and histories, with blows that resonate through the generations. Inspired by family and archival sources, Bird-Wilson assembles scraps of a history torn apart by colonial violence. The collection takes its name from the federal government's complex organizational structure of residential schools archives, which are divided into "black files" and "red files."

In vignettes as clear as glass beads, her poems offer affection to generations of children whose presence within the historic record is ghostlike, anonymous and ephemeral.

Secret Path by Gord Downie, Jeff Lemire (Illustrator) October 2016 Simon and Schuster Graphic Novel

Secret Path is a ten song album by Gord Downie with a graphic novel by illustrator Jeff Lemire that tells the story of Chanie "Charlie" Wenjack, a twelve-year-old boy who died in flight from the Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School fifty years ago. Chanie, misnamed Charlie by his teachers, was a young boy who died on October 22, 1966, walking the railroad tracks, trying to escape from the Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School to return home. Chanie's home was 644 kilometers away. He didn't know that. He didn't know where it was, nor how to find it, but, like so many kids more than anyone will be able to imagine—he tried.

Chanie's story is Canada's story. We are not the country we thought we were. History will be re-written. We are all accountable. *Secret Path* acknowledges a dark part of Canada's history the long suppressed mistreatment of Indigenous children and families by the residential school system—with the hope of starting our country on a road to reconciliation.

Every year as we remember Chanie Wenjack, the hope for *Secret Path* is that it educates all Canadians young and old on this omitted part of our history, urging our entire country to play an active role in the preservation of Indigenous lives and culture in Canada. The next hundred years are going to be painful as we come to know Chanie Wenjack and thousands like him—as we find out about ourselves, about

all of us—but only when we do can we truly call ourselves, "Canada."

Proceeds from *Secret Path* will be donated to The Gord Downie Secret Path Fund for Truth and Reconciliation via The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) at The University of Manitoba.

The Pemmican Eaters by Marilyn Dumont April 2015 ECW Press Poetry

With a title derived from John A. Macdonald's name for the Métis, *The Pemmican Eaters* offers a picture of the Riel Resistance from one of Canada's pre-eminent Métis poets. Combining free verse and metered poems, Marilyn Dumont recreates a palpable sense of this time and place through the eyes of those who fought the battles.

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer October 2013 Milkweed Editions Non-fiction

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, a mother, and a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings—asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass—offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to hear their voices. In a rich braid of reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten our existence today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of a wider ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgement and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world.

The Reason You Walk by Wab Kinew September 2015 Viking Canada Non-fiction

The Reason You Walk chronicles the year 2012, when Wab Kinew's father was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Kinew (who hosted Canada Reads in 2015) goes to Winnipeg to revisit his own childhood and travels to a reserve in northern Ontario, where he discovers more about his father's past and his troubled upbringing in a residential school.

The Inconvenient Indian by Thomas King November 2012 Doubleday Canada Non-fiction

Neither a traditional nor all-encompassing history of First Nations people in North America, *The Inconvenient Indian* is a personal meditation on what it means to be "Indian." King explores the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous since the fifteenth century and examines the way that popular culture has shaped our notion of Indigenous identity, while also reflecting on his own complicated relationship with activism. Craig Kielburger championed *The Inconvenient Indian* for Canada Reads 2015.

Birdie by Tracy Lindberg May 2015 Harper Collins Fiction

Birdie follows a Cree woman known as Birdie on a modern day quest from her home in northern Alberta to Gibsons,

British Columbia, where she hopes to meet her teenage crush: Jesse from *The Beachcombers*. Birdie's troubled childhood has left her with inner demons, and her adventures take a dark turn, forcing her to find the strength to heal old wounds and build a new life. Informed by Cree lore, *Birdie* is a darkly comic novel about finding out who you are and where you're from.

Birdie was defended by Bruce Poon Tip on Canada Reads 2016.

Celia's Song by **Lee Maracle** October 2014 Cormorant Books Fiction

Set on the west coast of Vancouver Island, *Celia's Song* chronicles the experiences of a Nuu'Chahlnuth family over several generations, and vividly brings to life the destructive legacy of colonial times— and a community's capacity for healing.

Its richly imagined characters include a sea serpent and a shape-shifting mink who bears witness to the past.

Legacy by **Waubgeshig Rice** August 2014 Theytus Books Fiction

Legacy is the first novel by Waubgeshig Rice, whose collection of stories — Midnight Sweatlodge — was the gold-medal winner of the Independent Publisher Book Awards in 2012 for Adult Multicultural Fiction.

Set in the 1990s, *Legacy* deals with violence against a young Indigenous woman and its lingering after-shocks on an Anishnawbe family in Ontario.

Its themes of injustice, privilege, reconciliation and revenge are as timely as today's headlines.

Monkey Beach by **Eden Robinson** April 2002 Mariner Books Fiction

Eden Robinson's first English-language novel is about a family facing a harrowing loss. It's told from the point of view of Lisa, the hot-tempered eldest sibling of a Haisla family in Kitamaat on the coast of British Columbia. As the family awaits word about Lisa's brother, who's missing at sea, Lisa looks back on their shared childhood. The spirit world and the natural world are equally real to her— and they are both vividly rendered in this riveting story of grief and survival.

Monkey Beach was nominated for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and the Governor General's Literary Award.

Real Justice: Convicted for Being Mi'kmaq—The story of Donald Marshall Jr. by **Bill Swan** March 2013 James Lorimer and Company Non-fiction

When a black teen was murdered in a Sydney, Cape Breton park late one night, his young companion, Donald Marshall Jr., became a prime suspect. Sydney police coached two teens to testify against Donald which helped convict him of a murder he did not commit. He spent 11 years in prison until he finally got a lucky break. Not only was he eventually acquitted of the crime, but a royal commission inquiry into his wrongful conviction found that a non-Indigenous youth

would not have been convicted in the first place.

Donald became a First Nations activist and later won a landmark court case in favour of Indigenous fishing rights. He was often referred to as the "reluctant hero" of the Mi'kmaq community.

The Lesser Blessed by **Richard Van Camp** April 2004 Douglas and McIntyre Fiction

Set in Fort Simmer, a fictional community in the Northwest Territories based on Richard Van Camp's hometown of Fort Smith, *The Lesser Blessed* follows a Dogrib teenager named Larry through his high school experience. In many ways, Larry is a typical 16-year-old boy who loves Iron Maiden and carries a flame for a local girl. But Larry is also haunted by his past: an abusive father, a fatal accident that claimed several of his cousins and the ill effects of sniffing gasoline. A new friendship with Johnny, a Métis newcomer to town, may help put him on the path to his future. In 2001,

The Lesser Blessed won the German Youth Literature Prize. A film adaptation, released in 2013, garnered a nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay at the Canadian Screen Awards.

North End Love Songs by **Katherena Vermette** March 2012 The Muses' Company Poetry

In *North End Love Songs*, Katherena Vermette's debut collection of poems, the young Métis/Mennonite poet pays tribute to Winnipeg's toughest and most notorious neighbourhood: the North End. She writes of its beauty and of the loss she experienced— her brother went missing there. These are gritty poems of spare but piercing intensity. *North End Love Songs* won the Governor General's Literary Award for poetry in 2013.

Him Standing by **Richard Wagamese** April 2013 Raven Books Fiction

When Lucas Smoke learns the Ojibway art of carving from his grandfather, he proves to be a natural. He can literally make people come to life in wood. Then Lucas's growing reputation attracts a mysterious stranger, who offers him a large advance to carve a spirit mask. This mask is to represent the master, but Lucas must find its face in his dreams. As his dreams become more and more disturbing, he feels himself changing. And the mask takes control of his life. Then a chance encounter with an old woman introduces him to the identity of the master. He is an ancient sorcerer named Him Standing, a powerful and dark wizard.

The more Lucas works on the mask, the closer Him Standing comes to emerging from the dream world to walk the earth again. What follows is a race against time and the forces of evil in this supernatural thriller.

Indian Horse by **Richard Wagamese** March 2012 Douglas and McIntyre Fiction

Saul Indian Horse is an alcoholic Ojibway man who finds himself the reluctant resident of an alcohol treatment centre after his latest binge. To come to peace with himself, he must tell his story. Richard Wagamese takes readers on the often difficult journey through Saul's life, from his painful forced separation from his family and land when he's sent to a residential school to the brief salvation he finds in playing hockey.

The novel is an unflinching portrayal of the harsh reality of life in 1960s Canada, where racism reigns and Saul's spirit is destroyed by the alienating effects of cultural displacement. *Indian Horse* was a finalist in Canada Reads 2013, when it was defended by Carol Huynh. It was voted the People Choice's winner.

Medicine Walk by **Richard Wagamese** April 2014 McClelland and Stewart Fiction

Celebrated author and Canada Reads finalist for *Indian Horse*, Wagamese has a stunning new novel that has all the timeless qualities of a classic.

Fresh and utterly memorable, *Medicine Walk* unveils a universal father-and-son struggle set in the dramatic landscape of the B.C. Interior.

The Right to be Cold by **Sheila Watt Cloutier** March 2016 Penguin Canada Non-fiction

The former head of the international Inuit Circumpolar Council and nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize, author and activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier chronicles the impact climate change has had on northern communities and makes the case that this environmental crisis is indeed a human rights issue.

Weaving together environmental, cultural and economic issues, Watt-Cloutier makes a passionate and personal plea for change.

Teacher

The Orenda by **Joseph Boyden** September 2013 Hamish Hamilton Fiction

Set in the wilderness in the 1600s, *The Orenda* brings together the three characters and their clashing cultures: a young Iroquois girl named Snow Falls, a Huron elder named Bird and a Jesuit priest named Christopher. As their cultures collide, the stage is set for the country that will become Canada. Both brutal and beautiful, *The Orenda* brings the past vividly to life: it's historical fiction at its best. *The Orenda* won Canada Reads 2014. It was defended by Wab Kinew.

Wenjack by **Joseph Boyden** October 2016 Hamish Hamilton Fiction

An Ojibwe boy runs away from a North Ontario Indian Residential School, not realizing just how far away home is.

Along the way he's followed by Manitou, spirits of the forest who comment on his plight, cajoling, taunting, and ultimately offering him a type of comfort on his difficult journey back to the place he was so brutally removed from.

Written by Scotiabank Giller Prize winning author Joseph Boyden and beautifully illustrated by acclaimed artist Ken Monkman, *Wenjack* is a powerful and poignant look into the world of a residential school runaway trying to find his way home.



Culturally relevant texts increase literacy. Photo source: WE Archives.

Sources for book suggestions and descriptions:

- "Top 10 Indigenous books for your summer reading list." CBC. July 5, 2015. www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/10-top-indigenous-books-for-your-summer-reading-list-1.2695671
- The Martin Family Initiative www.themfi.ca
- "15 books to read for Indigenous book club month." CBC. June 2, 2016. www.cbc.ca/books/2016/06/carolyn-bennett-marks-june-as-indigenous-book-club-month.html
- Goodreads.com

SEVEN WAYS TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP

1. Commit to taking action by taking the WE pledge at WE.org.
2. Incorporate best practices for teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, history and issues in your classroom.
3. Find out more about leadership programming for Indigenous youth, such as Sacred Circle, by contacting weschools@WE.org.
4. Celebrate Canada's 150th birthday by teaching lessons that promote reconciliation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
5. Participate in WE Stand Together. Check out www.WE.org/westandtogether for more information, lessons and resources.
6. Sign up to receive WE articles such as *Global Voices* to your inbox every week during the school year at www.WE.org/global-voices-signup.
7. Provide students with novels, poetry and non-fiction texts that tell Indigenous stories and are written by Indigenous Canadians.



Youth participating in Sacred Circle programming. Photo source: WE Archives.



AN INITIATIVE OF

