

Smudge and Mirrors: Representations of First Nations Knowledge in the Sudbury Catholic
District School Board

by

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Abstract

This research seeks to explore the understanding of, and representation of Indigenous knowledges within elementary schools within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board. Moreover, the research seeks to examine the perceived barriers that are faced by educators in the representation of Indigenous knowledges within elementary urban schools. The research will conclude by exploring some recommendations on reshaping educational institutions to better incorporate Indigenous content and knowledge within elementary schools.

This research confirms what First Nations parents, communities and students already know, western systems of education are continuing to fail First Nations students and by extension First Nations communities as they continue to perpetuate colonial approaches to the delivery of education for First Nations students.

Keywords

Indigenous, First Nations, Self-Identified, Colonization, Decolonization, Achievement, Demographics, Residential Schools.

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Preface

This thesis will strive to seek answers to a number of perplexing questions in relation to the approach to Indigenous education, primarily within the provincial school system. For example, where are the stories, the experiences and the Indigenous knowledge within the provincial school system in Ontario? And why is it that, when we do find sparse reference to these stories, experiences and Indigenous cultures within the provincial school system, they are often not told by Indigenous people or Indigenous educators?

For those more progressive provincial schools that understand the importance of incorporating Indigenous content within their curriculum, it is often difficult to find authentic, First Nations community developed teaching resources; Why is that in this day and age, in an age where numerous public inquiries have been launched, such as the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), the Ipperwash Inquiry (2007), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) and each of which recommended the need for a broader societal understanding of the scope and nature of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples.

The inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, history and perspectives in classrooms has been largely advocated for by Indigenous people for decades but continues to be ineffectively done within many provincial schools throughout Ontario. This research emerged from my own personal experiences as a student in a colonial education system, as a First Nations teacher and as a parent of First Nations children who attend provincial schools in Ontario.

The misrepresentation of First Nations people, our rich and diverse histories, traditions

and stories was the acceptable norm in classrooms throughout my childhood. The education that I received growing up in the Northern Ontario city of Timmins worked to foster a subtle sense of shame in who I was and where I came from. The retelling of history from a colonial perspective often resulted in the cowboys versus Indians approach or the stories of savage Indians being civilized and saved by white settler society. I know the confusion, struggle and erosion of self-confidence that manifests as a result of the misrepresentations of First Nations people, Canada's history and settler society.

That lack of knowledge about Indigenous people, history and perspectives persists today in greater society and rears its colonial head throughout classrooms and educational institutions throughout Ontario. The continued lack of knowledge and understanding of Indigenous people, cultures and issues is evidenced through my interactions with teachers, staff, students and First Nations community members. Effective and meaningful partnerships between First Nations and school boards in Ontario is the only path that will yield positive results on Indigenous achievement and well-being, which are the key measurements of success as outlined by the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework, 2007.

Chapter 1

1 Introduction

While efforts have been made by both Ontario provincial government and Canadian federal government to facilitate improved academic outcomes and increased well-being among Indigenous¹ students, there continues to be an apparent disparity in achievement and well-being, the key indicators of success as outlined by the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework (2007)² between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. In 2007, the Ontario Ministry of Education initiated the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework with the intention of improving Aboriginal³ education within provincially funded schools. The Ministry of Education identified Aboriginal education as one of its key priorities, with a focus on improving achievement among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and to close the achievement gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, retention of students in school, improved graduation rates, and advancement to postsecondary studies (Ontario, First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007). The Framework was developed

¹ In this research I use the term Indigenous only when it is used in a document that I am citing. I also use this term Indigenous only when including First Nations, Metis and Inuit as a group. I use the term First Nations to describe people who existed on the lands prior to contact. First Nations terminology is specific to the nations of people that occupied lands and territories from time immemorial and continue to have lands set aside for the specific use and occupation by First Nations people within Canada. First Nations people are a distinct group of people as we have inhabited a geographical region prior to colonization or prior to the establishment of present governments. First Nations continue to retain some social, economic, cultural and political institutions and structures.

² First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework was developed in 2007 and was designed to address the ongoing achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit and non-Indigenous students within public schools in Ontario.

³ In this research I also use the terms “Aboriginal, First Nations, Native and Indian” only where participants or various authors use this terminology.

amidst politically and socially shifting times following the eight-year reign of the conservative party in Ontario and on the heels of the election of Dalton McGuinty as Ontario's Premier. The main objectives of the Framework were to increase awareness of Indigenous cultures for all students in Ontario public schools and to close the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by 2016.

Despite the efforts put forth by the Ontario provincial government, many First Nations communities, parents and political leaders have demanded more accountability from school boards and, increased partnerships between First Nations and local school boards when it comes to the planning, development, delivery and implementation of programs and services that impact First Nations students within provincially funded schools across Ontario. The Provincial Auditor General's (2012) report identified serious issues with Indigenous education within Ontario, and in particular, Education Quality and Accountability Office and hereafter, EQAO scores and credit accumulation suggests that the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is minimally closing in Ontario (Gallagher-MacKay, K., Kidder, A., & Methot, S., 2013). In fact, only modest gains have been made in closing the academic achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and most improvements have been achieved within schools located on reserves (Kanu, 2011).

There has undoubtedly been some positive outcomes since the creation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Framework (2007), including a remarkable rise in awareness, especially among the non-Indigenous, of the history, culture and issues of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada. We have also witnessed an increase in the activities in schools throughout Ontario when it comes to Indigenous courses, programs and events, mostly funded by the Ministry of Education's Indigenous Education Grant, the per pupil amount allotted for self-identified

Indigenous students within each school board in Ontario, which currently sits at approximately 66 million dollars.

1.1 Indigenous Students in Ontario School Boards?

The Ministry of Education released a policy document in 2007 to promote Indigenous student self-identification but the guideline document largely left the task of developing a self-identification process to school boards in Ontario, which was an issue highlighted by the Provincial Auditor General's Report (2012). Gathering baseline data on Indigenous students in Ontario is fundamental in assessing any progress that may be made towards meeting the goals of developing and implementing effective programs and services for Indigenous students and ensuring accountability to First Nations communities and to the people of Ontario.

According to the Third Progress Report: Strengthening Our Journey, 2018, "as of 2013, all seventy-two Ontario district school boards and four school authorities had implemented voluntary, confidential Indigenous student self-identification policies and by October 2015, all were reporting First Nation, Métis and Inuit student self-identification data to the ministry." (pg. 63, 2018). The Provincial Auditor's Report (2012) established that boards needed to share best practices on the Indigenous student self-identification process amongst each other and get guidance from the Ministry of Education. Since the introduction and implementation of the 2007 First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework it took six years for all seventy-two school boards in Ontario to implement Indigenous student self-identification policies and it took eight years for all school boards in Ontario to report First Nations, Métis and Inuit self-identification data to the Ministry of Education.

1.2 Indigenous Demographics in Canada and Ontario

There are currently 133 First Nations communities in Ontario. There are thirteen Indigenous Nations in Ontario, including the Algonquin, Mississauga, Ojibway, Onondaga, Mohawk, Seneca, Oneida, Cayuga, Tuscarora, Cree, Odawa, Pottowatomi and Delaware. Each of these sovereign Nations has their own set of traditions, languages and knowledge systems that provide context for community, family and for educating their children.

According to the First Nations, Métis and Inuit 2nd Progress Report (2013)⁴, approximately 82 % of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in Ontario attend provincially funded schools. According to Statistics Canada, results on First Nations, Métis and Inuit 2016 Census of Population⁵ there were 1,673, 785 Indigenous people in Canada, accounting for 4.9 % of the total population. This included 977,230 First Nations; 587,545 Métis and 65, 025 Inuit. Since 2006, the Indigenous population has grown by 42.5%. Ontario is the most populous province in Canada with a population of 14 million. Indigenous people in Ontario accounted for 1.8 % of the total population in 2016. Almost one-quarter of the First Nations population in Canada live in Ontario or 242, 495 Indigenous peoples. There are 181, 524 Registered Indians⁶ in Ontario and First Nations people made up approximately 63% of the Indigenous population. From 2006 to 2016 the number of Indigenous people living in a metropolitan area has increased

⁴ The Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework (2007) provides the foundation for delivering education to First Nations, Métis and Inuit students within provincial schools in Ontario. The ministry of education committed to releasing a progress report on the implementation of the Framework every 3 years. A report was released in 2009, 2013 and in 2018.

⁵ The information source of this data is: Statistics Canada 2016 (accessed June 15, 2018).

⁶ Under the Indian Act, registered Indians or status Indians. The Indian Act, 1876 applies only to status Indians and is wide-ranging covering First Nations governance, reserve lands, health and education Indian status, also known as Indians, is a person who is registered as an Indian under the Indian Act, 1876. (<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/>: accessed June 15, 2018).

FIRST NATIONS AND TREATIES

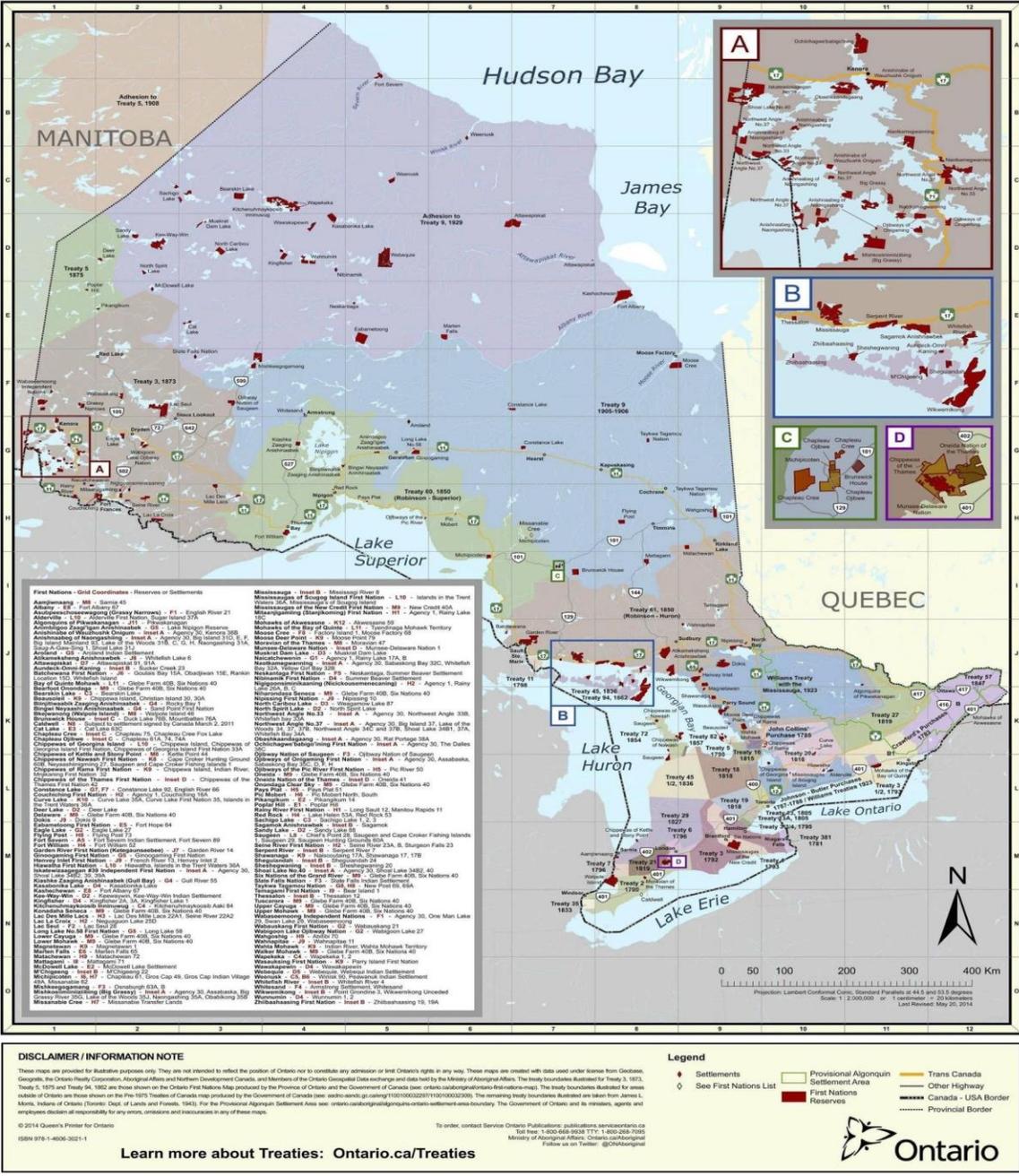


Figure 1: First Nations and Treaties in Ontario

(Image retrieved from Ontario.ca/treaties)

by 59.7 % with 52% of Indigenous people in Ontario living in Census Metropolitan Areas. The highest proportion of Indigenous people was in Thunder Bay (15,075) and Sudbury (15, 695).

The changing demographics within Canada and more specifically, Ontario is placing growing demands on provincial schools to better meet the unique and diverse needs of Indigenous students and further reinforces the need for increased representation of Indigenous knowledges within educational institutions.

1.3 How Are Indigenous Students Doing?

Despite the increased allocation of funds for Indigenous education throughout Ontario, First Nations students are not at par today with non-Indigenous students when it comes to achievement and well-being, the key measurements of achievement within the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Framework (2007). According to the provincially administered Education, Quality and Accountability Office mandatory testing of achievement for grade 3 and grade 6 students in Ontario, identifies the continued disparity in achievement among First Nations and non-First Nations students. This is especially apparent among First Nations students residing in First Nations communities who attend provincially funded schools in Ontario, despite the continued allocation of increased funding for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

There has been a continuous increase in the number of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students within the provincial education system in Ontario, which has resulted in increased funding to accommodate the needs for educational services. Has the increased funding and increased number of staff that is dedicated to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education amounted to more positive outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and

communities? According to Figure 2 and Figure 3, Grade 3 and Grade 6 EQAO results indicate that only minimal improvements have been made over the last decade. This leads me to question, are First Nations people and students in Ontario the tool being used by school boards to address the funding inadequacies of the standard education system?

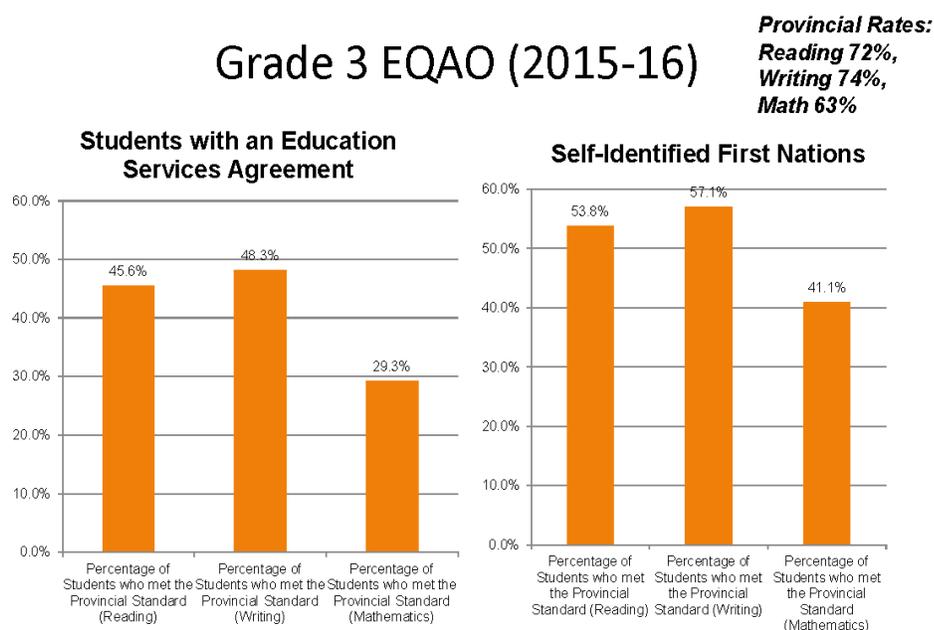


Figure 2: Grade 3 EQAO (2015-2016) for students with Education Services Agreements and for Self-Identified First Nations students' results for Reading, Writing and Mathematics⁷

⁷ The Grade 3 and 6 EQAO (2015-2016) results for Reading, Writing and Mathematics visual was presented at a Chiefs of Ontario Education Forum on December 5, 2017 in Timmins, Ontario. The Chiefs of Ontario is an advocacy forum and secretariat for collective decision making and action for First Nations in Ontario.

Grade 6 EQAO (2015-16)

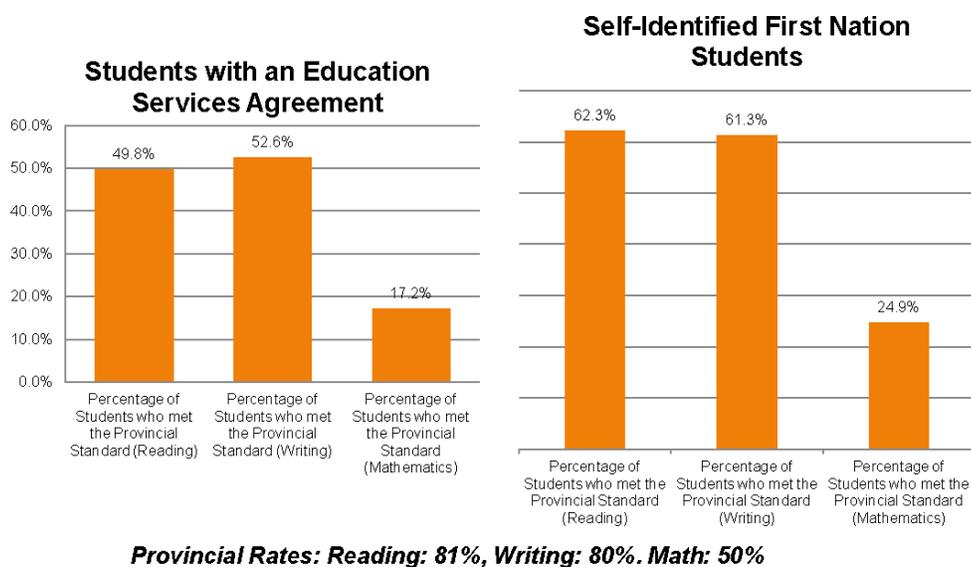


Figure 3: Grade 6 EQAO (2015-2016) results for Reading, Writing and Mathematics

Indigenous peoples throughout Canada have consistently articulated their goals for Indigenous education for their children and communities. They expect their educational institutions to prepare their children to participate fully in the economic life of their communities and in mainstream Canadian society (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Urban education institutions, in particular, must better meet the unique cultural and academic needs of Indigenous students in order to facilitate greater Indigenous student success and overall improvement of quality of life. Historically, the education system has not provided Indigenous students with the necessary skills needed to gain meaningful employment within mainstream society, nor did the education system provide Indigenous students with the language and cultural

knowledge of their people and history. According to my father, J. Nicolas,

“Indian boarding school did not teach me anything ... I didn’t even know how to write my name. I was embarrassed and didn’t want to be teased and I knew that my name started with the letter J So I copied somebody else’s name that started with a J, which was John. It wasn’t really my name but that is what I wrote and that is what everybody thought my name was after that. I only knew how to write my real name at age 12 and could barely read when I left that place. It really made getting a good job hard. All I remember learning was church and cleaning the floor with brushes” (Personal Communication, April 2015).

There is a strong desire by Indigenous peoples to effectively increase Indigenous student success within urban education institutions and there is a strong desire to ensure that their children maintain their cultural identity within the classroom. “The greatest myth about Aboriginal people is that when they move to the city, they abandon their culture. It is a myth assumed to be true by many mainstream Canadians” (Warry,2007, p.111). Much research has been done in the area of Indigenous education and it concludes that supporting a child’s culture and language significantly improves outcomes for Indigenous students (Haig-Brown, Hodgson-Smith, Regnier, & Archibald, 1997).

The meaning of success from the point of view of First Nations parents and communities is often in contrast with the more linear interpretation that is entrenched in Western ideology. The traditional First Nations view on the purpose of learning differs from Western society:

“The purpose of learning is to develop the skills, knowledge, values and wisdom needed to honor and protect the natural world and ensure the long-term sustainability of life. Interconnectedness is critical to well-being in First Nations worldview because it supports self-identity and guides the use of one’s innate gifts from Creator.” (Canadian Council on Learning, 2010, p. 18).

“Who we are cannot be separated from what we do, how we do it, and how we feel about things. Our sense of health and well-being is inextricably linked to our sense of which we are in the world and how we are linked to that world. These connections recognize and build from the healing power of cultural renaissance and positive self-identity.” (Tagalik, S., 2010, p. 32).

There has been a call to action among First Nations people in Canada to facilitate social and economic change, which works to improve the overall quality of life among First Nations people throughout Canada. Today, educational institutions have the distinct responsibility of providing students with the academic, emotional, psychological and cultural supports they need to facilitate success in school and later in life. Teachers play an important role in influencing the well-being and achievement of students as they have regular contact with students on a day to day basis. In my view, Improving First Nations students’ well-being and education achievement rates within the Ontario provincial school system will work to improve the overall quality of life for First Nations peoples by:

- Increasing access to and awareness of First Nations culture, languages and spirit;
- Increasing sense of well-being;
- Increasing partnerships with First Nations communities and people;

- Fostering participation in the labour market;
- Fostering the development of leadership roles within First Nations communities and non-First Nations organizations;
- Reducing poverty among First Nations communities and people;
- Reducing the marginalization of First Nations people.

Therefore, the overall purpose of this research is twofold: first, to create an increased understanding of the complexity of incorporating First Nations knowledge and authentic First Nations history, culture and stories into the existing Ontario provincial education system and second, to facilitate a transformative approach to education, which incorporates a two-eyed seeing paradigm to knowledge transmission within urban elementary classrooms.

1.4 The Research Focus

The focus of this research is to examine the ways that Indigenous knowledges, content, histories and stories are understood and represented by educators within urban public education within the City of Greater Sudbury. The research will work to explore the underlying beliefs and understandings of Indigenous philosophies, knowledges and histories of educators, and explore how the educators incorporate Indigenous knowledges, histories and philosophies into their pedagogical practices. Next, the research seeks to explore how Western approaches to education can be reconciled in ways that will help produce increased Indigenous academic success, facilitate positive self-awareness among Indigenous students and increase understanding of Indigenous culture and history among Indigenous and non-Indigenous students within the provincial education system. The research will also explore perceived barriers encountered by educators, which inhibits effective integration of Indigenous knowledges, content and histories

within provincial elementary urban schools. Can authentic change truly come within our current provincial education system if we are forced to continue to work within the same structures, while administering the same policies, programs and guidelines of the colonial government? How can schools and school authorities ensure that all students have access to accurate, meaningful and authentic information about First Nations peoples; how do we create space for Indigenous knowledges and experiences; and, how do we create meaningful and authentic partnerships with First Nations families and communities?

1.5 The Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this study is to explore if and how we can effectively make space for Indigenous knowledges and to gain understanding about how Indigenous content, histories and stories are integrated within urban elementary schools within the City of Greater Sudbury. Indigenous scholar, Taiiike Alfred asserts that in order to Indigenize public education, we must strive to transform schools to ensure they become the places where the “values, principles, and modes of organization and behaviors of our people are respected, and hopefully even integrated into, the larger system structures and processes that make up the school itself” (2005, p.88). In order for schools to adequately respond to the needs to Indigenous students, teachers have to have an understanding about Indigenous culture, history and current social issues that Indigenous people and students face. When we teach, we teach from who we are and from where we come from. If we are Anishinawbe, then we teach from our place on lands, our connection to community, from our history of colonialism and ongoing resurgence. In other words, authentic infusion of First Nations knowledge comes from First Nations people and community.

Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

This research examines how decolonization of urban elementary education in Ontario is complex and how true and meaningful decolonization must be driven by First Nations communities and people. Therefore, I strive to make connections between relevant authors, their research and work in the area of decolonization and education. Within this literature review I explore key concepts of colonization, decolonization and Indigenous knowledges. This provides an overview of the relationship between colonization and the education system that affects First Nations people; whilst offering an overview of the importance of implementing a two-eyed seeing approach for the delivery and incorporation of First Nations knowledge, history, culture and content within urban elementary schools.

The first part of this literature review will focus on the relationship between First Nations and the lands and will also examine the treaty relationship between First Nations and the Crown. I have relied on the experiences and stories of some of my relations and the community of Mattagami First Nation to provide a framework for understanding how First Nations connections to the lands and how the interactions with the lands and Mother Earth have shaped our approaches to learning and knowledge transmission.

2.1 First Nations Way of Living

First Nations people and communities have witnessed and have been largely unwilling participants in dramatic change from time of settler contact to the 21st century. Long before the

arrival of European settlers, First Nation people lived and flourished throughout North America. Over time, First Nation communities across the North American continent developed unique knowledge and understandings of the world around them. This understanding and interactions with the world around them worked to ensure survival of the many Nations throughout North America. First Nations populations throughout the lands were healthy, strong and thrived within diverse and complex societies. Within our communities First Nations survived through a cohesive, interconnected and organized effort that ensured our existence. We endured through interdependency and in the clear understanding of our roles and responsibilities within the nation. From time immemorial⁸, Indigenous nations have exercised control over their own approaches to education, including content development, systems of delivery and measurements of achievement. For thousands of years, Indigenous knowledge, including territorial understanding of the surrounding environment was central to community based education. Indigenous knowledge included many aspects of knowing and was centered on spirituality, culture, language, lands and environment.⁹

For First Nations, including the Ojibway, Cree and Oji-Cree that have historically occupied the territory currently known as the James Bay Treaty #9¹⁰, the extended family was a self-sufficient unit. Basic human needs such as food, clothing, shelter and other human and spiritual needs such as love, education and politics were all met through the value of, and

⁸ From time immemorial is often used to describe the historical framework within which First Nations and Inuit peoples have existed. From time immemorial has important meaning to First Nations and Inuit peoples and means a time before living memory.

⁹ Battiste, M., "Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy in First Nations Education: a Literature Review with Recommendations" Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Ottawa, 2002.

¹⁰ Treaty #9, also known as the James Bay Treaty is one of 11 post-Confederation numbered treaties negotiated with First Nations peoples of Canada the Crown. Treaty 9 covers most of Northern Ontario. Information retrieved from <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/treaty-9>

reliance on, kinship. Our people needed one another, relied on one another, and flourished because of this interconnectedness.

“During the spring months, I would spend about 6 weeks in the bush with my Nokomis (grandmother) and other family members. My uncle Jim would bring me in the bush when I was only about 2 years old. My uncles and aunts would all go, too. I lived with extended family. We would go into the bush in March when the water would break-up. Sometimes we would go other times but we would go into the bush with a dog team to help us bring all the supplies we needed. We would portage and come back by Grassy. We would trap wazhashk (muskrat), amik (beaver), zhiishiib (duck), and I would watch my relatives skin the animal and use all of the different parts of the animals. Then, I learned how to skin and cook the animals myself. My nookimis would teach me how to sew on a tam (woman’s hat). That’s how I learned to sew and all the words I heard being spoken were only in the language, never any English.” (Communication, Community Member, 2016).

Women were valued within the community and children were raised according to the values and principles of the Seven Grandfather Teachings¹¹. The community was able to survive within the resource-rich environments within the traditional territories of Mattagami First Nation.

¹¹ Long before the arrival of European settlers in what is now known as Canada, First Nations people lived and thrived on the lands. The First Nations were diverse and each group had their own unique beliefs about the world around them, how the earth was created and how people came to exist. These beliefs are passed down from one generation to the next through teachings and stories. The Seven Grandfather Teachings is a set of teachings on how we, First Nations conduct ourselves on a day to day basis. The Seven Grandfather Teachings include Love, Respect, Humility, Bravery, Honesty, Truth and Wisdom. These teachings are still taught today and some First Nations communities continue to pass on these teachings to as a way to help the community thrive and retain culture and traditions.

“It was a hard life for us as children. We saw a lot of change from the time we were kids ‘til now. We went from scrubbing our clothes at the lake, knowing everybody in the community and not having hydro to washing our clothes with washing machines, having hydro and seeing people in the community that I don’t even really recognize anymore.”

(Communication, Community Member, 2016)

For many generations First Nations communities ensured their survival through their reliance on Mother Earth who provided for them and by finding innovative ways to make and create all things necessary for survival.

“We used everything we could from the bush. We had to. We used fat from the bear and moose to cook. We never seemed to get sick when we lived that way, when we lived in the bush. Then as time went on the community dug 2 wells in the ground to store the meat and every community member would get meat. No matter who went out to hunt and kill an animal. We would put a galvanized pail with family name on it and put the meat down the hole for storage... because it was cold in the well. We took care of each other”

(Communication, Community Member, 2016)

First Nations people within the traditional territories of the James Bay, Watershed areas traded with one another prior to the arrival of Europeans, and their network was far-reaching, extensive and all trading was done in good faith. The Mattagami River and supporting water passages were used by many First Nations people throughout this traditional territory as a highway where they would travel using birch bark canoes to trade with other small, scattered First Nations villages along the way.

“The coastal Indians would travel down the Mattagami River using canoes to hunt, fish, trap and trade with different tribes along the way. Eventually, the Ojibway Nation became mixed with the Cree Nation creating the Oji-Cree Nation that we have today. When the Cree Indians were here, they were actually here trading goods, but Treaty #9 was being signed so the Commissioners rounded up all the Indians that were around and stuck them in the community that we have now.” (Communication, Community Member, 2016)

Major trading routes were developed and nation-to-nation treaties were established to determine how best to share the lands, its natural resources and how military alliances could be created for protection and defense against common enemies.

“The coastal Indians and southern Indians would always be moving by canoe and land to travel and trade goods with other Indians. Trading of animal pelts, meats and other goods would be traded all along the way. Times were tough back then but we had what we needed to be happy and survive.” (Communication, Community Member, 2016)

Wild fruits and plants supplemented the dietary needs of our people throughout the summer months. Gathering strawberries, blueberries and chokecherries throughout our territory was often a time for the women and children to socialize, share stories, teachings and allowed the children to learn about the lands and all that they provide for us.

“We would go out with our aunties and cousins and pick berries all day, off in the bush. We had lots of fun, heard the language being spoken all day, and play with our cousins and friends. When we got back to our house we were so excited to get to make different kinds of pies and scones and eat them.” (Communication, Community Member, 2016)

The lands and weather proved to be quite challenging at times, but the original peoples of our traditional territory adapted well as they led a semi-nomadic lifestyle where they would follow animals and plants to harvest. Much travelling was done throughout the summer months as Ojibway and Cree leaders held political councils, and people travelled for trade, social and ceremonial purposes. As the cold weather of winter arrived, First Nation people would disperse into smaller groups based on kinship relations and move into the interior hunting grounds for survival.

“The whole family would venture out of the community and trap animals together. Life was hard back then but the families were close and they were united. The Hudson’s Bay Company changed the way First Nation trapped and hunted. The reasons for trapping and hunting shifted from survival to bartering. It started to shift our way of thinking.” (Communication, Community Member, 2016)

“We have always been here...for how long...forever. We had our ways; we had our ways of governing, our medicines, we had everything we needed, we didn’t ask to be put onto small pieces of land, onto reserves.” (Communication, Community Member, 2016)

2.2 Colonization

The Doctrine of Discovery¹² was issued in 1493 by European monarchies and was a tool used by

¹² The Doctrine of Discovery emanates from a series of Papal Bulls (formal statements from the Pope) and extensions, originating in the 1400’s. Discovery was used as legal and moral justification for colonial dispassion of sovereign Indigenous nations, including First Nations in what is now Canada. During the European “Age of Discovery”, Christian explorers “claimed” lands for their monarchs who felt they could exploit the land, regardless of the original inhabitants. Retrieved from <http://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/18-01-22-Dismantling-the-Doctrine-of-Discovery-EN.pdf> on July 20, 2018.

European powers to assume control over First Nations lands. The Doctrine of Discovery continues to impact First Nations peoples throughout North America. The document provided a framework for explorers to lay claim to territories or lands that were perceived to be vacant, in the name of their sovereign nation. The lands that were historically occupied by First Nations peoples throughout North America could be defined as “discovered” and the sovereign nation that made the “first discovery” gained authority and rights to the lands and resources within the defined territory, according to the Doctrine of Discovery.

European explorers defined First Nations as non-Christians, which became the foundation for defining First Nations peoples as “non-human” by European nations. The non-human definition assigned by European nations to First Nations peoples throughout North America became the foundation for the principle of empty lands or “terra nullius¹³.” The rights to the lands and resources that First Nations assumed from time immemorial were arbitrarily extinguished by European powers. At that time, First Nations were considered “savages” and “heathens” by the Europeans, which led to further solidify the principle of terra nullius. The Doctrine of Discovery ensured the British Crown could continue to take possession of the traditional territories and resources that were occupied by First Nations peoples.

With the continued arrival of European settlers, First Nations peoples’ way of life began to change. Expansion of settlements and exploitation of natural resources restricted First Nations use of lands and traditional ways of life. According to Battiste,

¹³ Terra Nullius is described as lands that are legally deemed to be unoccupied or uninhabited, lands that are “empty.” The presiding theory at the time was that Indigenous peoples, because they were non-Christians, were not humans and therefore the land was defined as empty or terra nullius. Retrieved from <https://www.ictinc.ca> on July 20, 2018.

“all Indigenous communities are in recovery today from a deep colonizing culture of superiority and racism, and while there are new emergent forms of that coming back, Indigenous peoples are now reconciling with what was denied us, our knowledges and languages that leads us to the deep truths about ourselves and our connections with all thing.” (Battiste, 2013, p.2).

The lands that were once occupied by plants and animals were now occupied by European expansion and commercialization. The Doctrine of Discovery established a false narrative about the “discovery” and “creation” of North America.

The story of terra nullius or empty lands ensured First Nations peoples would never be viewed as existing nations or as equal partners within what would become Canada. Within the concept of the Doctrine of Discovery First Nations were reduced to being beneficiaries of the lands but could not be completely sovereign nations. To this day, First Nations can only sell lands to the federal government and according to the state remain beneficiaries of the lands but cannot own them. These paternalistic ideologies continue to be held to this day and echo the provisions that originated within the Doctrine of Discovery. Battiste states, “the assumptions and operating compelling ideologies fed normativity and normalcy of racism, inequities and poverty” (2013, p. 6).

2.3 The Royal Proclamation, 1763

“We were nations; we had our own forms of governance. The government made it look like we didn’t have civilized societies...in that way it made it easier for them to take our lands and control us...” (Communication, Community Member)

In 1763, King George of Great Britain issued a Royal Proclamation¹⁴ that, among other things provided a framework for how Indians* could share their lands. In October of 1763, King George wanted to maintain the military allegiance of the Indian tribes or Nations of North America and in order to prevent great frauds and abuses in the purchase of Indian lands by British settlers arriving in North America, issued a Royal Proclamation. The Royal Proclamation issued by the British established a framework for negotiating treaties with Indian Tribes or Nations with whom they were connected within North America. It also prohibited the direct purchase of Indian lands by the settlers and instead required that lands be shared with the Crown. In this way, the Royal Proclamation laid out the process for how Indian lands could be shared through treaties. The Royal Proclamation recognized that there were already Indian Tribes or Nations throughout North America and because of this it could not take Indian lands without their consent.

2.4 Decolonization of Education

The next part of this literature review centers on the broad concepts of colonization – decolonization and the education system. I have relied on the works of Fanon (1963), Memmi (1967) and Alfred (2005) to lay the framework for understanding colonization and decolonization. According to themes elicited from the works of Fanon (1963), Memmi (1967)

¹⁴ The issuance of the Royal Proclamation, 1763 and the accompanying promises made at the Fort Niagara in 1764 laid the foundation for the Constitutional recognition and protection of Aboriginal rights in Canada. This understanding was formally enshrined in the Constitution Act of 1982, which guarantees that the Charter would not impact any Aboriginal and treaty rights. The Royal Proclamation laid out the procedures for acquiring First Nations lands as well as the necessity of concluding agreements with First Nations people. The Royal Proclamation became an important element of treaty making in with the Crown. This information was retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2013/10/creating-canada-from-royal-proclamation-1763-modern-treaties-symposium.html> on July 20, 2018.

and Alfred (2005), colonization can be characterized as acts of ongoing, perpetual violence, against a group of people, which inevitably results in negative implications for the colonized peoples.

Shortly after contact between Indigenous peoples and European settlers, the process of colonization began for Canada's Indigenous peoples. The process of colonization is best described by Fanon (1963), in his book, *The Wretched of the Earth*,

Everything will be done to wipe out their traditions, to substitute our language for theirs and to destroy their culture without giving them ours. Sheer physical fatigue will stupefy them. Starved and ill, if they have any spirit left, fear will finish the job; guns are leveled at the peasant; civilians come to take over his land and force him by dint of flogging to till the land for them. (p.15)

Historically, Indigenous peoples were characterized as savages and less civilized than their European counterparts (Alfred, 2013). This particular characterization of Indigenous peoples was well thought out and orchestrated by the Euro-Western imperial regime. This process was also used by colonizers in Canada to justify and legitimize the displacement of Indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands as colonialism is truly about acquiring the lands and resources that are occupied by other people. This is further emphasized by Alfred (2014),

Colonialism is the disconnection of Native people from the land, their history, their identity and their rights so that others can benefit. It is a basic form of injustice in the world, and has been condemned as a practice by the United Nations. Yet, we have never acknowledged that Canada was built as a colonial country and that it is, in fact, still colonial in many ways. (Alfred, 2014).

The relationship between the colonized and the colonizer are interdependent upon each other. Memmi (1965) acknowledges this interdependence throughout his book, "... It can be stated that colonization creates the colonized just as we have seen that it creates the colonizer" (p. 91). The redefinition of Indigenous peoples by Euro-Western society served the economic agenda of settlers. This redefinition of Indigenous peoples separating them from their authentic Indigenous selves served a foreign society's economic model that was based on resource development and exploitation. Indigenous peoples within Canada were defined by colonial terms to serve the greater purpose of dispossessing Indigenous peoples and taking their lands (Alfred, 2005).

Fanon (1963) asserts, "to be a man is to be an accomplice of colonialism, since all of us without exception have profited by colonial exploitation" (p. 25). Some of the demographic consequences of Canadian colonialism includes: Indigenous peoples within Canada disproportionately ranked among the poorest of Canadians (Wilson and MacDonald, 2010), and, having an astonishing 43% of Indigenous peoples between the ages of 20 through 24 reported having less than a high school education (Mendelson, 2006). Horrendous levels of poverty and low educational attainment are only a fraction of the explicit effects of the legacy of colonialism within Canada.

Paternalism and prejudice have driven Euro-Canadian and Indigenous relations throughout history (Bear-Nicholas, 2001). The relationship between the colonizer and the colonized within Canadian history was formed over many decades and the tumultuous history of Canadian/Indigenous relations is framed within this paternalistic structure; prompting racist policies and legislation that was created specific to oppressing Indigenous peoples. The residential school system was the most effective colonial mechanism created by the state to

subjugate and marginalize Indigenous peoples. Residential schools are a primary example of an overt institution of assimilation that were created and designed to kill the Indian in the child (Fournier & Crey, 2006). Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding were disrupted and the government created policies that were developed and framed to attack Indigenous culture. Battiste and Henderson assert in their book, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge* (2004) that Euro-centrism within federal and provincial school systems delegitimized Indigenous knowledge and ways of life, subjugated Indigenous peoples and “perpetuated damaging myths about Indigenous knowledges and heritage, language, beliefs, and ways of life.” (p. 52).

The damaging characterizations of Indigenous peoples helped to legitimize the creation of residential schools across North America. Beginning in the 1870's, Canadian federal education policy centered on the creation and reliance on the residential school system. This policy was designed to destroy Indigenous peoples through systemic assimilation, as highlighted throughout the Truth and Reconciliation Report, “these measures were part of a coherent policy to eliminate Aboriginal people as distinct peoples and to assimilate them into the Canadian mainstream against their will” (p. 2, 2015). Indigenous peoples were viewed as a barrier to economic pursuits within the European value system and structural hierarchy.

Residential school policy required the separation of Indigenous children from their traditional communities, cultures and the influences of their families. Indigenous children were subjected to continual forms of violence throughout their daily lives including emotional, spiritual, cultural, physical and sexual abuses (Chrisjohn and Young, 1997; RCAP, 1996). Moreover, residential school policy forced a new belief and value system onto the students as the daily life within these schools reflected a foreign system of beliefs and understanding. Within

these schools, Indigenous languages and cultures were systematically stripped from the children and racist curriculum was the backbone of the institutions mandate of assimilation (Chrisjohn and Young, 1997). According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), the residential school system played a part in the larger scheme of colonization and the education system was the primary tool used to attempt to change Indigenous peoples and absorb them into mainstream Eurocentric society. Indigenous experiences within the residential school system shaped a relationship of mistrust and misunderstanding between Indigenous peoples and state-led education systems. This still continues today in various forms (Battiste, 1998; Cote-Meek, 2014).

2.5 Approaches to Decolonial Education

The work of Battiste (1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2009) and Cote-Meek (2014) highlights the deeply entrenched practices of colonization that continues to exist within our current education system. Battiste (1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2009) and Cote-Meek (2014) explore ways to decolonize education through incorporating pedagogy that relies on Indigenous knowledges. The shortcomings of our Eurocentric Western education system and its historical failures have effectively failed to provide Indigenous people with the necessary skills to succeed in life, particularly, in a manner that is comparable to mainstream society. Alfred (2005) states, “We all possess knowledge, but today this knowledge perpetuates our colonized status as subservient and debased parts of the colonial structure, knowledge that has trained us to be dominated by others” (p. 85).

The current approach of public education within Canada has not empowered Indigenous students because the system lacks the ability to facilitate an increased understanding of

Indigenous people, worldviews and knowledges (Battiste, 2009). According to RCAP (1996) Indigenous peoples expressed that,

“education must develop children and youth as Aboriginal citizens, linguistically and culturally competent to assume the responsibilities of their nations. Youth that emerge from school must be grounded in a strong, positive Aboriginal identity. Consistent with Aboriginal traditions, education must develop the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically” (RCAP, vol.3, ch.5).

For over a century, First Nations peoples within Canada have been forced to adopt a foreign system of learning that largely imposed a set of values from a particular worldview. Exclusive use of Eurocentric knowledge in education has consistently failed Indigenous children and has had negative effects within Indigenous communities (Battiste, 2002, p. 9). Academically, Indigenous students are still underperforming compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts. For example, the Auditor General’s Report (2004) highlighted that it would require 28 years for Indigenous learners to reach academic parity with their non-Indigenous learners.

One of the greatest impacts of colonialism within Canada is the exclusion of Indigenous knowledge from our education systems. Education infused with dominant Euro-Western worldviews and ideology often contradicts the values of Indigenous perspectives (Battiste, Youngblood, 2009). Euro-Western ways of seeing often fragments, categorizes and compartmentalizes all species on Earth. Historically, Euro-Western ways of knowing have failed to recognize the interconnectedness of all species and have failed to acknowledge the impact that our actions have on all other areas of the Earth. In this sense, Euro-Western ideology has facilitated linear thinking that fosters individualism. Within this paradigm, actions are believed to

be isolated within a specific context, lacking consequence or failing to understand the implications of negative consequences for future generations of all beings. Within a First Nations paradigm, First Nations people maintain strongly held beliefs that all things on earth have a living spirit, are interconnected and interdependent upon one another for survival. Fundamentally, First Nations ideology encapsulates the understanding that everything is dependent upon living in harmony/balance with Mother Earth and honoring the existing interconnectedness of all things. First Nations knowledge offers an alternative worldview that is centered on collective experience and inter-generational knowledge transmission.

“Indigenous knowledge (IK) is part of a collective genius of humanity of Indigenous peoples that exists in the context of their learning and knowing from the places where they have lived, hunted, explored, migrated, farmed, raised families, built communities, and survived for centuries despite sustained attacks on the peoples, their languages, and cultures” (Battiste, Youngblood, p. 5, 2009).

Decolonization of Indigenous populations begins with pushing back against the force of colonialism. This is expressed by Fanon (1963) who states “Decolonization never takes place unnoticed” (p. 37). Decolonization requires a re-articulation of Eurocentric knowledge domination and “a complete calling into question of the colonial situation” (Fanon, 1963, p. 37). The application of Indigenous knowledges contributes to the rejection of colonialism and the resurgence of decolonization.

First Nations knowledge cannot be learned from a book within a determined academic year, First Nations knowledge is a life-long process and is gathered and absorbed through processes of varying experiences. The knowledges that are gained through this life-long process

are relational to purpose and are specific to the community from which you are immersed in (Communication, Community Member). First Nations knowledge is unique throughout each geographic area and within each Indigenous community. Although Indigenous peoples throughout the world share many similarities, each Indigenous community has a distinct and a diverse history, languages and teachings, which forms the core of their distinct Indigenous knowledge. According to First Nations Elder from Mattagami First Nation, First Nations knowledge is difficult to define and offered concrete experience to highlight his understanding of Indigenous knowledge,

“The whole family would venture out of the community and trap animals together. Life was hard back then but the families were close and they were united. The Hudson’s Bay Company changed the way First Nations trapped and hunted. The reasons for trapping and hunting shifted from survival to bartering. It started to shift our way of thinking. All the kids would watch and learn from our Elders and soon we knew how to hunt, trap and survive the harsh winters in Northern Ontario. It was hard but we had to do it to survive. We were all together and out doing, experiencing stories, ceremony and observing listening was active learning.” (Communication, Community Member, 2016).

In the essay, *Maintaining Aboriginal Identity, Language, and Culture in Modern Society*, Battiste (2000) asserts “the current public education system within Canada has not empowered Indigenous students because the system lacks the ability to facilitate an increased understanding of Indigenous people, worldviews and knowledges” (p.192). The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People was vocal in emphasizing the lack of curricula about Indigenous peoples and history within most public schools in Canada (RCAP, 1996). In order to remedy the apparent disconnect between First Nations students and the education system we must strive to adopt a

blended system that builds on both First Nations and Euro-Western knowledges; where both knowledges are equally important and where there is no knowledge domination. The use of First Nations knowledges is the starting point for decolonization; decolonization of thoughts and decolonization of education. First Nations knowledges are the medium through which First Nations resurgence will occur and where the dismal outcomes that is prevalent within First Nations students' populations, within urban schools will begin to subside. Alfred (2005) reiterates this point by saying "the challenge for today is not how to restore ancient societies, but how to regenerate our culture and revitalize our people as warriors" (p. 85).

Chapter 3

3 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

As is First Nations customs, it is important to introduce oneself, and where you are from. This is also endorsed in an Indigenous research methodology as well (Smith, 2012). I am a member of the Mattagami First Nation, a Northern Ontario First Nation community within Treaty #9 territory. I am of mixed descent, as I am both the colonizer and the colonized. My maternal grandmother was Oji-Cree and my paternal grandfather was Maliseet.



Figure 4: Victoria (my great-great-grandmother) and her sister in Winneway First Nation

(My grandmother was Oji-Cree, spoke her language and was placed in a hospital for Indian children as she had polio and was confined to a wheelchair.)

My cultural background and lived experiences have laid the foundation for a deepening decolonial mindset, which will continue to expand through increased experiences with Anishinawbe ways of knowing, increased understanding of culture, history, story and as I strive to work among First Nations communities. I have chosen to privilege a First Nations worldview throughout my research and within this thesis. Therefore, I have chosen a First Nations theoretical framework to situate my research approach. This approach is called the “two-eyed seeing” conceptual approach and was first created by Albert Marshall (2004).

3.1 Two-Eyed Seeing

The conceptual and theoretical framework for this research is centered on a two-eyed seeing approach grounded in an Indigenous, decolonization framework. Two-Eyed seeing is a guiding principle created by Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall (2004) and offers a system that gives the gift of multiple perspectives and fosters a journey of co-learning from both knowledge paradigms. The framework focuses on the possible harmonies between Indigenous knowledges and tenets of 21st century education. This approach is also viewed as a decolonization framework which embraces the effects of inter-twining Indigenous knowledge and perspectives with Euro-Western knowledges. These perspectives are a way of conceptualizing Indigenous-based research in a good way. The research framework embraces the value of the interconnection between Indigenous and non-Indigenous systems of knowledge and learning. Making space for Indigenous knowledges within educational institutions challenges the institutional power relations, that has existed for over 150 years between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Indigenous knowledge offers a transformational approach to education and confronts settler and institutional norms and colonial mindsets (Alfred, 2014). To foster an understanding of the

guiding principles of a two-eyed seeing approach Mi'kmaw Spiritual Leader, Healer, and Chief Charles Labrador of Acadia First Nation, Nova Scotia offered 'Trees Holding Hands' as a concept (Institute for Integrative Science, 2003).



Figure 5: A representation of the entanglement of different trees

(This image demonstrates how this entanglement makes all the trees stronger and unified as their strength depends upon each other. Retrieved from:

<http://www.integrativescience.ca/Principles/TreesHoldingHands> on June 2018.)

Mi'kmaw Spiritual Leader, Healer, and Chief Charles Labrador offered the following words of guidance for education, learning and life, "Go into the forest, you see the birch, maple, pine. Look underground and all those trees are holding hands. We as people have to do the same." (Institute for Integrative Science, 2003). A respectful approach to understanding Indigenous knowledge means that the power relations and colonial mindset that permeates personal and institutional levels of our education system must be acknowledged and confronted.

The exclusion of Indigenous knowledge within our education system is a primary example of how colonialism shapes institutions, systems, individuals and ways of thinking to reflect the power of the colonizer (Alfred, 2014).

A fundamental process in decolonizing education and reconciling relationships with non-Indigenous peoples, systems and institutions is to advocate for the recovery and use of First Nations knowledges. In my view, a decolonizing, two-eyed seeing framework seeks to reclaim First Nations knowledges within the education system, as a method of increasing First Nations learner success, improving First Nations communities and building positive relations between First Nations and non-First Nations society. The recovery and maintenance of First Nations knowledge and the subsequent implementation of First Nations knowledge into urban elementary schools fosters the unraveling of the inherent control of the colonizing state.

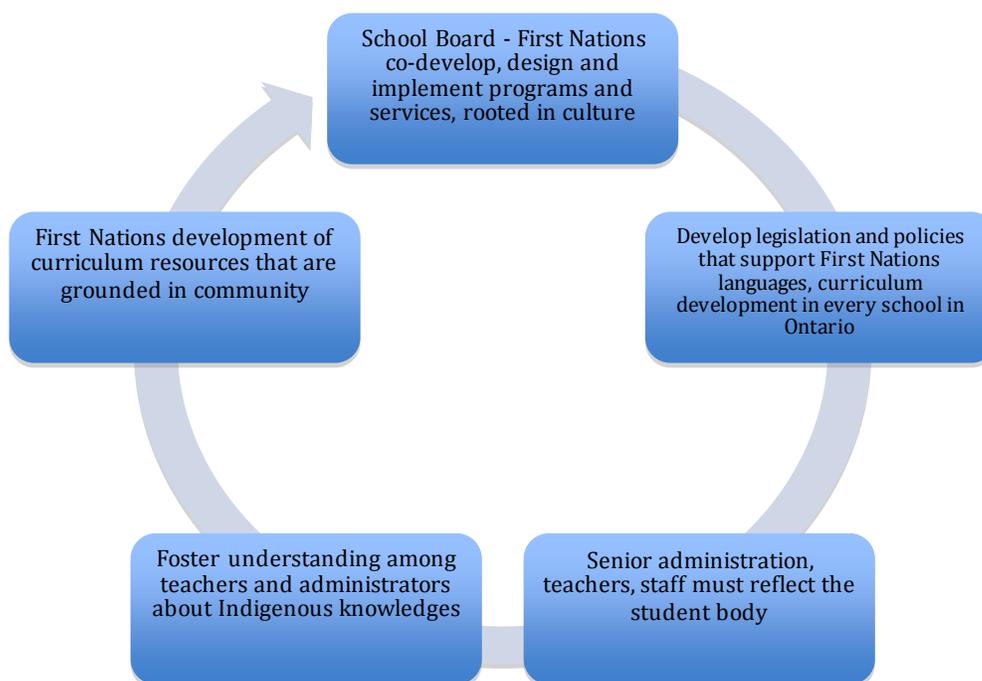
The goal of a two-eyed seeing approach is to reconcile the existing fragmented relationship that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, which is exemplified within the Euro-Western based education system. Two-eyed seeing is the ability to see through another worldview; it is the gift of seeing from multiple perspectives. According to Elder Marshall, “the key concepts within this understanding are: co-existence, interrelatedness, interconnectedness, and community spirit” (Bartlett, 2012, para. 9). The concept of two-eyed seeing allows you to always seek an alternative perspective and various approaches to doing things within a certain context. According to Elder Marshall (2004),

“when you force people to abandon their ways of knowing, their ways of seeing the world, you literally destroy their spirit and once that spirit is destroyed it is very, very

difficult to embrace anything – academically or through sports or through arts or through anything – because the person is never complete ...” (para. 4).

Two-eyed seeing enables an individual to weave back and forth between two worldviews and avoids knowledge domination and the assimilation of one worldview by the knowledge of another. Within educational institutions, Indigenous learners should be empowered to give voice to their ways of knowing and ways of understanding as opposed to imposing upon them that they see from a one dimensional, Eurocentric paradigm. It is clear that mainstream Eurocentric education has consistently failed Indigenous learners and communities; the statistics and the quality of life for Indigenous peoples throughout Canada verifies this state.

A central goal of implementing a two-eyed seeing approach to urban elementary educational institutions is to ensure that Indigenous learners achieve quality education while maintaining their cultural identity. An abundant amount of research on Indigenous education concludes that schools that support and nurture a child’s unique culture facilitates better personal and academic successes for the learner (Haig-Brown, Hodgson, Smith, Regnier, & Archibald, 1997).

Table 1: Two-Eyed Seeing Approach to Education

3.2 Situating Myself within the Research

Within this section, I will situate myself within the research. I will provide a brief description of my community, Mattagami First Nation, I will discuss Indigenous ways of knowing prior to European contact and I will provide references and stories, as told by some Elders from my community, Mattagami First Nation. Mattagami First Nation is situated on traditional Indigenous lands that has long been home to the Ojibway and Oji-Cree people from the Northeastern Ontario area and reaches as far as the James Bay coast (Communication, Community Member, 2016). The community is located on the northwest side of the Mattagami Lake. Translated, the Ojibway word ‘Mattagami’ means ‘Meeting Of The Waters’. On July 7, 1906, Treaty #9 was signed by Mattagami members Andrew Luke, who signed with a simple ‘X’ and Joseph

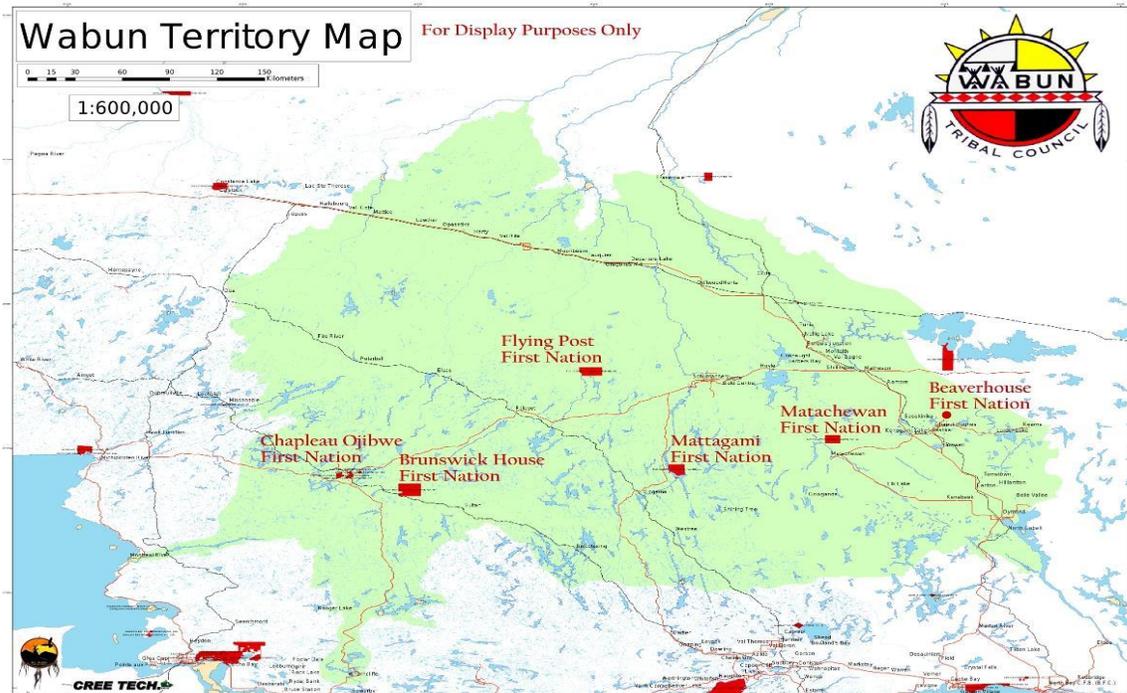


Figure 6: Mattagami First Nation Territory and Neighboring Communities

Shemeket, Thomas Chicken and James Nevue who wrote their names in syllabics. Commissioners Duncan Campbell Scott, Samuel Stewart and Daniel George MacMartin also signed the document.

In the early years of progression within Ontario's history, the Northern Power Company constructed a dam without consultation or agreement from the Mattagami First Nation. The illegal dam was built across the Mattagami River and the result of its construction was flooding parts of the ancestral lands of the Mattagami First Nation.

The lands that were flooded were a part of the lands promised to the community as being a signatory to Treaty #9. One thousand and eighty-nine acres were flooded when the Kenogamissee Lake dam was heightened (Communication, Community Member, 2016). The



Figure 7: Representation of the marking of territory within the traditional territory of Mattagami First Nation, as prescribed by the signing of Treaty #9, also known as the James Bay Treaty

(This photo is a section of the ‘old reserve’ prior to the flooding of community lands in 1921. The community was moved to a different land base that is now accessible by road.)

company paid scant compensation to a few band members for the loss of lands. For decades the Mattagami First Nation sent letters to Ontario Hydro, which was formerly known as the Northern Power Company. The letters described the devastation to their harvesting and the dramatic change in their lives as a result of flooding of ancestral lands. The provincial and federal levels of government mostly ignored the complaints from the community until the Mattagami First Nation retained a lawyer and filed a claim against Ontario Hydro and the Government of Canada for the flooding of their ancestral lands and for timber mismanagement. Ontario Hydro and the

Government of Canada settled the case by paying millions in compensation for the flooding of lands and loss of timber.

3.3 First Nations Ways of Being

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, Indigenous peoples throughout North America had their own forms of education. It was an education in which the community and surrounding environment was the classroom, the community members were the primary educators and each adult played a key role in ensuring that each child learned how to live the good life (National Indian Brotherhood, 1973). Nations of Indigenous peoples relied on complex systems of knowing and recognized their place within a system of interconnectedness and interdependence. Dr. Lynn Gehl (2010) discusses Indigenous systems of knowing prior to European immigration to Canada,

“this included systems of governance such as the Anishinawbe clan system, a system of raising their children within the safety and protection of the extended family, a sophisticated medicine and healing society, as well as sophisticated systems of communication that included both oral tradition and various forms of symbolic literacy (p. 11).

The societies within which First Nations thrived were diverse and complex with varying roles and duties within each tribe (Communication, Community Member, 2015). Women were valued within the community, children were raised according to the values of the Seven Grandfather Teachings and resource rich environments within the Anishinawbe territory provided the necessary food for a healthy diet (Communication, Community Member, 2014). They lived

under their own forms of government and their decisions and actions were guided by the Great Spirit, also known as Kitche Manitou.

Much travelling was done throughout the summer months as Ojibway and Cree leaders held political councils, and people travelled for trade, social and ceremonial purposes. As the cold of winter arrived First Nations would disperse into smaller groups of kinship and move into the interior hunting grounds for survival. First Nations within James Bay and Watershed territory traded with one another prior to the arrival of Europeans and their network was far-reaching and extensive. The Mattagami River was used by many First Nations within the James Bay and Watershed territories as a highway where they would travel using birch bark canoes to trade with other small, scattered Indigenous villages along the way. Major trading routes were developed over time and nation-to-nation treaties were formed to share the lands, resources and to create military alliances.

“The coastal Indians and southern Indians would always be moving by canoe and land to travel and trade goods with other Indians. Trading of animal pelts, meats and other goods would be traded all along the way. Times were tough back then but we had what we needed to be happy and survive.” (Communication, Community Member, 2015).

For First Nations people including the Ojibway, Cree and Oji-Cree that historically occupied the territory currently known as the Treaty # 9 – The James Bay Treaty the extended family was a self-sufficient unit for meeting needs. Basic human needs such as food, clothing and shelter were met through reliance on kinship and other human needs such as love, education, politics, and beliefs were also met through the value and reliance on kinship. Cajete (1999) states that, “traditional Native American systems of education were characterized by observation,

participation, assimilation and experiential learning rather than by low context formal instruction characteristic of Euro-American schooling” (p. 27).

The concept of interconnectedness was the guiding principle for First Nations peoples of the Anishinawbe territory currently known as Mattagami First Nation. Historically, First Nations peoples were strongly connected to their ancestral lands and communities. Traditional First Nations beliefs and customs centered on only taking from Mother Earth what was needed to survive. In addition, First Nations peoples possessed strong and intimate ecological knowledge that held strong scientific understandings and insight about the world around us including: the fundamental importance of our unique water systems, seasonal cycles, weather patterns, plants and animals that were used as food and medicinal sources, the overall need to protect Mother Earth and to maintain balance and harmony with our natural environment (Battiste & Henderson, 2000). Prior to European settlement, these traditional practices and systems of sustainability maintained the necessary balance and harmony within our ecosystem.

When European people first arrived on the shores of the North American continent, they were not prepared for the harsh climate and they became dependent upon the First Nations peoples and knowledge to survive. John Milloy (2003) adds, “partnerships, anchored in Aboriginal knowledge and skills, had enabled the newcomers to find their way, to survive, and to prosper” (p. 4). This became increasingly apparent as the newcomers were unprepared for the harshness of these lands and were often unable to cope with the harsh realities of life in a foreign environment. Many First Nations established positive relations with the newcomers as they became a major trading partner. Some settlers established positive relations with some of the First Nations upon arrival as they relied upon the unique knowledge and skills regarding hunting and trapping that First Nations possessed. In the early days of arrival, the First Nations helped

the settlers survive the harsh winters by use of their unique experiences and knowledges that were gained over many centuries of existence.

First Nations people taught settlers about planting, harvesting, hunting, making clothing and about medicines. First Nations people showed the settlers' prime hunting and fishing areas and which berries were healthy to eat and which roots were edible. First Nations people also shared methods of preserving meat to last through periods of harsh weather or scarce game. Techniques for preparing animal hides for clothing and shelter, making snowshoes and birch bark canoes were only some of the invaluable lessons that settlers learned from First Nations people. Over time, settlers began to provide Indigenous peoples with metal tools such as knives, saws and guns. The presence of settlers soon began to displace First Nations people, knowledges and practices. First Nations ways of interacting with Mother Earth were interrupted as Western ideology was more focused on resource extraction and development and the loss of culture and traditional practices was a predictable consequence.

Chapter 4

4 Research Methodology

Within the context of this qualitative research study, I investigated how educators within the provincial education system, specifically the Sudbury Catholic District School Board are incorporating First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives into their teaching as a means to increase First Nations student achievement and well-being. Qualitative research is conducted “because we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue” (Creswell, 2007, p. 40). Through conducting this research my intentions were to gain a better understanding of how First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives are being addressed and integrated within the classroom since the introduction of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework being introduced in 2007. Further, this research was about gathering and listening to the experiences from teachers and parents of First Nations students.

In this study I used a conversational approach to gathering research and drew upon qualitative inquiry. This research incorporates a decolonizing methodology, as First Nations worldview is central to my approach in this research. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) explains that putting Indigenous worldviews at the core of any Indigenous project should be paramount for engaging in decolonizing research. A series of open-ended, questions were used as the foundation for a conversational approach to gathering information from participants.

In an effort to increase an atmosphere that fosters openness, the dialogue/conversational approach to gathering information was used. This approach to gathering information is built upon Indigenous experiences, Indigenous values, Indigenous ways of knowing, ways of relation

building and interacting (Smith, 1999). This research methodology is aimed at empowering First Nations Elders, community members and urban public school educators to become active participants in developing strategies that facilitate systemic transformation. This is achieved through reflecting on their own experiences within the education system and through reflecting on their understanding and interpretation of First Nations knowledges, experiences, history and perspectives.

The transmission of culture and traditions within First Nations communities has primarily been communicated orally. In my view, the conversational method of gathering research is congruent with First Nations practices and culture and is consistent with First Nations ways of information transmission. Within First Nations communities' storytelling and sharing information has been a social and interactive process that is guided by community-based knowledge. This knowledge is integral and specific to that particular community as each First Nations community has their own unique history and story. Storytelling and group talk have historically been used within First Nations communities as ways of passing First Nations knowledge to younger children, which was a primary method for educating children (Communication, Community Member, 2016). Today, First Nations Elders within communities still hold invaluable knowledge and still transmit important information about behavioral conduct, cultural information and political understandings to younger people within the community.

In order to truly transform our current approach to education from a Eurocentric Western based ideological method of curriculum delivery to a system that better incorporates First Nations ways of knowing and thinking; we must first gain a better understanding about peoples' understanding of what First Nations knowledge, history and perspective is and how best it can be

represented within urban educational institutions. As the research focus of my thesis is based on exploring narratives from educators within urban schools, narratives from parents of First Nations children in urban schools, narratives from community Elders, I am interested in finding out about their philosophies and approaches to integrating First Nations knowledges (if any) into the classroom. First Nations Elders and parents will provide narratives about the needs and goals of their children within urban educational institutions and will explore how the education system helps to meet the needs of First Nations students. To elicit these narratives, the participants in the research were asked several questions. The open questions for urban educators will focus on personal ideologies and awareness about First Nations knowledges, perceived teacher barriers to effectively integrating First Nations knowledges into the curriculum and ways to transform instruction and curriculum content to better represent First Nations knowledges, history and perspectives within the classroom.

The open ended questions for First Nations Elders focused on the ability of First Nations knowledge to shape and transform public education by providing a holistic and encompassing approach to educating all children within the education system. Lastly, the questions for parents of First Nations students within an urban educational institution focused on the needs and goals of their children and how the education system assists the students and family in meeting them.

In recognition of the difficulty in concretely defining Indigenous knowledge, at the beginning of each interview/conversations with urban educators, a working definition of Indigenous knowledges will be put forward and discussed. The definition of Indigenous knowledges that will be used will be the definition from the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2006),

Indigenous Knowledge refers to the complex bodies and systems of knowledge, know-how, practices and cultural expressions that have been and are maintained, used and developed by local and Indigenous communities, not only sustains the daily life of these communities, but is also a key element in maintaining their identities and building their self-determination. The Indigenous traditional knowledge of Indigenous communities, which reflects their holistic worldview, also contributes to the world's cultural and biological diversity and is a source of cultural and economic wealth for the communities and for humanity as a whole. (p.5)

4.1 Data Collection and Analysis

Sudbury District Catholic School Board research protocols were followed and Board approval was required prior to engaging in conversations with participants in research (see Appendix III). The researcher used the snowball effect to reach teachers, administrators and First Nations populations. First, the researcher found one unit (teacher) within the overall population of teachers within the pre-selected schools within the Sudbury District Catholic School Board. The selected teacher helped to identify other teachers that wanted to take part in the research. The snowball effect was also used to reach the parents of First Nations students. The researcher selected First Nations Elders and community members from the researchers First Nation community to engage in research. The inclusion of First Nations Elders and community members provided meaningful and authentic insight and knowledge about First Nations experiences and perspectives within provincial schools.

The interview questions were purposely broad (see Appendix IV), to facilitate the sharing of individual stories and personal experiences. I wanted to get a sense of participants' level of

understanding First Nations knowledge, history, stories and how they represent First Nations content within their teaching practices and the incorporation into teaching instruction. Guiding questions for First Nations Elders and community members were shaped in a way to facilitate discussions on their individual and community experiences within provincial schools and to further highlight the integral role First Nations knowledge, histories and perspectives plays in shaping positive experiences for First Nations students and for ultimately reshaping our education system to better reflect the needs of First Nations students and communities.

Educator participation in this study was entirely voluntary; accordingly, it can be inferred that individuals who chose to participate in this study were motivated to include First Nations knowledge within the classroom and were motivated to learn more about First Nations knowledge to help facilitate increased understanding and incorporation of First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives within their classrooms. First Nations Elders and parents of First Nations students' participation in this study were also entirely voluntary; accordingly, it can be inferred that individuals who choose to participate in this study are motivated to help transform urban education and to help facilitate a better understanding of First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives within provincial schools.

A small gift of a sweet-grass braid was given, along with a copy of "Keepers of Our Stories: Mattagami First Nation" community based curriculum resource (see Appendix III) to participants. This was done to acknowledge the contributions of the participants and to demonstrate reciprocity in knowledge sharing between the participants and the researcher. The study involved the participation of 23 interviewees in total across the two preselected school sites and from First Nations communities. Six of the interviewees were educators, five of the interviewees were parents of First Nations students and 12 of the interviewees Elders from

Mattagami First Nation.

Data collection conformed to Laurentian University's ethical review requirements (see Appendix I) and the requirements of Sudbury Catholic District School Board (see Appendix II). The researcher emphasized the importance of maintaining confidentiality and anonymity within the research but all of the participants waived the requirement to remain anonymous. All of the research participants expressed their desire to have their experiences and insights heard surrounding First Nations knowledges, histories and perspectives within provincial schools. The researcher continued to ensure any identifying information was excluded from and removed from data.

Consent forms were given to each participant at the outset of each interview and were signed prior to data collection activities. Prior to conducting interviews with participants I went over the purpose of the research and intended use of results from participant interviews. Participants had an opportunity to review and edit their own transcribed interview data. The participants were advised that they could withdraw at any time from the research. The research questions that I asked are located in the Appendix IV. In order to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants in the research, all participant names and place locations were removed from the interviews once collected. Pseudonyms were assigned to the teacher participants and parents of First Nations students but the Elders and First Nations community members maintained their identity through use of their names.

The methodology used to gather the data was primarily through conversations and/or interviews with various rights holders and stakeholders within the Sudbury District Catholic School Board, including teachers and parents. Also, First Nations Elders and community

members were interviewed using a conversational approach to gathering data.

As previously outlined, the research method for this research project is qualitative with open ended questions. In order to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the ways that First Nations knowledges, histories and perspectives are incorporated into urban elementary schools within the Greater Sudbury area, the research data was gathered from two representative schools within the Sudbury District Catholic School Board. The Sudbury Catholic District School Board is located within the traditional territory of Atikameksheng Anishinawbek and Wahnapiatae First Nations. Sudbury is the largest city in the Northern Ontario region. There are 18 schools within the board including:

- 13 Elementary Schools
- 4 Secondary Schools
- 1 Adult Education Centre

The Sudbury Catholic School Board currently has 5944 students including:

- 3999 Elementary Students
- 1945 Secondary Students¹⁵

The researcher sought out teachers that had a minimum of three years teaching experience within the junior or intermediate grade levels. The researcher tried to ensure that there was equitable representation for the selection of participants. For example, the researcher tried to seek a representational ratio between First Nations educators and non-First Nations educators, and male/female educator ratio.

¹⁵ Data and statistical information was retrieved from Director's Annual Report 2016-2017 on July 5, 2018 <http://www.scdsb.edu.on.ca/admin/DirectorsReport.pdf>

In interviewing teachers, parents and First Nations Elders, my intentions were twofold. First, I approached how teachers understand and approach the task of incorporating First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives into their pedagogical practices. Then I explored the perceived barriers that teachers encounter in incorporating First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives into the classroom. Next, I gave parents of First Nations students and Elders the opportunity to share their experiences and perspectives on the significance of incorporating First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives into the classroom and how this process helps to shape First Nations student identity and achievement.

I engaged in a general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis. According to Thomas (1993), the purposes for using an inductive approach to qualitative data analysis includes:

- 1) to condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, summary format;
- 2) to establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and;
- 3) to develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in raw data (p. 1).

According to Creswell (2013), the process of qualitative data analysis suggests that “the researcher will prepare and organize the data for analysis, then reduce the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and representing the data in figures, tables, or discussions” (p. 180). During the initial stage of gathering data, the researcher decoded and categorized information. According to Dey, (1993), “qualitative researchers often learn by

doing” (p. 182). Outlined below are the steps I followed to complete my data analysis:

1. I began by reading through the notes gathered from my interviews and making margin notes and forming initial codes. This involved reading and re-reading all of the interview notes and categorizing them into initial themes.
2. I conformed to the general approaches of qualitative data analysis. I found patterns within the interviews. The patterns were based on key findings elicited from the data, were identified and explored, and were sorted and categorized into themes.
3. I utilized constant comparative method to achieve categorical aggregation. Throughout the process, I went back and forth between the teachers’ responses and the parents’ responses to find patterns and connections between the groups’ responses.
4. The themes were initially developed by the questions, and then followed by further analysis and exploration. Next, the themes were further coded into concepts, ideas and experiences. The themes that emerged became evident through the concepts and topics that reoccurred throughout the data that was collected.

I invited participants to review the transcripts and notes, in an effort to maintain a trustworthy relationship and to honor the participants’ stories that they shared with me. According to Kovach (2009), “for story to surface, there must be trust” (p. 98).

4.2 Ethical Considerations

Throughout all phases of this research, it was imperative that I remain sensitive to the ethical considerations regarding anonymity of all participants. As noted by Cresswell (2013), “researchers need to consider what ethical issues might surface during the study and to plan how

these issues need to be addressed” (p. 56). My research could not have been conducted without the commitment and courage of the teachers, parents and Elders that participated. Researchers Weis and Fine (2000) note the importance of considering our roles within the research process and to “assess issues that we may be fearful of disclosing; establishing supportive, respectful relationships without stereotyping and using labels that participants do not embrace; acknowledging whose voices will be represented on our final study; and writing ourselves into the study by reflecting on who we are and the people we study” (p. 56). Historically, research involving First Nations peoples has been defined by and conducted by non-First Nations people. Historically, approaches to research with First Nations communities have largely ignored First Nations worldviews and have not always worked to benefit First Nations communities (Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)).

It was important that I conduct my research in a manner where my inherent bias as a First Nations mother, educator, community member and researcher were made explicit to the participants. From the onset of the interviews I shared with the participants my lived experiences as a First Nations teacher that worked within First Nations communities and within provincial schools, as a mother of First Nations children that attend school within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board, as a community member of Mattagami First Nation and as a staff member of Chiefs of Ontario who works within the First Nations Lifelong Learning Table¹⁶. I discussed some of my experiences as a teacher within First Nations and provincial schools and highlighted

¹⁶ The First Nations Lifelong Learning Table aims to enable First Nations and the government of Ontario to build stronger, collaborative working relationship based on inclusion and mutual respect. It is anticipated that the Table will improve communication and increase understanding resulting in improved support for First Nations learners in the provincial education system. Information retrieved from <http://education.chiefs-of-ontario.org/article/first-nation-lifelong-learning-table--7504.asp> on July 20, 2018.

some of my experiences as a mother of First Nations within the provincial school system. These experiences flamed my inquiry for this research as I strive to make positive changes within the provincial school system. I acknowledged that my experiences have been largely influenced by First Nations perspectives and community connection. It is through my experiences and the ongoing experiences of my children and other First Nations students and communities that I seek to disclose and identify the ongoing marginalization and misunderstanding and de-valuing of First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives within the provincial education system.

4.3 Findings, Analysis and Discussion

In this section I provide information regarding the participants and an overview of the themes in the data. In addition to the themes resulting from my research questions and I highlight emerging themes. It is paramount to examine understandings and pedagogical approaches that that influence First Nations students' achievement and well-being within the provincial education system. As a First Nations teacher, mother and advocate that currently works to improve provincial education for First Nations students, I have a strong interest in developing and strengthening teachers' understanding of and approaches to effectively incorporating First Nations knowledge, histories, culture and stories into the classroom.

My research findings echo that of Harper (2000) findings, non-aboriginal teachers feel unprepared, lack appropriate leadership and training around Aboriginal traditions, culture and practices and do not have adequate understanding of the historical and current challenges that work to influence First Nations student achievement and well-being within the current education system.

The Sudbury Catholic District School Board is located within the city of Greater Sudbury, which is the largest city on Northern Ontario. The school board has eighteen schools including, 13 elementary schools, 4 secondary schools and 1 adult education school. The five teachers who participated in the interviews represented two different schools within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board. Five female teachers made up the teacher interviews. The City of Greater Sudbury has a large Indigenous population and is situated within the traditional territories of Atikameksheng First Nations and Wahnapiatae First Nations. The Sudbury Catholic District School Board employs an Indigenous lead who works to enhance relationships between First Nations and the school board, ensures teachers have access to adequate supports and resources.

The teachers' professional experience ranged from five years to eighteen years. All teachers that participated within the research taught within the Primary / Junior and Intermediate positions, which entail an increased focus on First Nations, Métis and Inuit content within the provincial curriculum.

The five parents that were interviewed had children that attended schools within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board, within the primary / junior and intermediate divisions. The Elders and community members that participated in the research provided contextual information surrounding First Nations knowledge, stories and experiences within provincial schools. Elder knowledge helped to increase my understanding about the role First Nations community and people play in authentic transformation of education through grassroots, First Nations community collaboration.

Table 2: Research Participant Data

<i>Elders</i>		<i>Parents</i>		<i>Teachers</i>	
<i>Females</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Males</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>5</i>
		<i>First Nations</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>First Nations</i>	<i>1</i>
		<i>Non-First Nations</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Non-First Nations</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Total Number of Participants:</i>					
<i>First Nations</i>	<i>16</i>				
<i>Non-First Nations</i>	<i>5</i>				
<i>Total</i>	<i>21</i>				

4.4 Research Findings

In this section, I identify themes in the data and relate them to current research literature. In addition to themes derived from my research questions, I discuss emergent themes; themes that I did not anticipate finding, but that I feel contribute insights related to questions. There are four consistent themes that emerged within the research findings:

1. Educator lack of foundational knowledge in Indigenous knowledges, history, story and perspectives;
2. Lack of School Board Level Supports

3. Lack of Indigenous staff within School Board
4. Lack of authentic and accessible Indigenous resources

Table 3: Themes within Research Findings

Key Themes	<p>Lack of Knowledge by Educator</p> <p>Lack of School Board Support</p> <p>Lack of Indigenous Staff within School Board</p> <p>Lack of Indigenous Resources for Educators</p>
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4.5 Lack of Foundational Knowledge about Indigenous History, Culture and Perspectives by Educators

The educators I spoke with expressed the importance of incorporating First Nations knowledge, history, stories and perspectives into the school and classroom. The educators also noted a lack of foundational knowledge in First Nations, Métis or Inuit history, story and knowledge and this impacted their ability to meaningfully incorporate accurate and authentic First Nations, Métis and Inuit content.

“I cannot teach what I do not know. There is growing pressure to teach what I don’t know.” Teacher A

All of the non-Indigenous educators shared Teacher A’s view about their lack of foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledges, history, story and content,

attributing to their apprehension in incorporating First Nations perspective into the classroom on a regular basis.

“I am not really comfortable teaching what I don’t understand. How can I do this in my day to day teaching when I don’t have the knowledge?” Teacher B

Two of the educators recognized the barriers faced by many educators as they strive to gain increased understanding of Indigenous knowledge and history but asserted that educators must continue to strive to learn and develop the skill base that is required to effectively teach Indigenous history, story and content on a daily basis.

“We need to create a healthier atmosphere for students. It has taken over 500 years to get here so hanging up posters and having some books available isn’t enough. As professionals we must keep learning. Our teachers need to keep learning and the best way to do that is to learn from Indigenous people.” Teacher D

“We have a professional responsibility to learn history, culture, languages in the same way that we have responsibility to learn math. When we are uncomfortable with something then you don’t want to do it but we must try to push passed this and continue to learn about the things that make us uncomfortable. People only seem to want to learn things when it interests you.” Teacher E

The one educator that identified as First Nations and having strong family and community connection provided insight into incorporating Indigenous content into the classroom on a regular basis. Drawing attention to the lack of Indigenous content and knowledge within the education system and the effects on all students.

“Indigenous knowledge, land based learning, interconnection and perspective has been systematically denied for everyone, not just First Nations students. All students benefit and grow from being exposed to Indigenous knowledge and content.” Teacher C

The parents of First Nations students provided insight into the incorporation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledges, history, story and content into the classroom. All of the parents said that the representation of First Nations knowledges, content, history and stories in the classroom was minimal. All parents expressed a strong desire for the school to foster an atmosphere that facilitates students’ ability to express their ways of thinking and their worldview, even when it does not align with the ideology being represented within the classroom.

“My child has no authentic exposure to culture in her school; there are many systemic issues at play within the Sudbury Catholic School Board. The needs of the students are non-existent.” Parent R

“I want my children to be able to express their ways of thinking and understanding of the world as they see it, which stems from who they are, Anishinawbe. This is different from the ways of settlers and the views that are put forward by schools and the people in them, even more so by Catholic schools. My son has often been faced with having to regurgitate the information that has been put forward to him by a teacher or answer a question in a way that he has been taught, from a First Nations worldview, way of understanding. This has often resulted in him getting it wrong – according to the teacher and school. But I would rather he “get it wrong” by their standards than adopt Western ways of thinking.” Parent M

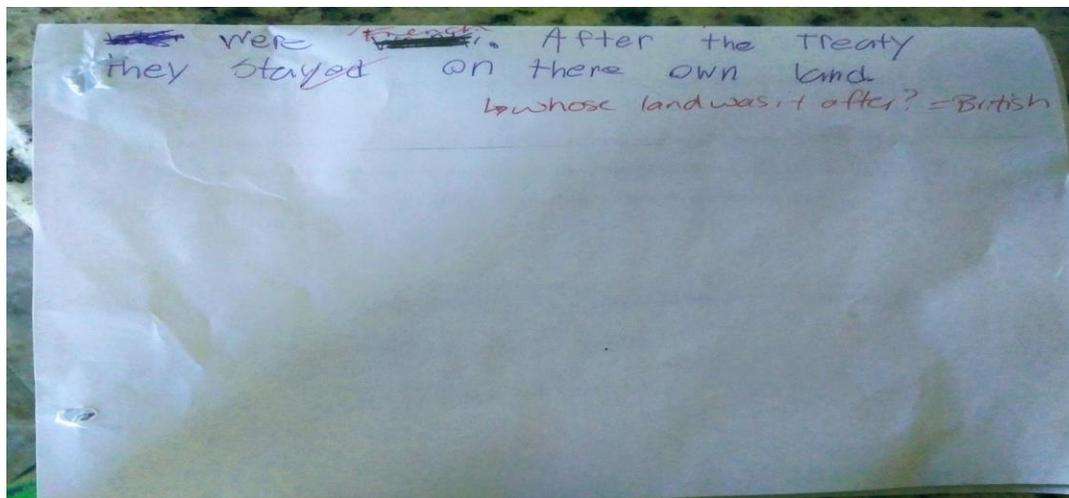


Figure 8: History Test Example

(This image, provided by Parent M., is a history test that was marked by a teacher within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board and illustrates the worldview and understanding of the student regarding First Nations and Treaties. It further illustrates the worldview and understanding of Treaties by the educator.)

Parent M stated that the apparent disconnect between the worldview and ways of knowing of the First Nations student and the teacher is evidenced through the answer provided by the student and the comment inserted by the teacher.

“My son understands that a Treaty is made between First Nations and the Crown and is an agreement between two sovereign nations. He also understands that First Nations did not cede or give up the lands when treaties were signed. His answer of “after the treaty they stayed on their own lands” is exactly right. The teacher commented with – “whose land was it after? = British.” The teacher is correcting my First Nations son who grows up understanding treaties and First Nations lands from a First Nations perspective and the teacher has sent him the message that his way of understanding is wrong ... that First

Nations ceded lands to the British, we have never accepted that version of history. That version of history works to benefit settler society. That narrative of history has allowed much harm to be done to our people and lands.”

4.6 Lack of Teacher Supports within School Board

The teachers I spoke with noted a lack of Teacher Supports that focus on increasing teacher knowledge and understanding about Indigenous people, communities, histories and knowledge within the School Board.

“Professional development is needed for teachers. We need small group professional development so we can learn from each other. As it stands now, when there is professional development offered in this area, it is board wide and very large numbers of teachers so it makes it more difficult to learn and absorb information. The professional development needs to be applicable, practical as Indigenous content is in the curriculum now it’s no longer just an extra. It needs to be seen as such within the school board.”

Teacher A

Teacher C expressed a similar response, adding board level follow-up with teachers after a professional development day has been facilitated within the board should be a minimum.

“We must make sure that teachers have continual professional development and follow-up as a minimum. Right now, there are a lot of part-time teachers in Indigenous course areas. If we are serious about Indigenous education and reconciliation we would make sure that adequate teacher supports are in place that is not currently the case in this board. Teachers need to look through the curriculum and do the work to infuse Indigenous

content and it takes work. Teachers need to treat First Nations courses with the same professionalism as other courses. Boards must place tremendous effort on new teachers and support them in learning how to teach First Nations content. How can teachers be effective if they have no support?" Teacher C

4.7 Lack of Indigenous Staff within School Board

Some of the teacher participants recognized the importance of increasing the number of Indigenous teachers and staff within the school board.

"We must have First Nations people in these buildings as educators and as everything else, including administrators and custodians. That is when real change will happen. The principal directs the priorities and there needs to be people in buildings that you can ask questions to right now there are not a lot of people to turn to if teachers have questions about content or approaches." Teacher C

Teacher A suggested new approach to teaching Indigenous content and fostering teacher supports for learning how to teach Indigenous knowledges, content and perspectives.

"A model that could work is an expert floater that is in the school and could be the expert that teachers can go to for information and could illustrate how to teach content. It needs to be seen as equally as important as other subject areas and right now it still isn't. Our school doesn't appear to have a high Indigenous population and others schools with high Indigenous " Teacher A

Many parents of First Nations students expressed frustrations at the lack of First Nations teachers and staff within schools and school board. Many parents found it challenging to accept

Indigenous knowledge, story, history content and perspectives are being facilitated by teachers that admittedly lack the knowledge, expertise and right to be teaching it.

“Getting this right is extremely important and I don’t know if schools and school boards are getting it right yet. I know this because schools still aren’t reflective of the student body. There needs to be more First Nations teachers and staff within the schools, this will also help other teachers understand First Nations people better. It is sad to say but there are probably many teachers that have never even seen a First Nations community and are completely unaware of the issues that exist for our people still today. And you think they can offer more than our own people and teach this better than our own people? Look around, our kids don’t have and First Nations teachers in the schools what message does that send to our kids and to our communities? To me, it says they still think we aren’t even good enough to teach our own stories.” Parent X

For Parent M, the importance of having First Nations teachers and staff within schools and school board meant increasing authenticity in knowledge and content delivery and would reinforce positive relationships between teacher and student.

“It reinforces the students’ identities, reinforces self-confidence and because of that they will feel more confident, comfortable in the learning environment. Most importantly, our kids will not have to defend their identities.” Parent M

4.8 Lack of Authentic Indigenous Resources for Educators

All teacher participants agreed that there is a lack of First Nations, Métis and Inuit resources that would work to support increasing teachers' capacity to understand and facilitate student understanding surrounding Indigenous knowledge, history, perspective and content within the classroom. For two of the teachers I interviewed, they expressed their lack of basic knowledge about Indigenous people is a barrier for knowing what online information is factual or if it even applies to our geographic area.

“I don't have a background in Indigenous history. I don't know where to look for information and I don't even know if the information that I gather from the internet is correct. A huge barrier for me is not knowing where to look to bring people in, to gather stories ... how can I bring in guest speakers when I do not know where to look? Teacher A

This was also echoed by Teacher B,

“There are scarce resources. There is so much to cover over the year and the day and not a lot of resources to help with this task. It would be much easier if there were program books because I don't have the knowledge or confidence to do this. We should be as prepared as we are for any other subject, but we aren't. If we had books and resources like we do for math, science and every other subject area Why isn't it the same in the sense that we could pick up the teacher resource book and everything we need and know that we are teaching the right information.” Teacher B

Teacher C felt it was important for schools and school boards to develop resources to support teachers in the classroom with a particular focus on localized curriculum development projects.

“If we are serious about this we need to design local curriculum and develop relationships with First Nations communities. First Nations communities must be a part of the design, development and implementation of curriculum. I hope in my day, every student will graduate with a basic understanding of community, local history and treaty lands.”

Teacher C

4.9 Emergent Themes

4.9.1 “First Nations Community Partnerships” – Collaborative Reframe

Educators recognize how, from a First Nations and school board perspective the importance of forming positive relationships with First Nations communities and people. All of the teachers mentioned how they have been encouraged to form positive relationships with First Nations communities, which would work to increase their own understandings and interpretations of knowledge, history and perspectives as told by First Nations community. Nevertheless, teachers struggled to know how to form any working relationships with surrounding First Nations communities and struggled to ensure knowledge and stories from local First Nations communities were shared in their class.

“We brought in Elders so teachers could ask questions to because the teachers do not have community connections so they do not know who to even turn to when they have questions. We must build relationships with First Nations in order to feel comfortable

asking uncomfortable questions, but where do teachers even start when they don't know anybody within the First Nations communities?" Teacher E

"Relationships with parents, family and First Nations are pivotal to success with students. Success of students is dependent on parents, families and communities being comfortable, involved and included in school life. There is a level of discomfort among First Nations students in this school, among First Nations families and communities too – We need these kids and communities to feel valued in the education system." Teacher D

Issues of trust between First Nations communities and school boards continue to remain an area concern for parents and educators. There have been some improvements among many school boards in Ontario and First Nations communities but the legacy of residential schools and the continued lack of First Nations teachers and staff within the school board continues to impact relationships between parents, First Nations community members and educators.

"I never saw myself in the institution. My first Indigenous teacher was in my 2nd year of university. Having that teacher helped me to understand myself better. This needs to happen at an earlier stage. My kids and other First Nations kids in provincial schools have nobody to turn to within the school that can really understand them, see things from their perspective, it's not right. We still aren't valued in these institutions." Parent F

"Schools and school boards say they want to work with First Nations communities and parents but they make little to no effort to do that. I do not have any relationship really with the school, I don't trust them and they make no effort to build relationships with us. They don't do anything different than they used to do, it's all optics but nothing meaningful. They think they can bring in an Elder once in a while to smudge and to talk

to students and that's all they have to do, it's all smudge and mirrors we deserve more than that. If they really believed in what they publicly state then they would put out a real effort. My son's school, the Indigenous worker organized a pow wow and he was quite excited to attend. When he got home I asked him about the pow wow and he said he didn't even get to go as the classes were allocated time slots and the teacher didn't bring them during their time slot. This is one of many examples of blatant disregard for First Nations culture. We should still not be restricted from practicing our culture but that is exactly what happened to my son in 2018. The school willingly takes the per pupil funding for FNMI students but certainly doesn't value those students." Parent M

The underlying theme throughout many of the conversations with teachers, parents and Elders was one of an increased need to shape positive relationships between First Nations communities and school boards. First Nations communities and parents are no longer willing to be passive observers in the education of their children. The parameters of true partnerships and collaboration need to be determined by First Nations communities. For far too long, First Nations communities have had to sit on the sidelines while decisions were made about every aspect of their lives, including the education of their children.

4.9.2 "I Want to Make Change Happen" – Where Do I Start?

Teachers recognized the importance of framing historical context within a First Nations perspective, but also acknowledged that the task of doing that was at most times, beyond their skill set.

Regardless of the difficulties and challenges the teachers I interviewed had to face when it came to infusing First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives throughout the daily

curriculum, an underlying theme throughout my conversations with the teachers was one of hope and change. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework, 2007 has had some positive effects over the last decade, since its introduction in 2007. Both students and teachers have seen increasing rise in awareness of First Nations history and culture throughout Ontario. There has been increased activity, new courses and programs with a focus on Indigenous content in schools across Ontario, mostly funded by the Ministry of Education's Indigenous Education Grant, which currently stands around \$66 million annually (Strengthening Our Journey – Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2018, p. 18). According to the “Strengthening Our Learning Journey – Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, (2018) the Indigenous Education Grant, formerly the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement is projected to be \$66.3 million, an increase of approximately \$54 million since 2007 (p. 18).

“All things are inclusive and not just specific to First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. All the kids are invited and it's important that we include all students. It is a healthier classroom when there is a mixed class of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. We have had Elders come in and provide teachings on a monthly basis and the kids really like it.” Teacher E

According to Teacher A, there is a lack of consistency and overall commitment to providing students and teachers with on-going access to learning and experiences with Indigenous people and knowledge holders.

“Elders are brought in once a week for a short period of time and it is separate from the classroom day it is not integrated into any classroom instruction, projects or activities that are already occurring. Instead, the Elder visit is most times held in the gymnasium and the students are brought there for teaching. Kids remember things that are reinforced, discussed and heard over a period of time. They remember things that last over a long period of time.” Teacher A

As expressed in the findings above, teachers and students have had more access to opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding concerning issues involving Indigenous people, history and perspectives, but there is a lack of on-going and consistent professional development and mentoring opportunities. As the findings above illustrate, greater investments need to be made to ensure authentic and meaningful systemic change occurs.

4.9.3 “I Want Things to Change For My Children” – When Will I See Change?

First Nations parents on the other hand, felt First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives were not accurately and appropriately infused into the classroom. This often resulted in the apparent disconnect between curricular expectations, as outlined by the Ministry of Education and the abilities and understanding of the teacher to carry out the explicit expectations.

Parent M: “As with much of society, teachers need to do some unlearning before they can truly shape the kind of new understanding of First Nations people and history that is required to effectively teach First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, perspectives and knowledge. Teachers need to understand why this is so important and its purpose, We all have a duty as citizens of Canada to correct the wrongs and to deconstruct all of the

prejudices, stereotypes and misinformation that was perpetuated about First Nations people, largely through the education system.”

Both teachers and parents described the incorporation of First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives as being inadequate and lacking consistency. When content surrounding historical context or contemporary issues regarding First Nations people were raised, information from a First Nations perspective was discounted or devalued in some instances.

“I want my children to be able to express their ways of thinking and understanding about the world around them, which is different than the views and worldview that are put forward by educational institutions and even more so by the Catholic School Board. Teachers do not have a strong understanding, if any understanding at all to be able to truly teach about treaties, sovereignty, culture, Indian Act and governance to name a few. They can’t properly do this because they don’t believe it, they don’t feel it and live it they teach from what they know and believe.” Parent M

Regardless of the negative experiences and mistrust that continues to linger within First Nations communities, the parents and community members expressed a feeling of hope for their children and optimism that systemic changes will slowly prevail. They were all cognizant of the challenges that exist regarding infusing First Nations knowledge, history, story and perspectives into the classroom on a regular basis but affirmed that the answers begin with First Nations teachers in schools.

“I think we are slowly getting there, we are making small steps towards change. We have come a long way and I am hopeful that our communities will continue to push school boards to be more reflective of the population that it serves.” Parent X.

4.10 Limitations of Research

The first limitation to this research is only one of the teachers that were interviewed identified as First Nations, while the remaining teachers interviewed were all non-Indigenous. My intentions were to gain an increased understanding of the complexity of incorporating First Nations knowledge and authentic First Nations history, culture and stories into the existing Ontario provincial education system. Non-Indigenous teachers represent the vast majority of teachers within schools in Ontario, and my research largely focused on exploring teacher understanding of First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives and how non-Indigenous teachers work to incorporate First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives into their pedagogical practices. It is my belief that this research will make a contribution to understanding the complexity and diversity of Indigenous knowledge, history and perspectives and it is my hope that in my time, First Nations people will be leading the teachings and education that encompasses our own knowledge, history and perspectives.

Next, the teachers that participated in the interviews were all female. One may question why I did not invite male teachers to participate in the teachers interviews to share their experiences and perspectives. Although I did consider this as fundamental to solid research, the reality was that the two schools that I chose to be a part of this research only had 1 male teacher each. Female teachers represent the vast majority of teachers and staff within elementary schools and this was certainly the case with the two schools that I selected for this research.

Finally, the parents of First Nations students that contributed to the research were all First Nations except for one. My intention was to facilitate an increased understanding of the expectations of parents of First Nations students and the existing realities that were expressed by

the parents of First Nations students within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board. My research came from a First Nations perspective, recognizing the complexity of authentic incorporation of First Nations knowledge, history and perspective in a classroom, by a non-Indigenous teacher.

4.11 Recommendations

4.11.1 Develop Teacher and Staff Understanding of First Nations Peoples, Communities and Histories

The findings point to the need for extensive work to promote and cultivate teacher knowledge and understanding of First Nations knowledges, history and perspectives in Sudbury Catholic District School Board.

4.11.2 Develop Relationship/Partnership Protocol Between First Nations Communities and Local School Boards

Develop a collaborative Action Plan / Strategic Plan with the Sudbury Catholic District School Board and First Nations communities that works to rethink and redefine the approach to First Nations and school boards partnerships as schools continue to reflect the colonizing narrative. The strategic plan should outline First Nations and School Board priorities and strategies that will work to create an environment that better meets the needs of First Nations students and communities.

4.11.3 Develop Clear and Concise Policy on First Nations Curriculum Resources Development

It is important to honour First Nations students and communities within the process of education. A coordinated process needs to be developed with First Nations communities, the Ministry of Education and school boards moving forward, to design, develop and implement local First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives into curriculum resource documents. It is important for schools to work with surrounding First Nations communities to develop resources and support networks that incorporate the teachings, values, voices and languages of local First Nations communities. These locally developed, First Nations led curriculum resource documents will work to fill the apparent gap in resources that work to support teachers on their journey of incorporating First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives into the classroom. Mattagami First Nations initiated a community based curriculum resource development project that focused on supporting teachers within the local community school to better incorporate local First Nations history, knowledge and stories (See Appendix I). Teachers have consistently expressed their lack of knowledge in this area of content delivery and have also voiced concern with the lack of school boards supports and lack of authentic resources that support teacher knowledge.

4.11.4 Develop Clear and Enforceable Policy on Hiring Practices within School Boards

First Nations peoples and communities have consistently expressed the need to have First Nations teachers, administrators and staff within provincial schools. An Ontario provincial policy that addresses the current hiring practices within school boards needs to be developed, with collaboration with First Nations communities, peoples and organizations. There is an

apparent absence of First Nations teachers, administrators and staff within provincial schools, which fosters the ongoing process of transmitting misinformation and a false narrative of Canada's version of First Nations peoples and history.

4.11.5 Develop Strong Partnerships and Mutual Accountability Between School Boards and First Nations Communities

Establish an accountability and reporting framework to assess improvements in First Nations education and known priority areas. This may include developing a data-sharing process between First Nations and school boards and the co-development of school board's action plans and the development of programs and services that for First Nations students.

4.12 Conclusion

For far too long governments, both federal and provincial have had ideas about how to rebuild First Nations education. These ideas seem to center around reshaping history into a pan-Indian approach where the diversity and distinctive histories of First Nations people become melted into one definition or one umbrella term; the latest homogenous term used to define First Nations people is the word Indigenous. This pan-Indian approach remains prevalent within the education system and is practiced in schools across Ontario on a daily basis. This research has highlighted the minimal improvements that have been made since the development and implementation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework (2007) and unless and until significant changes are made to the implementation of the Framework, First Nations and citizens in Ontario will continue to fund a policy that simply does not yield the results that were intended and expected.

In an effort to build relationships between First Nations and non-First Nations teachers and communities a process of decolonization has to occur. Dion, Johnson and Rice describe this further:

“In schools undertaking decolonization, students would know the name of the nation on whose traditional territory their school is built, and they would know the names and location of reserves located in close proximity to their school community. Students would develop an understanding of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people, learning that Aboriginal people did not simply or in reality disappear after Canada was explored and settled by waves of immigrants. All students would benefit from access of knowledge and understanding of a complex and difficult history that informs the present. And, importantly, Aboriginal students would have the possibility of understanding the context of their lives” (2010, p. 13).

A decolonization of education and self begins with acknowledging that First Nations knowledges, history and perspectives are valuable and have a rightful place within education and greater society. Progressive measures that work to situate First Nations teachers and community members in a place that allows them to authentically incorporate First Nations knowledge, history and perspectives within the education need to be taken.

The maintenance of and continuation of the colonial approach to education and education reform comes from a long held settler mindset that colonial governments and settler society know best and that their knowledge is more valued within mainstream society. Decisions on approaches to education, policies and implementation are still made without meaningful input or partnerships from First Nations peoples. Effective and meaningful change in First Nations

education in Ontario will not be achieved by increasing the number of people within the Ministry of Education and within school boards in Ontario; after all, we do not need more settlers developing and managing programs and services that are ineffective. Rather, authentic, measurable change in First Nations education will come with systemic changes that witness First Nations people and community at the heart of the development and administration of programs and services that meet the needs of their students and communities. The result of educational change being confined by the existing colonial administrative structures has seen education policies and practices that are mere copycats of existing models and all First Nations are left with is ‘adding curtains to an existing house.’

The goals of First Nations peoples and communities is not to simply replace settler curriculum resources with First Nations curriculum resources and work within the same restricted confines of government policy and practice. As noted by Balzer, “Institutions shaped by Eurocentric colonial governments are often replicated by the government structures of the newly independent states since few other structures exist as models” (2008, p. 21). Instead, our goal is to build our own education systems that are consistent with our culture and values. Rethinking educational models that work to reflect First Nations values and ways of life is difficult at best. Changes within existing colonial structures are restrictive but if we truly want to honour our ancestors, our communities and our children then we will strive to rebuild our relationships with the lands and with ourselves.

For hundreds of years, First Nations history, stories and experiences have been represented by the settler, by the colonizer; so much so that we almost started to believe their version of our own history. This mindset and historical narrative runs rampant throughout curriculum in Ontario. A clear and concise policy on First Nations curriculum needs to be



Figure 9: Symbolic Demonstration of Restrictive and Superficial Changes within the Ontario Education System

(Image of house with curtains illustrates the restrictive and superficial changes that can be made by First Nations people and community within the education system in Ontario.)

designed, developed and implemented by First Nations peoples. Curriculum reforms have been in place for years in Ontario but they have failed to capture accurate First Nations history, stories, knowledges and perspectives. The approach to curriculum was led by the same colonial mindset that helped to shape the false narrative about Canadian history and First Nations people in the first place and it was evident through the countless revisions that were made by First Nations curriculum reviewers. The content and context within a modern classroom should reflect the lived experiences, the social and cultural contexts of the students that are in it and making space for First Nations people as administrators, teachers and staff will serve to facilitate the necessary authentic change within a colonial structure.

The findings presented above indicate that the teachers are well intentioned and are struggling to include any authentic First Nations content into their classrooms on a consistent

basis. I am reminded of Manuel's words when he says, "...you have to begin by listening. Programs and organizations that don't serve the people's most basic needs are less than useless – they are hindrances to development" (2015, p. 25). The non-First Nations and First Nations teachers that I interviewed within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board understand the importance of incorporating First Nations knowledges, history and perspectives into their pedagogical practice but continue to lack the foundational knowledge and the school board supports to meet the obligations that are outlined within the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework (2007). The teachers within this research are good teachers, who work hard to provide students with the best education that they can.

True learning for these teachers, the learning that they have stated they have had little to no access to on a consistent basis will only come from First Nations community partnerships and enforceable school board accountability. The Ministry of Education and school boards must move beyond forcing First Nations communities into a position that requires a constant battle to be included in a meaningful and authentic way in the education of our children. Effective educational change and partnerships will only come when we can move beyond this battle.

When I began this thesis journey, I was filled with naivety and lacked the true understanding of the complexity of infusing First Nations knowledge, history and perspective into the classroom on a daily basis. As I write this, I realize that we teach from where we come from, from who we are, from our life experiences and from the knowledge that was given to us by our ancestors. Requiring or expecting a sudden shift in a person's or teacher's understanding about what they have lived and the knowledge that they have been imparted is simplistic and unrealistic, at best. It is easy to point to the classroom teacher and place the burden of the truth is if you want First Nations perspectives, knowledges and histories in a classroom then the system

has to infuse the people that hold those perspectives and histories into those institutions. You cannot teach perspective. You cannot teach experiences that you have not had. Perspective comes from lived experience and can be supplemented by information out of a book but cannot be derived from a book. First Nation community and people must be placed at the center of the necessary and overdue changes within education institutions in Ontario. Throughout this thesis and within the context of my job, I have grown to truly appreciate knowing that we make small movements of change on a daily basis that works to affect positive change for First Nations students and all students. The change may not be as monumental and quick as we may like, but I am confident that First Nations people have affected positive changes and will continue to battle for our rightful place within educational reform. With this, I invite you to reflect on the quote below:

As First Nations people, our lifelong learning systems are embedded in the knowledge of our ancestors, our language, ways of being, ceremonies and connections to the land. We are united, obligated and committed to maintain our inherent jurisdiction over the education of our people; ensuring the empowerment and success of future generations, grounded in our identity as the original people of this land. (Charting Our Own Path Forward, Chiefs of Ontario, nd.)

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Appendices

Appendix I: Approval for Conducting Research Involving Human Subjects

Research Ethics Board – Laurentian University



This letter confirms that the research project identified below has successfully passed the ethics review by the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board (REB). Your ethics approval date, other milestone dates, and any special conditions for your project are indicated below.

TYPE OF APPROVAL / New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> / Modifications to project / Time extension	
Name of Principal Investigator and school/department	Nicole Nicolas-Bayer, Masters of Indigenous Relations program, supervisor, Pamela Toulouse, School of Education
Title of Project	Exploring Representations of Indigenous Knowledge in Elementary Urban Schools in Greater Sudbury
REB file number	2015-12-05
Date of original approval of project	March 18, 2016

Date of approval of project modifications or extension (if applicable)	
Final/Interim report due on: (You may request an extension)	March, 2017
Conditions placed on project	

During the course of your research, no deviations from, or changes to, the protocol, recruitment or consent forms may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to the Research Ethics website to complete the appropriate REB form.

All projects must submit a report to REB at least once per year. If involvement with human participants continues for longer than one year (e.g. you have not completed the objectives of the study and have not yet terminated contact with the participants, except for feedback of final results to participants), you must request an extension using the appropriate LU REB form. In all cases, please ensure that your research complies with Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS). Also please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence with the REB office.

Congratulations and best wishes in conducting your research.



Rosanna Langer, PHD, Chair, Laurentian University Research Ethics Board

Appendix II: Approval for Conducting Research Involving Human Subjects

Research Ethics Board – Sudbury District Catholic District School Board

9. RESEARCHER'S AGREEMENT

I have read the Sudbury Catholic District School Board's Policy and Procedure for Conducting Research and agree that this research will be conducted in accordance with those procedures.

Furthermore, I agree that I will maintain the utmost confidentiality and will not disclose any personal information I obtain on students, teachers, or others through my research.

Signature of Researcher:  Date: March 24/16

10. DECISION OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Revision Required (see notes attached) Approved

Not approved (see attached note)

Signature of Committee Chair: _____

Date: _____

Appendix III: Conversational Approach/Interview Information for Participants

Representation of Indigenous Knowledge in Elementary Urban Schools within the City of Greater Sudbury

Researcher: Nicole Nicolas-Bayer, Laurentian University, Sudbury, Ontario

In this context the Conversational Approach / Interview will be used as a process of data collection, where individuals will share their knowledge and insight based on questions posed by the researcher. The place of the conversation / interview will take occur in a place of your choosing to ensure anonymity and comfort. Prior to commencement, the process of the conversation / interview will be explained by the researcher, and the researcher will address any questions the participant may have. The participants will respond to a series of open-ended questions, which will be posed one at a time within the context of a conversation. This process should take 1-2 hours depending on how much the participant wishes to share. After the Conversation / Interview are complete, the participants will be thanked with a small gift.

Conversational Approach / Interview Process:

- This is a Conversational Approach / Interview, which is being used to share your experiences, and knowledge about Indigenous knowledge and how it is represented within the urban classroom within the City of Greater Sudbury.
- The Conversational Approach / Interview to gathering information are used to promote openness and this approach has been used within Indigenous communities to transmit stories, history and knowledge throughout history (Personal Communication, 2014).

- The Conversational Approach / Interviews provide a safe and comfortable environment to share, without interruption.

Conversational Approach / Interview Questions:

1. Educators within the Sudbury Catholic District School Board will be presented with the following questions,

- a) What do you do see as your strengths in working with Indigenous students? What are your areas for growth?
- b) Describe some ways that you integrate Indigenous Knowledge, history, perspectives in your classroom?
- c) What challenges, if any do you experience with integrating Indigenous Knowledge, history, perspectives into your classroom?
- d) What supports (board, school) could be put in place to help facilitate the understanding and integration of Indigenous Knowledge, history and perspectives in the classroom?

2. The prompt questions for First Nations Elders will focus on experiences and insight on reshaping education to better meet the needs of First Nations students,

- a) What are some of your thoughts on provincial schools and how they meet the needs of First Nations students?
- b) Teachers have been asked to include Indigenous Knowledge, history and perspectives into the classroom, can you describe your thoughts on this.
- c) Does Indigenous knowledge fit into our current education system and who should be responsible for representing this in the classroom?

3. The prompt questions for parents of First Nations students will include:

- a) What are the needs of your children within the public education system?
- b) What goals do you have for your children and how does the education system assist your children in meeting them?

Participants are thanked for sharing their knowledge and insights for this research project. Lastly before departing, they are provided with a package which includes copies of Letter of Invitation, Consent Form, they are also thanked with a small gift of braided sweetgrass and a copy of the curriculum resource Mattagami First Nation - Keepers of Our Stories, upon completion.

Appendix IV: Mattagami First Nation - Keepers of Our Stories

Mattagami First Nation Curriculum Resource Document – A Wise Process and Practice for Consideration in Provincial Schools (continued on pages 87-164).



KEEPERS OF OUR STORIES:
MATTAGAMI FIRST NATION



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mattagami First Nation respectfully acknowledges the wisdom and guidance of the Elders and community members who shared their knowledge and personal experiences contributing to the development of this curriculum resource document.

First Nations knowledge has been passed down from one generation to the next and will continue to be shared. It is with much pride, honour and humility that we are able to pass on our knowledge and wisdom to our children by using the many stories that have been, and continue to be, shared by Elders and community members.

We respectfully acknowledge the following Elders and community members for their contributions: Delores McKay, Morris Naveau, Frank McKay, George Naveau, Stephen Naveau, Lawrence Naveau, Daisy Naveau, Leonard Naveau, Joyce Constant, Bernice Naveau and Norman Naveau.

Also, we would like to respectfully acknowledge and offer gratitude to former Chief, Walter Naveau and the current Chief, Chad Boissoneau for their input, guidance and encouragement throughout this process.

Finally, a very special thank you and appreciation for the support and encouragement of the community's Educational Director, Cathy Naveau.

Chi-Miigwech

Nicole Nicolas-Bayer, B.A. (Hons) B.Ed, M.A. (c)

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Editor: Paul Toffanello M.Ed., B.Ed., B.A

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MOVING FORWARD: KNOWING OUR STORIES



Introduction

This document incorporates both Western ways of knowing and Traditional Knowledge of the Anishnaabe of the James Bay area and Watershed areas. It is intended to be a dynamic community-based educational resource. This resource document serves as a curriculum guide that provides detailed stories revealing the history of our people, and it acts as a tool for teachers and community members to aid in the understanding of some of our history and experiences. The purpose of developing and implementing this unit, Keepers of Our Stories, is to facilitate understanding of our community's history and to reveal the enormous changes that our people were compelled to make as a result of colonization.

It is understood that First Nations communities across North America have unique histories and experiences. The units and activities defined in this document explore the interconnected relationships among

Elders, community members, youth, and the natural surroundings including the waters and all that Shkagamik-Kwe (Mother Earth) provides for us. Like other First Nation communities across Canada, many of our stories and teachings are being forgotten and even lost over time as many of our Knowledge Keepers move into the Spirit world.

Therefore, we feel obligated to provide a path to the continued and necessary sharing of our story and mitigate its diminishment and potential loss. In this effort, we hope to capture some of our stories that attempt to preserve our community culture, to encourage our peoples to learn and share their story, and to inform our non-Indigenous friends of the unique nature of who we are, where we came from, and how we have contributed to the growth of our country. We are the first people, the keepers of our stories.

Rationale

Designing and implementing First Nation community-based curriculum into schools facilitates and informs a process of decolonization of our systems of education. This is achieved through regaining control over the development of curriculum and methodology of content delivery. Integrating community-based traditional knowledge and philosophy into our curriculum provides our students an opportunity to increase their self-awareness as they gain an understanding about their ancestors, lands and community story.

Enhancing student success underpins our efforts in developing and implementing community-based curriculum and pedagogical practices into schools. A fuller understanding by our students of the communities to which they belong, their unique worldview, their unique history and culture will achieve important and necessary results. It is anticipated that it will increase their understanding of their own identities, enhance their self-esteem and positively influence and improve their overall success throughout their academic careers.

The process of learning throughout this unit will provide students with opportunities to enhance their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. The lessons are structured to facilitate an increased self-awareness through opportunities to share, discuss, reflect, and engage in hands-on experiences through the learning process.

Finally, although the series *Keepers of Our Stories* provides our First Nation children with a stronger sense of their identity, their history, and their understanding of their place in the world, it is also intended to provide non-Indigenous learners with a fresh, truthful view of our history spoken in the words of the people who are First Nation, people who live and experience life as proud members of the First Nation community.

Teachers, educators, parents: Our hope is that this series will also increase and enhance your understanding and delivery of the very important messages we have to offer. We thank you for your dedication and heartfelt intent to learn of our stories and share in our truth.

Note To Teachers: Lessons & Activities

Teachers: It is important to know that the lessons presented are clearly intended to offer a deeper, more personal understanding of the Anishnaabe people of the James Bay and Watershed areas. The activities and strategies to direct and implement these understandings are in keeping with Ministry guidelines, but they are not intended to be used in isolation; rather, teachers may modify the activities presented and enrich the learning experience through planning of additional lessons.

In all learning and teaching activities, it is imperative that student's prior knowledge is determined by the teacher in order to successfully teach the concepts, achieve the learning outcomes and address the stated expectations. Modifications to lessons should be made in meeting the needs of the learners under the teacher's supervision.

SECTION 1: MY COMMUNITY

"The hard times brought our family together and made us closer. Each generation changes but, historically, our families always relied on each other. We knew our roles and knew we all had to help the community survive."

Daisy Naveau, Elder



Teacher Background

Long before the arrival of European settlers, First Nations people lived and flourished throughout North America. Over time, First Nations communities across the continent developed unique knowledge and sacred stories. The First Nations populations throughout Canada were healthy, strong and thrived within diverse and complex societies. There were many tribes within these societies, all of which were unique, and all of which were connected by culture and heritage. Our people within these communities survived through a cohesive, interconnected and organized effort that ensured our existence. We endured through interdependency and in the clear understanding of our roles and responsibilities within the tribe.

For First Nation people, including the Ojibway, Cree and Oji-Cree that have historically occupied the territory currently known as the James Bay Treaty #9, the extended family was a self-sufficient unit. Basic human needs such as food, clothing, shelter and other human and spiritual needs such as love, education and politics were all met through the value of, and reliance on, kinship. Our people needed one another, relied on one another, and flourished because of this interconnectedness.

"During the spring months, I would spend about 6 weeks in the bush with my nookimis (grandmother) and other family members. My uncle Jim would bring me in the bush when I was only about 2 years old. My uncles and aunts would all go, too. I lived with extended family. We would go into the bush in March when the water would break-up. Sometimes we would go other times but we would go into the bush with a dog team to help us bring all the supplies we needed. We would portage and come back by Grassy. We would trap wazhashk (muskrat), amik (beaver), zhiishiib (duck), and I would watch my relatives skin the animal and use all of the different parts of the animals. Then, I learned how to skin and cook the animals myself. My nookimis would teach me how to sew on a tam (woman's hat). That's how I learned to sew and all the words I heard being spoken were only in the language, never any English." Daisy Naveau, Elder

Women were valued within the community and children were raised according to the values and principles of the Seven Grandfather Teachings. The community was able to survive within the resource-rich environments within the territory of the James Bay Treaty #9.

"It was a hard life for us as children. We saw a lot of change from the time we were kids 'til now. We went from scrubbing our clothes at the lake, knowing everybody in the community and not having hydro to washing our clothes with washing machines, having hydro and seeing people in the community that I don't even really recognize anymore." Daisy Naveau, Elder

For many generations First Nation communities ensured their survival through their reliance on Shkagami-Kwe (Mother Earth) who provided for them and by finding innovative ways to make and create all things necessary for survival.

"We used everything we could from the bush. We had to. We used fat from the bear and moose to cook. We never seemed to get sick when we lived that way, when we lived in the bush. Then as time went on the community dug 2 wells in the ground to store the meat and every community member would get meat. No matter who went out to hunt and kill an animal. We would put a galvanized pail with family name on it and put the meat down the hole for storage... because it was cold in the well. We took care of each other" Daisy Naveau, Elder

First Nations people within the James Bay Treaty #9 territory traded with one another prior to the arrival of Europeans, and their network was far-reaching, extensive and all trading was done in good faith. The Mattagami River and supporting water passages were used by many First Nations people throughout the James Bay Treaty #9 territory as a highway where they would travel using birch bark canoes to trade with other small, scattered First Nations villages along the way.

"The coastal Indians would travel down the Mattagami River using canoes to hunt, fish, trap and trade with different tribes along the way. Eventually, the Ojibway Nation became mixed with the Cree Nation creating the Oji-Cree Nation that we have today. When the Cree Indians were here, they were actually here trading goods, but Treaty #9 was being signed so the Commissioners rounded up all the Indians that were around and stuck them in the community that we have now." Morris Naveau, Elder

Major trading routes were developed and nation-to-nation treaties were established to determine how best to share the lands, its natural resources and how military alliances could be created for protection and defense against common enemies.

"The coastal Indians and southern Indians would always be moving by canoe and land to travel and trade goods with other Indians. Animal pelts, meats and other goods would be traded all along the way. Times were tough back then but we had what we needed to be happy and survive."

Stephen Naveau, Elder

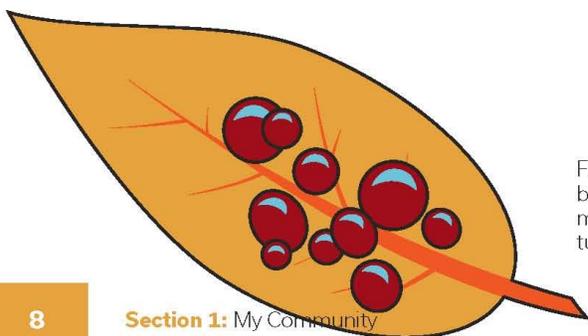
Wild fruits and plants supplemented the dietary needs of our people throughout the summer months. Gathering strawberries, blueberries and chokecherries throughout our territory was often a time for the women and children to socialize, share stories, teachings and allowed the children to learn about the lands and all that they provide for us.

"We would go out with our aunties and cousins and pick berries all day, off in the bush. We had lots of fun, heard the language being spoken all day, and played with our cousins and friends. When we got back to our house we were so excited to get to make different kinds of pies and scones and eat them."

Daisy Naveau, Elder

The lands and weather proved to be quite challenging at times, but the original peoples of our traditional territory adapted well as they led a semi-nomadic lifestyle where they would follow animals and plants to harvest. Much travelling was done throughout the summer months as Ojibway and Cree leaders held political councils, and people travelled for trade, social and ceremonial purposes. As the cold weather of winter arrived, First Nations people would disperse into smaller groups of kinship and move into the interior hunting grounds for survival.

First Nations people and communities have faced much adversity and have put forward tremendous efforts in order to persevere and hold together any semblance of family. Today, our Anishinaabe family may be quite diverse. It may be a two-parent or single parent family, but the extended family including grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives continues to this day and plays a big role in helping to meet the needs of all family members.



8

Section 1: My Community

The Influence of New Settlers

Over time, settlers arrived, and trading with our people commenced and grew at a very quick pace. In the very early years of contact, new settlers offered metal tools such as knives, saws and guns which were all new to our people. The tools were accepted by our people, in trade, and they enhanced our people's ability to survive and thrive throughout our territory.

Unfortunately, as the number of settlers increased, the issues and tensions between First Nations and European settlers also increased. The tensions intensified as the majority of settlers took up farming as a way of life, which at that time involved cutting down trees, clearing the lands of stumps, rocks and brush, constructing houses, shelters and fences. As well, the settlers assumed an "ownership" of the land and claimed rights to large areas of traditional First Nations territory. Although we defined our land as territory, the concept of "owning" the land was foreign to our people, and it became one of the first areas of discontent between First Nation people and the new settlers.

Suddenly, the lands that our people used for survival and ceremony from time immemorial were disappearing into the hands of the European settlers. First Nations people were restricted from using our own lands due to the encroachment and land claims of settlers. Differences in beliefs about the use and ownership of lands, increased exposure by First Nations people to foreign diseases and the negative attitudes and abhorrent treatment of First Nations people by the new settlers would set the stage for a long and difficult relationship that continues to this day.

The newcomers believed in possessing and owning the lands and all that was on the lands, while First Nations people believed that the lands, animals, water and plants could not be possessed or owned by people. Rather, the Anishinaabe believed the lands and all of Creation were placed here by the Creator to be used, shared, enjoyed and cared for by everyone.

"The whole family would venture out of the community and trap animals together. Life was hard back then but the families were close and they were united. The Hudson's Bay Company changed the way First Nation trapped and hunted. The reasons for trapping and hunting shifted from survival to bartering. It started to shift our way of thinking."

Morris Naveau, Elder

First Nations people had no understanding of money because they had no use for it. Instead, they used animal pelts to trade for goods with each other and eventually with various trading posts. First Nations were able

to use animal pelts to trade with the Hudson's Bay Company for various goods including metal tools, pots, axes, gunpowder, blankets and much more. The Hudson's Bay Company changed the practice of First Nations people's relationship with Mother Earth, and very quickly, First Nations people became dependent on this new system of trade and commerce - something that was not in keeping with our traditional ways. Animal pelts became a commodity, and it changed and minimized the sacred relationship between animals and people. The change in practice forced First Nations people to become part of a system that was completely foreign to us and that changed us and some of our ways. The whole concept of money was not only foreign to the First Nations people, but it had no place in our time-proven methods of survival.

Change and Transition

In many communities within our traditional territory, many families lived under one roof. This still exists in many cases today, but change occurred when settlers imposed their beliefs and structures on our people. Regardless, children continue to grow up learning from, and being loved and accepted by, the larger family unit. Children still play a vital role in the family by doing tasks suited to their abilities such as running errands, carrying messages between houses and camps, and caring for siblings and other family members.

"We used to sit and talk all over the community, by the dock, on the stumps or rocks or just in backyards and talk about everything. We had community celebrations at different times of the year and everybody would come and contribute in some way. We would have all wild foods, the young girls would go out and pick the berries and make pies, the Chief would organize everything. I remember that the community would be dancing while other community members played the fiddle, guitar and sang old songs. Chief would be dancing and would throw candies out all over the floor for the kids to pick up and the kids would laugh and get a nice treat of candies."
Daisy Naveau, Elder

Extended family units gradually changed as the Anishinaabe began to adopt the European concept of a small, nuclear family. The beliefs of individual rights began to override the traditional beliefs of greater collective good. The individual Anishinaabe within the larger First Nation unit began to lose a sense of identity and uniqueness. The desire to contribute to the greater good of the larger unit lessened over time. The interdependence of each person within the group began to transition to an individualistic approach diminishing our traditional ways of being. Our traditional ways began to erode with increased settlement and imposed restrictions.

First Nations methods of education were transformed from teaching children and youth through experience and modeling to a more westernized approach. Historically, the responsibility of teaching children within the tribe rested upon the kinship group and each member within the group providing the student with a unique perspective and teaching unique skills.

Over time, First Nations were forced to adopt a European approach to education, and our children were taken away from their families and forced into schools outside of their communities, often hundreds of miles away from their homes. These schools were a collusion between the Crown and religious institutions, the latter taking responsibility for operating the schools.

These came to be known as residential schools, and First Nation children were forced to attend as determined by the provisions of the *Indian Act, 1876*. The purpose of these schools was to strip First Nations people of their beliefs and culture by removing their children from the home and its traditions. The thinking was that by doing this, the children would become more westernized in their thinking and more Christian in their beliefs.

Removing children from their family units and communities prevented the Anishinaabe parents and Elders, and all other First Nations people across Canada, to transmit their language, traditions, culture and beliefs to their children. As a result, many aspects of the Anishinaabe peoples' way of life began to disintegrate and, in some cases, disappear. The decision to rip our children from their loving families and indoctrinate them into a completely foreign way of thinking, acting and believing has had dire consequences to our people and our way of life.

LESSON 1: MY COMMUNITY

GRADE 1

Expectation Social Studies

A2.2 Gather and organize information on significant events, people, and/or places in their lives that contribute or have contributed to the development of their roles, relationships, responsibilities, and identity/sense of self

Concept: *Adaptation*

Teacher Information:

The Anishinaabe lived in extended families, close knit kinship groups, which often included a man and his wife (or wives) and their children along with the man's siblings, the wife's siblings and the couple's parents. As well, aunts, uncles, and close friends were included. In this family dynamic, sharing was central to life, and it was necessary to ensure everyone's survival.

All members of the family unit were interconnected. The welfare of the whole group was influenced by the circumstances of each of its members, and what happened to one person affected everyone else in the group. The survival and welfare of the group were the priorities, and individualism had no place within this system of interconnectedness. Traditionally, the adults within the extended family assisted with parenting of all of the children and, as such, each child benefited from learning from more than just the mother and father.

Members of the community would teach the children many different skills depending on their area of expertise, and children would gain knowledge in learning how to survive, how to get along with one another, and how to contribute to the larger community. The children would develop special skills and come to understand the ways of the people. They would learn how to trap, cook, build different forms of shelters, and learn about plants and medicines, sewing, dancing, patience, responsibility and much more. They would develop self-respect and achieve a strong sense of accomplishment when they participated in helping the community grow and flourish.

Once the new settlers arrived, First Nations people became unwitting participants in a series of changes that would dramatically affect their way of life, their relationships with one another, and their relationship with the lands. For the first time in their existence, First Nations families were confronted with the politics of a governing body whose aim it was to explore and claim right to foreign lands. Suddenly, First Nations communities were inundated with policies and procedures with which they were wholly unfamiliar and which eventually had the disastrous results of fragmenting families and dramatically altering their way of life. A number of government policies and laws, such as residential schools and the *Indian Act, 1876*, shattered traditional First Nations family and community relationships.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Family & Community:

Have students gather in a circle. Students will engage in Talking Circle Activity. Each student will have a turn to speak within the circle, but only the person who holds a rock or a stick will be able to speak. All others are encouraged to listen and consider their own story through the sharing.

- a. The teacher will begin the circle by introducing the topics of family and community. Each child can share a story about any aspect of their relationships with family. They may discuss a family member and share activities they've enjoyed with this member. This may include story sharing, walking, berry picking, etc.



2. Extended Family:

Students will bring photographs, or draw pictures of, the different family members including, grandmothers, grandfathers, parents, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and other community members that may be considered family. Each student should be provided with a large piece of canvas or bristol board so they can glue their photos or draw their pictures.

- a. The student will use paint or markers to illustrate activities that they do with their family members. Students will present their family murals to class.



Enrichment:

Invite an Elder or Knowledge Keeper from the community to visit the class to share stories and Traditional Knowledge about the area. Elders and Knowledge Keepers may include grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, hunters, trappers, community workers or friends.

Students will be asked to bring any member(s) of their family to class to be introduced and to observe as they share the family murals with peers.

Materials:

- ✓ Photographs of family
- ✓ Canvas or bristol board
- ✓ Glue or tape
- ✓ Paint
- ✓ Paint brushes

LESSON 2: SACRED SPACES

GRADE 1

Expectation Social Studies

A2.3 Analyze and construct simple maps as part of their investigations into places that are significant to them or to their family

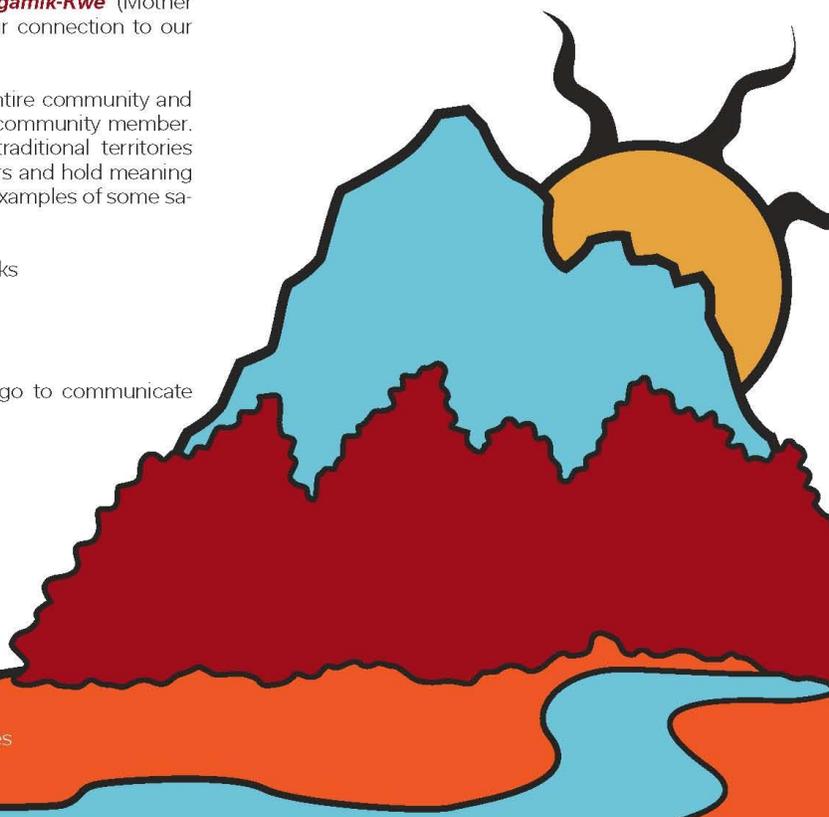
Concept: *Beliefs*

Teacher Information:

Shkagamik-Kwe (Mother Earth) is our source of life and is considered sacred among First Nations peoples. Our Elders share many stories about their experiences with some of these sacred spaces, including stories about time spent in the natural surroundings with family, plants, animals and Spirit. Many sacred teachings and practices about respecting **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth) are at the very heart of our connection to our traditional lands.

Some spaces are sacred to the entire community and some are sacred to an individual community member. Many sacred places within our traditional territories have existed for thousands of years and hold meaning to our people and communities. Examples of some sacred spaces could include:

- ▶ the petroglyphs located on rocks
- ▶ ancient burial grounds
- ▶ old growth forest by the dock
- ▶ the pow wow grounds
- ▶ the rocks
- ▶ places community members go to communicate with ancestors
- ▶ others.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce Concept of Mapping:

- a. Ask students about the purpose of a map;
- b. Show students a map of Ontario, noting their location and the towns with which they may be familiar;
- c. Using a Smartboard and Google Maps, show an image of Canada zooming into Ontario, then zooming into Mattagami First Nation. Discuss some of the images and places that are displayed, attempting to personalize this activity. Continue to discuss the purpose of a map, extending the initial conversation. Record student responses within the discussion.

2. Create a Map:

- a. Prepare the map outline and contents. Draw a simple map of the community on a large piece of canvas or butcher paper. Cut shapes out of construction paper that represent water, trees, houses, traditional medicines, pow wow grounds, the community store (located in Activity Sheets section)

and other areas of importance may be mapped, as well.

*Have place names prepared in advance and allow students to locate where the name should be placed on the map.

3. Sacred Walk:

- a. As a group, students, teacher and community volunteers will walk to an identified sacred place in the community and discuss its significance and importance to the community.

4. Personal Mapping:

- a. Students will create a personal map including the location of their home, school, favourite space within community and any other space that they want to place on map. Map will include cardinal directions, a title and a legend.

Enrichment:

Invite an Elder, Knowledge Keeper or community member into the classroom to assist with community mapping activity.

Elder(s) will share their knowledge of traditional lands. The Elder(s) will discuss where sacred spaces and places are located on map and the students will glue these locations to their own map.

In preparation for the Elder's visit, the teacher will prompt students to offer questions that they feel they should ask the Elder. The teacher will guide the children through this process. All questions should be deemed important. Some questions students may choose to ask Elder, Knowledge Keeper or community member might include:

- ▶ Do you remember any stories about the community when you were our age?
- ▶ What kinds of community activities did you do when you were younger?
- ▶ How has the community changed over the years?
- ▶ What were some of the sacred spaces in the community? Do they still exist today?
- ▶ Why are they sacred?

Materials:

- ✓ **Map of Ontario**
- ✓ **Internet access and Google Maps**
- ✓ **Mapping spaces and places images**
- ✓ **Construction paper**
- ✓ **Colouring pencils**

LESSON 3: COMMUNITY TRADITIONS

GRADE 2

Expectation Social Studies

A3.6 Identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various community celebrations and events

Concept: *The Hunt*

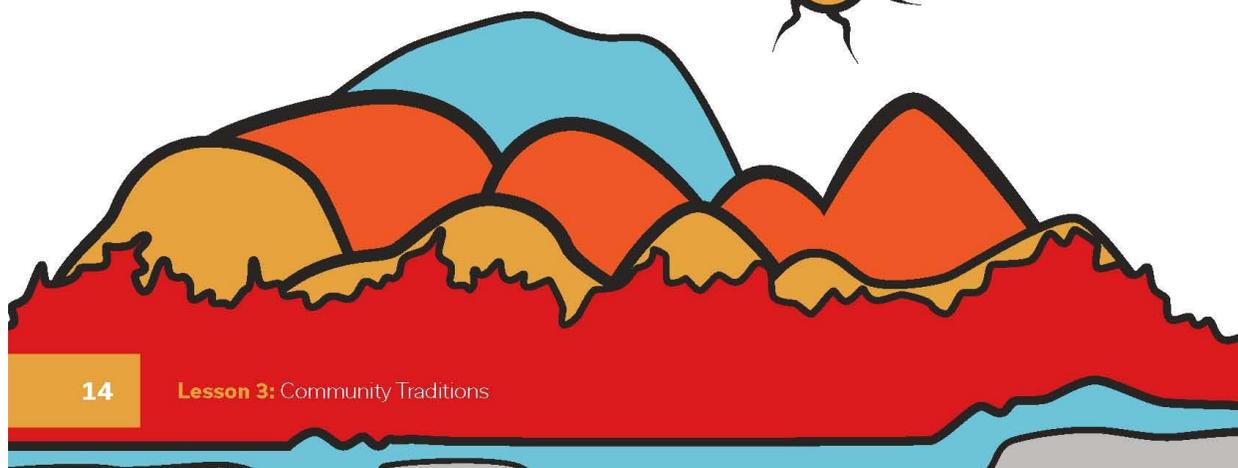
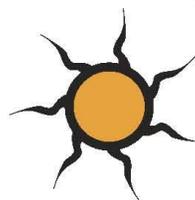
Teacher Information:

Within Anishnaabe communities, the annual **Mooz** (moose) hunt is a traditional practice that has been exercised for thousands of years. One of the most celebrated times of the year for our community is the fall moose hunt. It is one tradition among many that our people practiced, using all the resources available to them. Within our traditional territory this included fishing, hunting, trapping, gathering berries and gathering. According to our Elders, our people did not waste anything and only took what was needed, recognizing that our survival depended on an abundance and variety of resources.

During the traditional hunt, our hunters would track and kill a moose. Our hunters were very familiar with the lands, having been taught by our ancestors who tracked moose and other animals, relying on their traditional knowledge and connection to the lands. Historically, the well-being of the family depended on this knowledge, which often led to a successful hunt.

After the killing of the moose, a prayer was said to honour the animal for giving its life for meat and to make clothing from its skin. Tobacco was offered in acknowledgement of the spirit of the moose and in thanks for the sacrifice it has made for the continuance of our people. The ceremony for the moose acknowledged this animal as our brother and that the animal has given its life to help the hunter and community survive. The animal continues to be honoured by using all parts of the moose. When the hunters return from the hunt, the meat from the animal was divided up between the families within the community. Some of the meat from the moose was sun dried and smoked and buried in food storage holes for the coming long winter.

These traditions continue today.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. To stimulate discussion, display relevant images of the Fall moose harvest. Talk together about how members of the community to prepare for the moose hunt, for example exploring traditional territory, looking for signs of moose, making a birch bark caller, calling moose, setting up camp, chopping wood, building a fire, and accessing water to name a few.
2. Divide the children into groups. Use a **Mind Map** template and record details about what would be involved in preparing for the moose hunt and actually going on the hunt.
3. Discuss their ideas, and use a **Priority Pyramid** to prioritize the list of things they need to prepare for moose hunt. Have children reflect on who participates in the moose hunt within the community.
4. Display images of the **Birchbark Moose** caller(s). Engage in whole group discussion asking probing questions such as:
 - ▶ What is a moose caller?
 - ▶ What is it used for?
 - ▶ What is it made from?
 - ▶ Where do you find material that moose caller is made from?
5. Making the Moose Caller:
 - a. Explain to students that they will make a moose caller out of birch bark. Introduce the steps of making a birch bark moose caller.
 - b. Go into nearby bush, preferably in spring, and find birch trees. Before peeling any bark from the trees, have students offer tobacco as an offering for taking the birch. Tobacco is always offered before taking from *Shkagamik-Kwe* (Mother Earth).
 - c. Have the students strip only as much birch bark as they will need from the tree. Remind them that a living thing is giving a gift and they need to be respectful.
 - d. Before making their own moose caller, the students should be shown a moose caller as an example of what they will be making. Demonstrate how to use it.
 - e. With the white side on the inside, roll the bark into a funnel shape and temporarily fasten shape with a piece of tape. Teacher and classroom helpers will trim both ends to make the openings even.
 - f. Using *Sinew* and large needle, thread them all together. Students will weave along the edges of birchbark.
 - g. Have children practice moose calls outside in the schoolyard.



Enrichment:

Invite an Elder or Knowledge Keeper from the community to visit the class to help the children make a birchbark moose caller. Elders and Knowledge Keepers may include grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, hunters, trappers, community workers or friends.

Materials:

- ✓ Images of fall moose harvest
- ✓ Images of birchbark moose callers
- ✓ Tobacco
- ✓ Large pieces of birchbark
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Sinew and large needle

LESSON 4: CELEBRATION OF SEASONS

GRADE 2

Expectation Social Studies

A3.7 Identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various family celebrations and practices

Concept: *One With Nature*

Teacher Information:

From time immemorial, First Nations communities have celebrated for many different reasons. Some celebrations included the birth of a child, a marriage, rites of passage, following a fast, harvesting of different animals, and the welcoming of the different seasons.

During times of hunting and gathering there would be celebrations of thanks for all that **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth) has provided. The celebrations of thanks would include music, song, dance, gifts and feasts. Many changes within the community were influenced by the changes in seasons.

Spring was a time of renewal when we witnessed the melting of ice from our surrounding rivers and lakes and the return of many birds and animals that migrated or hibernated throughout the winter months. Plants and trees began to grow again, and we could begin to access sacred medicines.

Summer provided the community with the time needed to hunt and gather food and engage in playful activity. The summer season allowed First Nations to gather and store tree roots, wild berries, herbs and edible plants.

Fall was an important time of the year as it was used to prepare for the pending harsh winters. This often meant moving to traditional sites among a more densely populated forest to better protect us from the elements of winter. Many people within the community would dry meat and use earth cellars to store food for the winter.

Winter imposed many challenges for First Nations people who lived throughout Northern Ontario. Long periods of cold temperatures and scarce food sources often made survival difficult, but it also provided time for forms of community gatherings through story sharing and family gatherings around a fire.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. On a large piece of paper, draw a Medicine Wheel with 4 quadrants, each quadrant representing one of the four seasons (winter, spring, summer, fall) or display Medicine Wheel using Smartboard (located in Activity Sheets section of document). Give each child a name tag template (size depends on size of medicine wheel) and ask them to write and decorate their names. (located in Activity Sheets section of document)
 2. Sit in a circle with the Medicine Wheel in the middle. Discuss the seasons, the weather, foods that are available and activities that we engage in during particular seasons. Invite each child to share the month of their birthday and determine in which season their birthday is situated. Invite each child in turn to stick their name in the relevant season.
- *You may consider partnering students with birthdays in same seasons.
3. To stimulate discussion, display some images of celebrations, discuss how we celebrate birthdays. Allow each child to share memories about a birthday celebration.
 4. Students will research the season that their birthday is in and will produce a poster based on their research. As part of the research, ask them to identify community members who might visit the class to discuss and or demonstrate different activities, rituals, traditions that take place during the season that their birthday is situated in..
 5. Allow the students to copy and print pictures from the Internet and gather pictures from family that illustrate and highlight the season, the activities, the family and people linked to the season of their birthdate.
 6. Students will give oral presentations describing their poster.



Enrichment:

Invite members of the community to come in for storytelling. The stories would be linked to a personal experience of the storyteller where the season is significant to the story. For example: a storyteller might tell of a time when she/he was exploring in the bush.

Materials:

- ✓ **Medicine Wheel**
- ✓ **Images of different celebrations**
- ✓ **Internet**
- ✓ **Paper**
- ✓ **Bristol Board**
- ✓ **Pencil Crayons**
- ✓ **Glue**
- ✓ **Scissors**
- ✓ **Name Tags**

LESSON 5: COMMUNITY FEAST

GRADE 2

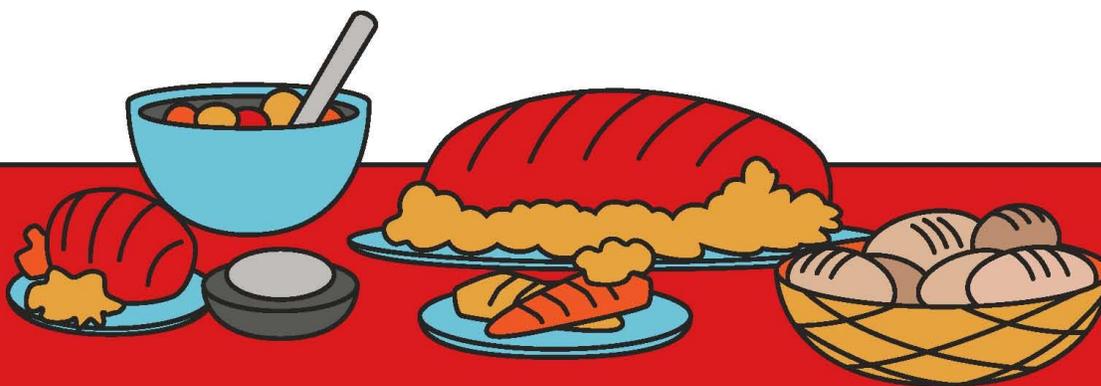
Expectation Social Studies

A2.2 Gather and organize information on some of the past and present traditions and celebrations within their family and the community to which they belong, using primary and / or secondary sources that they have gathered themselves or that have been provided to them

Concept: *The Community Table*

Teacher Information:

Feasts are an integral component within First Nations culture and community. Feasts are held throughout the year for many different reasons including, but not exclusive to, births, deaths, marriages, rites of passage, to honour the seasons, and naming ceremonies. Today, many communities continue to feast throughout the year, and each First Nation community has their own protocols and customs for feasts. Many communities gather on lands that are sacred to them while some communities gather at a community complex. Mattagami First Nation community gathers to feast to honour our ancestors, Elders and community members and give thanks for all that **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth) provides.



Learning and Teaching Activities

Mind Mapping:

1. To stimulate discussion, display images of family, community and celebrations. Try to include images of community-based celebrations. Discuss with the students why it is important to show gratitude and thanks for the many gifts that have been afforded to us by the Creator.
2. Create a Mind Map and solicit student responses to: **I AM GRATEFUL FOR ...**
3. Students will create a short paragraph describing the things for which they are grateful. This may include parents, grandparents, friends, community, animals, trees, water, etc.
4. Invite parents and Elders into classroom for a classroom feast to celebrate and allow students to show gratitude for all that we are provided within our lives. Students will read their gratitude paragraphs to start the classroom feast.
5. Each community member who attends the feast will bring a dish of food.



Enrichment:

Have students create tobacco ties for classroom feast and give to all community members that attend.

Materials:

- ✓ Images of family, community and celebrations
- ✓ Colouring pencils
- ✓ Construction paper
- ✓ Food for class feast

SECTION 2: THE WORLD AROUND US

"A long time ago our people depended on the earth and all it gives for survival but we only killed or took what we needed to survive. We would kill bear to use the furs for clothing and as a bed to sleep on. It would restrict the dampness and cold. The Elders described the times as being really hard but also simple and happy."

Morris Naveau, Elder



Teacher Background

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the natural lands provided all that was necessary for First Nations people to survive. Great boreal forests covered the fruitful lands, the waters were clean and full of fish and the resources were abundant. The newcomers to this land quickly discovered the great wealth that could be extracted from the lands through the creatures, trees, rocks and minerals. A tidal wave of change came not only for the original people of this land, the Anishinaabe but also for **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth).

Entrenched in the lives and beliefs of First Nations people were natural laws which were established by the Creator. Natural laws informed the beliefs that humans would survive as long as they lived in harmony and balance with **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth); this meant humans should only take from the natural world what they needed for survival. Natural laws shaped the relationship between First Nations people and the natural world around them. The relationship was founded on interdependence and respect. First Nations peoples' interactions with the world around us centered on the principle of interconnectedness.

Strong and intimate ecological knowledge combined with a strong scientific understanding of the world around us has helped First Nations people survive and thrive for thousands of years. We have strong traditional ecological knowledge in many areas including the fundamental importance of our unique water systems, seasonal cycles, weather patterns, and plants and animals that are used as food and medicinal sources. Our day to day behaviours and interactions with the world around us were premised on the overall need to respect **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth) and to maintain balance and harmony with our natural environment.

First Nations people have been given the responsibility of being the keepers of the Earth and have traditionally lived in harmony with the environment for millennia. Prior to European settlement, these traditional practices and systems of sustainability maintained the necessary balance and harmony with **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth). First Nation peoples were content with all that was provided for them. We always understood and acknowledged our interconnection with the natural world around us and proceeded to walk lightly on Shkagamik-Kwe (Mother Earth).

LESSON 1: THE WORLD AROUND US

GRADE 3

Expectation Science

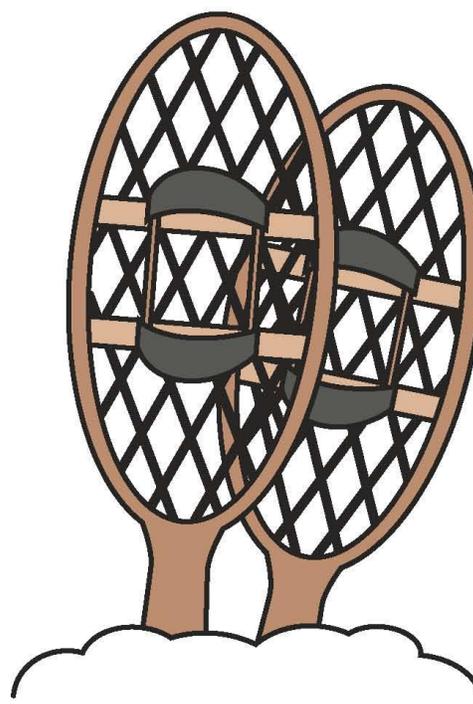
3.5 Describe ways in which humans from various cultures, including Aboriginal people, use plants for food, shelter, medicine and clothing.

Concept: *Our Relationship with Mother Earth*

Teacher Information:

The teachings of **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth) are the very foundation of who we are as First Nations people. We are taught that everything we need to survive in this life - food, water, medicine, clothing and shelter - are all provided by **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth). The natural and spiritual laws and our foundational teachings come from **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth). Winter was often a very challenging time for First Nations people throughout Northern Ontario. Temperatures were cold, snow and ice covered lands and the search for food was very challenging.

Many First Nations people endured much suffering during the winter months and some faced starvation. Traditional knowledge which was passed on from one generation to another helped our people to develop ways to survive the harsh winters. First Nation people within the traditional territory of James Bay Treaty #9 developed techniques for travelling both long and short distances throughout the winter months. Temporary shelters made from snow and other available natural resources were often used during the search for food. These temporary structures provided protection and insulation against the harsh winters in our traditional territories. Throughout the winter months, hunters used snowshoes to hunt large animals, such as moose. Snowshoes were vital for travel and survival throughout the winter months as they were used to travel on top of the snow to check traplines and to hunt.



Learning and Teaching Activities

The best time to introduce this activity is late fall or winter when the students might have a chance to snowshoe. To stimulate discussion, display pictures of traditional and modern snowshoes. If possible, have snowshoes available in the classroom.

1. Ask students to describe what they see in the images, including shape of traditional snowshoes, lacing of traditional snowshoes, materials that they are made from, who traditionally used them, why were they necessary.
2. Use a **KWL** strategy to find out what students already **K**now about traditional snowshoes. Next, discuss what they **W**ould like to learn about traditional snowshoes. As the lesson is complete, and the students engage in the activities, build a list of what the students **L**earned about traditional snowshoes.
3. Brainstorm with students and use a **Mind Map** to list materials needed to make snowshoes and location of materials, keeping in mind the natural resources that surround our community. Ask students to design a snowshoe only using natural materials found within community area.
4. Plan a field trip to area within community where you can cut branches for each student to make snowshoes. Have students offer tobacco before cutting any branches or other materials.
5. Have community volunteers assist students with making snowshoes.
6. Write haiku poem about snowshoes.



Enrichment:

Plan field trip to allow students to use their snow shoes.

Invite an Elder or Knowledge Keeper from the community to visit the class to show children how to make snowshoes. Elders and Knowledge Keepers may include grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, hunters, trappers, community workers or friends.

Materials:

- ✓ Images of traditional and modern snowshoes
- ✓ Construction paper
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Natural materials may include, pine, spruce, cedar or balsam branches.
- ✓ Sinew or string

LESSON 2: SACRED MEDICINES

GRADE 3

Expectation Science

- 1.1** Assess ways in which plants are important to humans and other living things, taking different points of view into consideration, and suggest ways in which humans can protect plants.

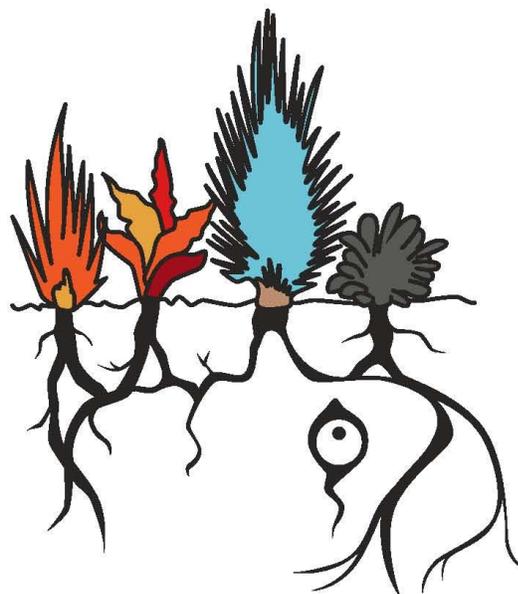
Concept: *What We Believe*

Teacher Information:

According to our Elders, the **Kitche Manitou** (Great Spirit) created the sun, moon, Earth and stars first. Next, **Kitche Manitou** (Great Spirit) created the trees, grasses, fruits and flowers. The plant world was created before animals and humans. The plant world are not dependent on upon other beings for survival or existence. The principles of First Nation spirituality is founded on the belief of interconnection of the natural world and the sacredness of **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth). Although First Nation culture acknowledges the sacredness of the natural world, the four main sacred plants are **Wiigashk** (Sweetgrass), **Mshkodwewish** (Sage), **Giizhkaandag** (Cedar) and **Semaa** (Tobacco). The four sacred medicines are used in everyday life and are used as a part of ceremony. **Mshkodwewish** (Sage) is used to prepare for teachings and ceremonies. It is used for removing negative energies and for helping to release negative or troubling thoughts. **Wiigashk** (Sweetgrass) is the sacred hair of **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth) and was the first plant to grow on **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth). **Wiigashk** (Sweetgrass) is used during smudging, keeps negative spirits away and cleanses your soul. **Giizhkaandag** (Cedar) purifies the body from disease. It is also used to purify the home. Many First Nation people use cedar baths as a healing practice.

According to our Elders, **Semaa** (Tobacco) is the first plant that was given to us by **Kitche Manitou** (Great Spirit). **Semaa** (Tobacco) is used as an offering for everything and in ceremony. When we make an offering of **Semaa** (Tobacco), we communicate our thoughts with the world around us through the offering as we pray for others. **Semaa** (Tobacco) is always offered first, before harvesting anything from **Shkagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth).

This is done to honour the Spirit of the resources provided to us by Mother Earth. We also offer **Semaa** (Tobacco) when we seek help from an Elder or Knowledge Keeper. This is done to acknowledge the sacredness of the request. Many people make an offering of **Semaa** (Tobacco) every morning to the Spirits, thanking them for their guidance, and to the natural world around us as it provides us with all that we need to survive.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Display The Medicine Wheel to the class. Display sacred medicine labels, along with sacred medicine descriptions. Ask for volunteers to read the labels and descriptions, drawing attention to the traditional names for the sacred medicines (located in Activity Sheets section).
2. Ask student volunteers to place sacred medicines in the four cardinal directions that each medicine belongs to. Reinforce the direction of each medicine by removing medicine labels from The Medicine Wheel and repeating process.
North Direction - **Wiigashk** (Sweetgrass)
East Direction - **Semaa** (Tobacco)
South Direction - **Giizhkaandag** (Cedar)
West Direction - **Mshkodwewish** (Sage)
3. Introduce the purposes and descriptions of each sacred medicine using the descriptions provided. Place each description provided on The Medicine Wheel.
4. Ask student volunteers to place descriptions of sacred medicines under the medicine to which it belongs. Reinforce the descriptions of each medicine by removing descriptions and having volunteers place under correct medicine again. Repeat process.
5. Bring samples of each of the four sacred medicine plants and distribute each to every student. Students will examine the plants through sight, touch and smell. Discuss the responsibilities for proper use of the four sacred medicines.
6. Students will create their own display of sacred medicines, labelling each with proper names.
7. Students will present their display to class.

Wiigashk (Sweetgrass): First plant to grow on **Sh-kagamik-Kwe** (Mother Earth). Smoke keeps negative spirits away and cleanses your soul.

Semaa (Tobacco): Smoke carries your thoughts to the spirit world. Use it as offering or when speaking to the Creator.

Giizhkaandag (Cedar): Purifies the body from disease. It is used in baths as a healing practice.



Enrichment:

Plan field trip to allow students to gather natural materials from outside to be a part of their sacred medicines display.

Invite an Elder or Knowledge Keeper from the community to visit the class to discuss sacred medicines and conduct a smudge ceremony. Elders and Knowledge Keepers may include grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, hunters, trappers, community workers or friends.

Have students create Semaa (tobacco) ties and review importance of Semaa (tobacco). Bring students outside to make offering.

Materials:

- ✓ **Medicine Wheel**
- ✓ **Sacred Medicine labels**
- ✓ **Sacred Medicine descriptions**
- ✓ **Sacred Medicine samples**

LESSON 3: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND MY COMMUNITY GRADE 4

Expectation Science

3.4 Demonstrate an understanding of a community as a group of interacting species sharing a common habitat

Concept: *Natural Features of our Community*

Teacher Information:

For thousands of years First Nations people developed a unique understanding of the world around them. This understanding and knowledge about the natural world allowed for their continued survival on Mother Earth. Sophisticated knowledge has been passed from one generation to the next and has provided First Nations peoples with a unique understanding about plants, animals, weather patterns, astronomy, gardening, and water to name a few.

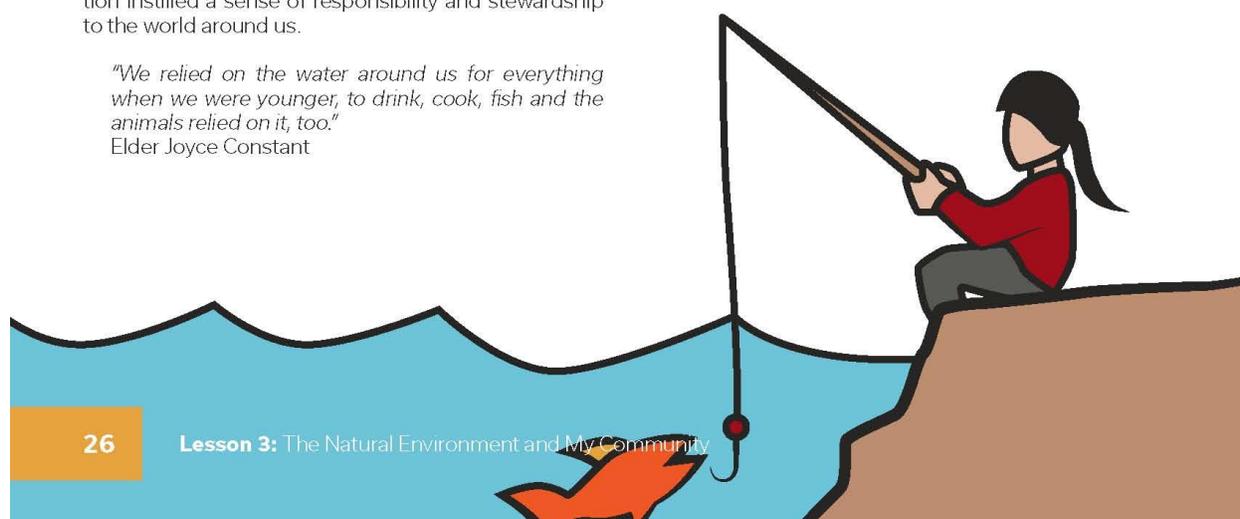
"We were taught from a young age that what we did in the bush affected us too, so we knew we had to be careful with what we did."
Elder, Joyce Constant

There is an inherent and existing relationship between First Nations people and the communities within which we live and the lands upon which we survive as we have for thousands of years. Mother Earth and this connection instilled a sense of responsibility and stewardship to the world around us.

"We relied on the water around us for everything when we were younger, to drink, cook, fish and the animals relied on it, too."
Elder Joyce Constant

The basic tenet of this relationship rests in our commitment to live and exist in harmony and balance with Mother Earth, recognizing that our actions have strong implications for future generations. This means that we acknowledge the living Spirit of Mother Earth and commit to our interconnectedness with all living things.

From time immemorial, First Nations peoples have practiced ecological sustainability and have maintained traditional harvesting practices in an effort to maintain balance and harmony with Mother Earth. This interconnection to the Earth and all of life is described as the web of life. The complexity and inter-relatedness of all living things cannot be overstated. Plants, animals, fish, and the environment within which they live and thrive create an ecosystem. Each element within the ecosystem maintains the balance and harmony through a food-chain. The removal of any component within the food-chain can affect the ecosystem as a whole.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce concept of natural features of the community by displaying images of local natural resources and discussing their importance to community and to the ecosystem. Brainstorm as a whole group, record and display student responses.
2. Display guiding question:
 - ▶ How is this important to my community?
3. Bring students outdoors to participate in a community walk. Students will document areas of interest or of particular importance to community. Students must highlight why it is of interest to them and why it is of importance to community.
4. Students will focus on one observation about natural feature and will document it. They can use words or draw pictures. Observations should correspond to question:
 - ▶ How is this important to my community?
5. Return to classroom and discuss student responses.
6. Students will develop a poster titled: *"How is this important to my community?"* The poster will have illustrations and words from nature walk and student reflections. Should the teacher elect to allow students to use "samples" from Mother Earth in the presentation, (i.e. birch bark, leaves, mushrooms, etc.) there must be some consideration of an offering to Mother Earth for the use of the resources.
7. Debrief by having students present their posters. Have students stand in a circle with their work and discuss similarities between posters.



Enrichment:

Use student journals to reflect on the following questions:

- ▶ How do we affect nature?
- ▶ How does nature interact with us?
- ▶ What are some of the benefits of our natural features that surround our community?

Allow students to use mobile devices to take pictures of selected natural features and create a slide show.

Materials:

- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Bristol Board
- ✓ Pencil Crayons



LESSON 4: A BALANCING ACT

GRADE 4

Expectation Science

- 1.1** Analyse the positive and negative impacts of human interactions with natural habitats and communities taking different perspectives into account and evaluate ways of minimizing the negative impacts

Concept: *Human Interaction with Environment*

Teacher Information:

Water is the lifeblood that runs through Mother Earth. It provides life to all living things. First Nations people believe that it is our responsibility to maintain clean water as it is understood that, from the beginning, for thousands of years, water has developed and sustained life on Earth including the rivers and lakes that surround our traditional territories. Water has a living Spirit and is our source of life.

These understandings of water often come in direct conflict with socio-economic realities of the modern era. The construction of dams and changing the directions and natural flow of water systems is often seen as necessary progress within today's world, but it is complete contradiction to what First Nation people know, understand and have practiced since time immemorial.

Within the Western world, water has become highly valued as a commodity rather than being honored as our very source of living existence. The construction of the Mattagami River Dam changed the relationship between the water and the land and reshaped the flow of water systems that existed for thousands of years. While the creation of dams provides some benefits to modern living, it can have serious negative impacts on the local ecosystems. First Nations perspectives on water largely differ from that of non-First Nations people as expressed by Elder, Leonard Naveau: *"Whatever we do to the water, we do to ourselves."* Within Western ways of understanding the world, changing and controlling our water systems serves the convenience of the developing population, and it is based solely on economic considerations as it becomes a revenue generator where water is bought and sold for monetary gain.

Water has always had significant cultural and spiritual meaning to First Nations people. Our relationship with the lands and waters have shaped who we are and have informed our interactions with the world around us. According to our creation stories, all of life comes from water. From this perspective and belief, water is the center of all life and existence. Just as we survive in our mother's womb surrounded by water, all of creation exists by being surrounded by water. Maintaining clean water is essential to the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of all people as it is the life-blood of all of creation. First Nations peoples look seven generations ahead when interacting with the world around them. In this way, there is a connection between our actions of today and the quality of life for our future generations. Our actions are guided by the principle of caring for the earth in a way that ensures that those who follow us can, and will, live and thrive.

Interrupted Ways of Life

Many factors contribute to an imbalance within our lake habitats within the waters surrounding Mattagami First Nation territory. This imbalance has resulted in declining fish populations and an imbalanced ecosystem. According to community members and Elders the hydroelectric dam, water pollution and increased fishing have had negative effects on our fish populations. The hydroelectric dams can block migratory species from accessing critical habitat for spawning and rearing. If the fish migration is interrupted or delayed, then this has negative implications for spawning and for the overall long-term fish stock.

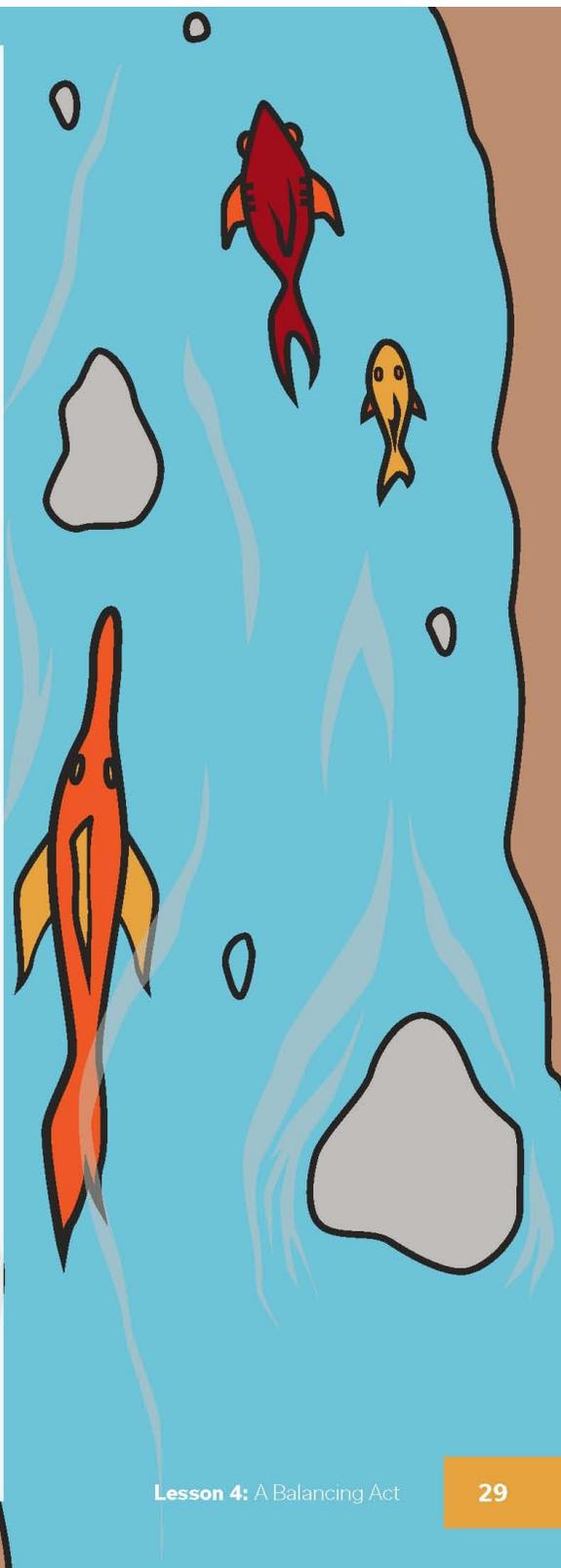
In the early years of progression within Ontario's history, the Northern Power Company constructed a dam without consultation or agreement with the Mattagami First Nation. The illegal dam was built across the Mattagami River and the result of its construction was flooding parts of the ancestral lands of Mattagami First Nation. The flooded lands were a part of the lands promised to the First Nation within the terms of James Bay Treaty #9.

1089 acres of lands were flooded when the Kenogamissee Lake dam was heightened. The hydroelectric company paid scant compensation to a few band members for the loss of lands including \$600.00 to Chief James Naveau in 1921. The band was also paid \$5675.00 in 1931 for the loss of timber and \$.50 cents an acre which came to a total of \$6745.00 but in the end the Mattagami First Nation was only paid \$3500.00 as a final settlement for the flooding of ancestral lands and timber loss.

For decades, the Mattagami First Nation sent letters to Ontario Hydro, which was formerly known as the Northern Power Company. The letters described the devastation to their harvesting and the changes in their ways of life as a result of the flooding of ancestral lands. The provincial and federal levels of government mostly ignored the complaints from the First Nation until the Mattagami First Nation retained a lawyer and filed a claim against Ontario Hydro and the Government of Canada for the flooding of ancestral lands and for timber mismanagement. Ontario Hydro and the Government of Canada settled the case by paying millions in compensation for these wrongdoings.

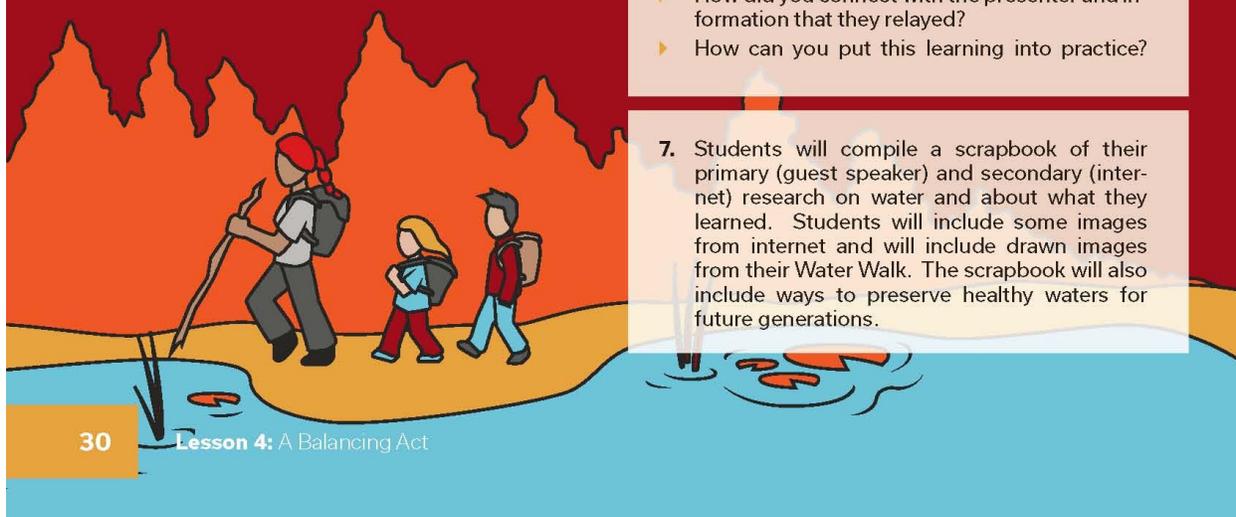
Some of the plants and animals that surround the lands and waters within the traditional territories of Mattagami First Nation are unique to the area, and the context within which they flourish is dependent upon the ecosystem maintaining balance. The construction of the Mattagami Dam altered the water levels, water flow and water pattern of the water system, as well as inhibited the passage of fish from areas within which they historically had traveled. In order to complete their life cycles, fish must move upstream and downstream, but constructing a dam impacts the ability of fish to complete their passage.

"There have been changes to our waters since the dam was constructed and then mines began to open up...damage has been done, things are different and we can see it in the animals and plants. The timing and seasons are very important for fish and animals. Different fish spawn at different times, and when we change their patterns for our own needs, then we change the way things always have been done. We see less and less fish and animals...we are changing too much and too fast."
Leonard Naveau, Elder



Learning and Teaching Activities

- To stimulate discussion, display relevant images of sources of water, including lakes and rivers. Discuss student observations about images.
- Display quote by Elder, Leonard Naveau, *"Whatever we do to the water, we do to ourselves."* Engage students in whole group discussion about their interpretation of this quote and ask: *"What does Elder Leonard Naveau mean?"*
- Introduce students to First Nations sacred relationship with water by viewing video: <http://www.sacredrelationship.ca/videos/> (Running time: 7:59)
- On chart paper create a Brainstorm Web to discuss everything students know about water, including First Nations perspectives / understanding about water. Possible prompts may include:
 - Where does water originate?
 - What are some of the uses of water?
 - In what ways is water important to our community?
 - What things can pollute the water?
 - What responsibility do First Nations people have to water?
 - What are some things we can do to help to protect water?
- In a large group, students will co-develop questions with teacher to increase understanding of the importance of water and the effects of human interactions on water. Students will use internet to complete research on questions. Some sample questions may include:
 - What are uses of hydroelectric dams?
 - What effects do dams have on waterways and the ecosystem?
 - How does water pollution affect our waters?
 - Describe the relationship between First Nations and the water.
 - What does it mean when we say water is sacred?
 - How have First Nations people raised awareness about the sacredness of water?
 - What are Water Walkers and how have they helped the water?
- Students will engage in a Water Walk with community volunteers and teachers. As a whole group, decide location of Water Walk. Invite community Elder or Knowledge Keeper to lead the Water Walk and to discuss the impacts on the community from the construction of the Mattagami Dam. During the Water Walk students will record guest speaker reflection questions as a whole group or in pairs. Guest speaker reflection questions include:
 - What were the main ideas / message(s) that stood out to you?
 - How did you connect with the presenter and information that they relayed?
 - How can you put this learning into practice?
- Students will compile a scrapbook of their primary (guest speaker) and secondary (internet) research on water and about what they learned. Students will include some images from internet and will include drawn images from their Water Walk. The scrapbook will also include ways to preserve healthy waters for future generations.



Enrichment:

To demonstrate that life exists within water allow students to study water under a microscope. Let them discuss what they observe, and then provide students with an overview of the makeup of water emphasizing that, not only does water help us survive, but water also contains life within itself.

Provide each child with two paper cups and have them fill both cups with black muck. Then, provide each of them with two seeds from a plant that can be grown in their area. Instruct them to place the cups in a well-lit area, but have them only water one plant, leaving the other dry. Have them observe and document the plants growth over a two-week period.

After the plant growing exercise, ask the children what would happen if the water that they are familiar with in their area was suddenly removed. What would happen to the plants in that area?

Materials:

- ✓ **Computers and Internet**
- ✓ **Scrapbook**
- ✓ **Pencils, Paint, Paint Brushes**
- ✓ **Paper Cups**
- ✓ **Plant Seeds**
- ✓ **Soil**
- ✓ **Microscope**



LESSON 5: THE WEB OF LIFE

GRADE 4

Expectation Science

- 1.2** Identify reasons for the depletion or extinction of a plant or animal species, evaluate the impacts on the rest of the natural community, and propose possible actions for preventing such depletions or extinctions from happening

Concept: *Human Impacts on Environment*

Teacher Information:

First Nations land management practices have existed long before European settlement throughout North America. These practices were based on the principle of all things on Earth being interconnected and the need to maintain balance and harmony with Mother Earth. This interconnection to the Earth and all of life is described as the web of life. The complexity and inter-relatedness of all living things cannot be overstated. Plants, animals, fish, and the environment within which they live and thrive create an ecosystem.

Each element within the ecosystem maintains the balance and harmony through a food-chain. The removal of any component or the addition of foreign components with the food-chain can affect the ecosystem as a whole. At the base of a freshwater food web are producers such as algae, duckweed, lily pads and leaves. Freshwater consumers include zooplankton and invertebrates and smaller preyfish consume the invertebrates. Predators are at the top levels and include large and smallmouth bass, walleye, perch and pike. Humans and other meat eating (carnivores) are also included in the freshwater food chain.

It is important to note that, despite fragmentation of First Nations communities and families through forced settlement and colonial legislation, traditional ecological knowledge has been maintained. First Nation peoples continue to attend to our relationship with Mother Earth in effort to sustain the important balance and harmony despite non-Indigenous practices that are contrary to this thinking and practice.

Our Water, Our Ecosystem

In many food webs, humans are the top predators and are responsible for negatively impacting the food chain. Human influence within the food chain is evident through the decline in fish populations and in some cases the extinction of some species. Humans can negatively impact freshwater food webs in many ways, including: overfishing, introducing non-native species, or polluting the aquatic ecosystem.

Community members of Mattagami First Nation have long engaged in discussions with different levels of government to address the issue of declining fish populations and its effects on the biodiversity of the waters within the Mattagami First Nation territory. In 2012, community member Chad Boissoneau worked to bring positive change to our community and the waters that surround us. The concept of a walleye fish hatchery finally came to fruition with the cooperation of Mattagami First Nation and non-Indigenous partners.

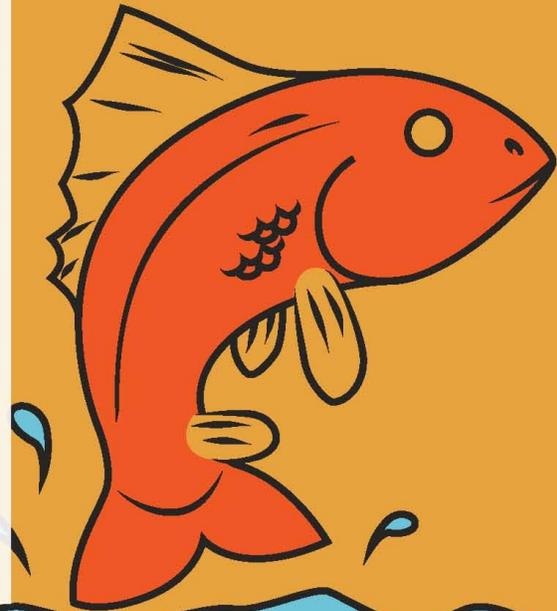
"In order to be successful we have to have dedication to make it work. It is a 24-hour a day job. We are invested in making this work, helping to restore the walleye population and bring more balance to the lake, just like we have always done as First Nation people."
Chad Boissoneau, Mattagami First Nation

The hatchery process begins with simulating the natural incubation of the eggs that is experienced within its natural environment. Continual monitoring of the eggs and water is integral to ensuring the greatest success for hatching. The temperature of the water taken from the lake helps to dictate the number of days that it takes for the eggs to mature. It takes approximately 15-25 days for the walleye eggs to attain maturity and begin

hatching. Once the fry (small fish) are hatched they are placed into a holding tank and then they are taken to areas that are natural feeding grounds for the fry. Approximately 95 % of the hatched eggs are placed in the feeding grounds. This initiative has had positive effects on the walleye population, Mattagami Lake and the entire community. This is in keeping with our relationship to Mother Earth to maintain balance and harmony through thoughtful management of the precious gift of fish to our community.

"The hatchery has taught the community about sustainability and the community members are a part of the change. The community members are influencing the younger members to adopt positive traditional harvesting methods Keep the small ones and let the big ones live to help repopulate the lake. Our people are thinking different, thinking the way we used to, the way that sustained us since we have been here. The community has taken ownership of sustainability."
Chad Boissoneau, Mattagami First Nation

Thousands of years of traditional knowledge about the lands and waters has been accumulated by our ancestors and once again, our community members are regaining and using this knowledge to restore balance within our surrounding territory. As First Nations people, our relationship with the water is sacred and it is our responsibility to continue to protect and raise awareness about the sacredness of our lands and waters.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Students will work in small groups to brainstorm the variety of species (plants, trees, animals) that exist within traditional territory of Mattagami First Nation. This discussion should include the purpose(s) and use(s) of each. Share small group responses in whole group session.
2. Discuss the possible impacts of constructing homes, bridges and dams on the variety of species that surround the community. Document student responses then discuss reasons why human beings might ignore the negative impact of these kinds of changes to the natural environment. In large group, discuss student's ideas.
3. Students will explore the concept of interdependence and biodiversity by using internet, non-fiction books and by conducting community interviews to research an aquatic animal that exists within the waters that surround Mattagami First Nation. Students will choose an aquatic animal that interests them and will create a mobile to illustrate their research findings. The pieces of the mobile may include:
 - ▶ Pictures of the species
 - ▶ A description of the characteristics of the species
 - ▶ A description of the role it plays in the local ecosystem? (what does it eat, who eats it?)
 - ▶ A list of ways in which it is important to the community
 - ▶ A list of activities by humans that have affected its population
 - ▶ Stories or legends about your chosen animal
4. Students will create each mobile piece using colored construction paper and a branch that will be gathered from outside. Punch holes at the top of each mobile piece and attach different lengths of string. Attach the pieces to a branch. Display the mobiles from the ceilings within the classroom.
5. Students will present their mobiles to the class and highlight what they have learned about their species.



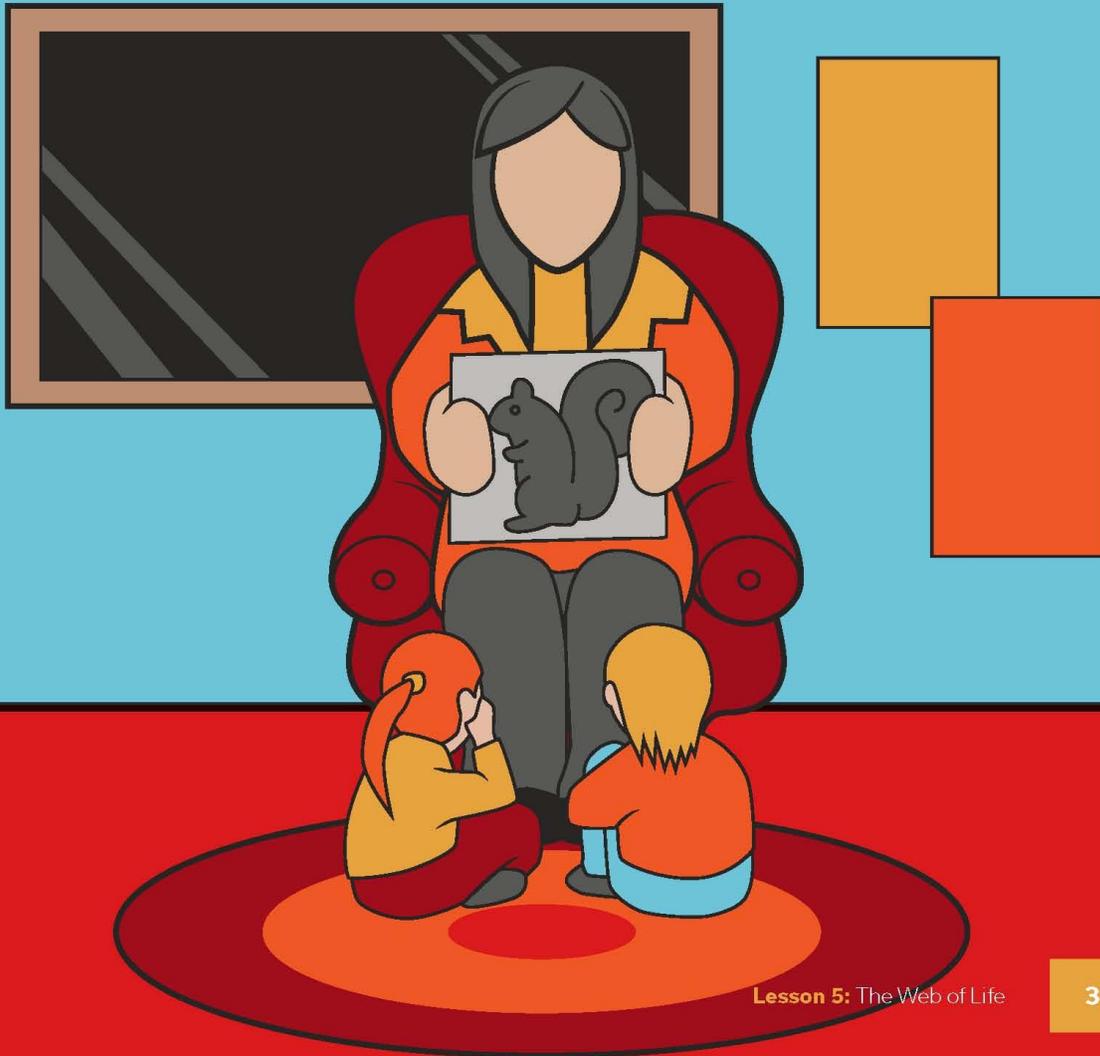
Enrichment:

Invite an Elder or Knowledge Keeper into the classroom to discuss information on animals that inhabit our surrounding territory and the contributions the animals have made to the ecosystem.

Visit the hatchery and have a knowledgeable guide provide a thorough description of the process. Extend the lesson by researching how the fish hatchery contributes to improving our local ecosystem.

Materials:

- ✓ **Internet**
- ✓ **Construction Paper**
- ✓ **Pencils, Crayons**
- ✓ **String**
- ✓ **Scissors**
- ✓ **Hole Punch**
- ✓ **Stick**



LESSON 6: OIL AND WATER DON'T MIX

GRADE 4

Expectation Science

B1.3 Describe some key actions taken by both industries and citizens to address the need for more sustainable use of land and resources, and assess their effectiveness.

Concept: *Impacts and Consequences of Resource Extraction*

Teacher Information:

First Nations people's interactions with the world around us is grounded in the belief and understanding that everything has a soul, a purpose and everything exists in balance with one another. In this respect, it is understood that all things and beings are connected to each other and our interactions with the world around us naturally have both positive and negative implications.

Anything that is altered or taken from nature, whether it be picking berries, cutting trees or killing an animal, affects the balance of the ecosystem. A forest is a complex living system. There are many ways that plants and animals of an ecosystem are connected.

Oil Spill Impact on Ecosystem

"I could smell smoke, my eyes and throat could feel the heavy smoke, I knew something was really wrong..... we found out about the train cars derailed around our waters and knew that our waters were going to be really affected."
Leonard Naveau, Elder

In the early morning hours of March 8, 2015, CN Rail cars derailed near Gogama and sent synthetic crude oil into Makami River. The effects of crude oil in waters and soils within the traditional territory of Mattagami First Nation will be felt for many years.

"This was a crucial time for our fish because it was close to spawning, our pike, pickerel, perch all make their way up the river to spawn...our animals rely on healthy fish too...it affects everything."
Leonard Naveau, Elder

A massive blaze burned furiously for days until it were eventually extinguished. It was estimated that more than one million litres of oil was released in the train derailment.

"We can see the oil floating on the water...our people are reluctant to eat the fish."
Walter Naveau, Chief

The Mattagami River water system is far reaching and connects with many smaller lakes and river systems as it continues to snake and flow north. Some of the oil that spilled into the waters can be found in the many small rivers and lakes in the water system, adding to the difficulties of adequate clean-up of the oil. Oil forms a thick layer on the surface of the water, unable to dissolve in water. This impacts the ability of marine plants to thrive and flourish as they do not receive enough light for photosynthesis process to occur. This has a dramatic and deadly effect on plants and wildlife that are part of the natural balance we strive to maintain with Mother Earth.

"We don't see beavers now because they know that there's something wrong with the water and plants so they moved to a different area away from the affected waters. Our blueberries are affected, they won't be as healthy for years to come as the particles from the oil and smoke that burned in the air fell all over fell for miles our medicines won't be healthy."
Leonard Naveau, Elder

Lesson Reference:

https://www.teachengineering.org/activities/view/cub_enveng_lesson01_activity1



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce topic of the CN Rail derailment that occurred within Mattagami First Nation traditional territory on March 8, 2015 by displaying images of occurrence (Images may be found using the internet). Display other images of oil spills that have occurred throughout the world, including the Exxon Valdez oil spill as it was one of the largest oil spills in recorded history. Engage in whole group discussion about the challenges inherent in oil spills. Use guiding questions such as:
 - ▶ Why does it take so long to clean up oil from water?
 - ▶ What role does the company play in cleaning up the oil?
2. Brainstorm different student ideas for cleaning up oil spills. Record student answers and display in order to review it after the actual exercise to determine which, if any, worked to clean up the oil.
3. Students will create a model of an oil spill and will be tasked with finding ways to clean the oil from the water. Students will record their observations and results.
4. Have students go outside and gather soil, sticks, leaves and a rock to use in model. Students will place materials in pan on the table and will place the rock in the middle of the pan. Students will add water to pan, until approximately half full. This is the model of the oil spill and the stone represents the lands. The main objective of this activity is to clean up the oil and keep it away from the rock.
5. Begin the activity by placing a small amount of oil (car engine oil best, but could substitute with vegetable or olive oil) in the pan. Students record their observations.
6. Have students use the skimmer (spoon) to try and remove the oil. (Note: Demonstrate how to use the spoon to gently skim off the top layer of oil without removing spoonfuls of water). Students record their observations.
7. Next, students will use pieces of absorbent cloth attempt to absorb the oil. Students record their observations. [Note: be sure to remove any oil that comes in contact with students by washing of hands]
8. As a whole group, discuss student's observations and have a class vote on which method cleans up oil the best.
9. Engage in whole group discussion about the potential impacts of the CN Rail derailment on the waters that surround Mattagami First Nation. In what ways does the oil spill affect the animals and people of Mattagami First Nation? Has CN Rail adequately cleaned up the oil from the lands?
10. Students will work in pairs or small groups to write a letter to CN Rail to highlight the need to adequately clean up the oil from the waters and lands that surround Mattagami First Nation. Review paragraph writing and formatting with students. Proofread and edit work for final copy. Send class letters to CN Rail and request a response.

Enrichment:

Students gather materials from the forest, (i.e. plants, feathers, sticks, etc.) and use materials in experiment. Students will record observations about the effects of oil on materials.

Invite community members into the classroom to discuss their experiences, thoughts, feelings about the effects of the CN train derailment and oil spill on the community.

Take a field trip to the site where the CN Rail derailment occurred. Explore the surroundings and discuss observations.

Determine where, in the community, oil, gas and or any other dangerous materials are used. Seek to find out how precautions are taken to ensure that none of these materials come in contact with the natural environment.

Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Tin Pan
- ✓ Outdoor Materials (soil, leaves, sticks, water)
- ✓ Car Engine Oil or Vegetable Oil
- ✓ Spoon
- ✓ Cloth

SECTION 3: "EMPTY" Lands

"We have always been here...for how long...forever. We had our ways; we had our ways of governing, our medicines, we had everything we needed, we didn't ask to be put onto small pieces of land, onto reserves."

Lawrence Naveau Elder



The Doctrine of Discovery was issued in 1493 by European monarchies and was a tool used by European powers to assume control over First Nations lands. The Doctrine of Discovery continues to impact First Nations peoples throughout North America. The document provided a framework for explorers to lay claim to territories or lands that were perceived to be vacant, in the name of their sovereign nation. The lands that were historically occupied by First Nations peoples throughout North America could be defined as "discovered", and the sovereign nation that made the "first discovery" gained authority and rights to the lands and resources within the defined territory, according to the doctrine.

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, it is estimated that millions of First Nations peoples occupied the Americas. At that time, our people had their own beliefs, customs and traditions rooted in spirituality. European explorers defined First Nations peoples as non-Christians, which ultimately became the foundation of the Europeans' determination that all our people across North

America were "non-human". First Nations peoples were considered "savages" and "heathens" by the Europeans and these designations supported the premise that if they were non-human, then they could not own the lands upon which they existed thereby allowing the Europeans to create the principle of empty lands or "*terra nullius*."

The rights to the lands and resources that First Nations peoples had utilized, shared and engaged from time immemorial were arbitrarily extinguished by European powers. The Doctrine of Discovery ensured the British Crown could continue to take possession of the traditional territories and resources that were occupied by First Nations peoples.

With the continued arrival of European settlers, First Nations peoples' way of life began to change. Expansion of settlements and exploitation of natural resources restricted our people's use of lands and traditional ways of life. European expansion and commercializa-

tion overwhelmed the lands that supported plants and animals. The Doctrine of Discovery established a false narrative about the “discovery” and “creation” of North America. The story of *terra nullius* or empty lands ensured First Nations peoples would never be viewed as existing nations or as equal partners within what would become Canada.

Within the concept of the Doctrine of Discovery First Nations people were reduced to being beneficiaries of the lands but could not be completely sovereign nations. To this day, First Nations lands are held in trust by the federal government, ensuring that the original peoples of these lands cannot fully own them. These paternalistic ideologies continue to be held to this day and echo the provisions that originated within the Doctrine of Discovery.

The Royal Proclamation, 1763

“We were nations, we had our own forms of governance. The government made it look like we didn’t have civilized societies...in that way it made it easier for them to take our lands and control us...”
Lawrence Naveau, Elder

In 1763, King George of Great Britain issued a Royal Proclamation that, among other things, provided a framework for how Indians* could share their lands. In October of 1763, King George of Great Britain wanted to maintain the military allegiance of the Indian tribes or Nations of North America and in order to prevent great frauds and abuses in the purchase of Indian lands by British settlers arriving in North America, issued a Royal Proclamation. The Royal Proclamation provided a framework for negotiating treaties with Indian Tribes or Nations with whom they were connected within North America. It also prohibited the direct purchase of Indian lands by the settlers and instead required that lands be shared with the Crown. In this way, the Royal Proclamation laid out the process for how Indian lands could be shared through treaties.

The Royal Proclamation recognized that there were already Indian tribes or Nations throughout North America and because of this it could not take Indian lands without their consent.

*Note: the term “Indian” was first used in the Royal Proclamation but has never been accepted by First Nations, Indigenous peoples.

Treaty Making

“Our ancestors did not understand what the government was talking about...We have very different ways of thinking and understanding about the lands. At that time, our ancestors thought that \$4.00 was so much [money], and they needed supplies because a lot of the animals that we relied on for food were harder and harder to find...they were being hunted and pushed out by settlers and railroads.”

Leonard Naveau, Elder

Between 1904 and 1905, the British Crown and First Nations peoples surrounding the James Bay and Watershed area entered into the James Bay Treaty, also known as Treaty #9. The signatories of The James Bay Treaty were independent and sovereign nations. Historically, the First Nations peoples within the James Bay and Watershed region were Cree, Ojibway and Oji-Cree. The Cree people lived mainly in the Hudson Bay and James Bay lowlands while the Ojibway people lived in the Northern interior mainland.

The initial relationship between settlers and First Nations peoples within the geographic area of James Bay and Watershed region was defined by the fur trade. The Hudson’s Bay Company controlled the fur trade in Northern Ontario as they had a store in most villages and outposts in smaller outlying settlements. It could be argued that the Hudson’s Bay Company’s outlying posts and forts had no legal basis to be operating within Treaty #9 lands, as the Treaty did not come into existence until 1905.

“To take away culture...that is a crime. And it is continuing today.”

Leonard Naveau, Elder

Emerging stories of sickness, starvation, disappearing food sources and scarcity of animals left to hunt and trap began to emerge throughout the many years of settler encroachment. Increased influence of Christian faith throughout traditional First Nations territories witnessed an ever-increasing diminishment of the old ways of being and believing in our traditional ways of life. Many First Nations people began to learn about and hear stories of other tribes, mainly located in the south, that were signing treaties for money, medicine, schools and relief as a means to help them survive. Reasons for treaty making among First Nations included survival of community, children and Elders.

"There were lots of reasons why the settlers wanted a treaty signed...around 1905 the railway was coming through these territories and they wanted our people to sign the treaty. The government tried to make it sound good, but we now know it wasn't and they still give us a hard time about a lot of things that they promised."

Leonard Naveau, Elder

The increasing pressure on the Crown to negotiate treaties with First Nations arose as European settlement and development began to flourish. This prompted the Crown to increase treaty making with First Nations peoples to better facilitate European settlement throughout First Nations territories. The treaties were also initiated by the Crown as a means to resolve increasing conflicts between settlers and First Nations peoples. The James Bay Treaty #9 got its name because the territory was defined by many river systems that snaked throughout the territory and eventually drained northward into James Bay. The terms of the Treaty were often explained to First Nations leaders by trade post employees as the employees were often very fluent in Ojibway and Cree languages. Few Ojibway and Cree leaders were fluent in English at that time and relied on others to interpret and explain the terms of James Bay Treaty #9.

First Nations peoples entered into treaties to protect their traditional territories, resources and ways of life. In exchange for lands, First Nations signatories to the treaty would receive an annuity, hunting and fishing rights within traditional territories and reserve lands that were set-aside for "Indians."

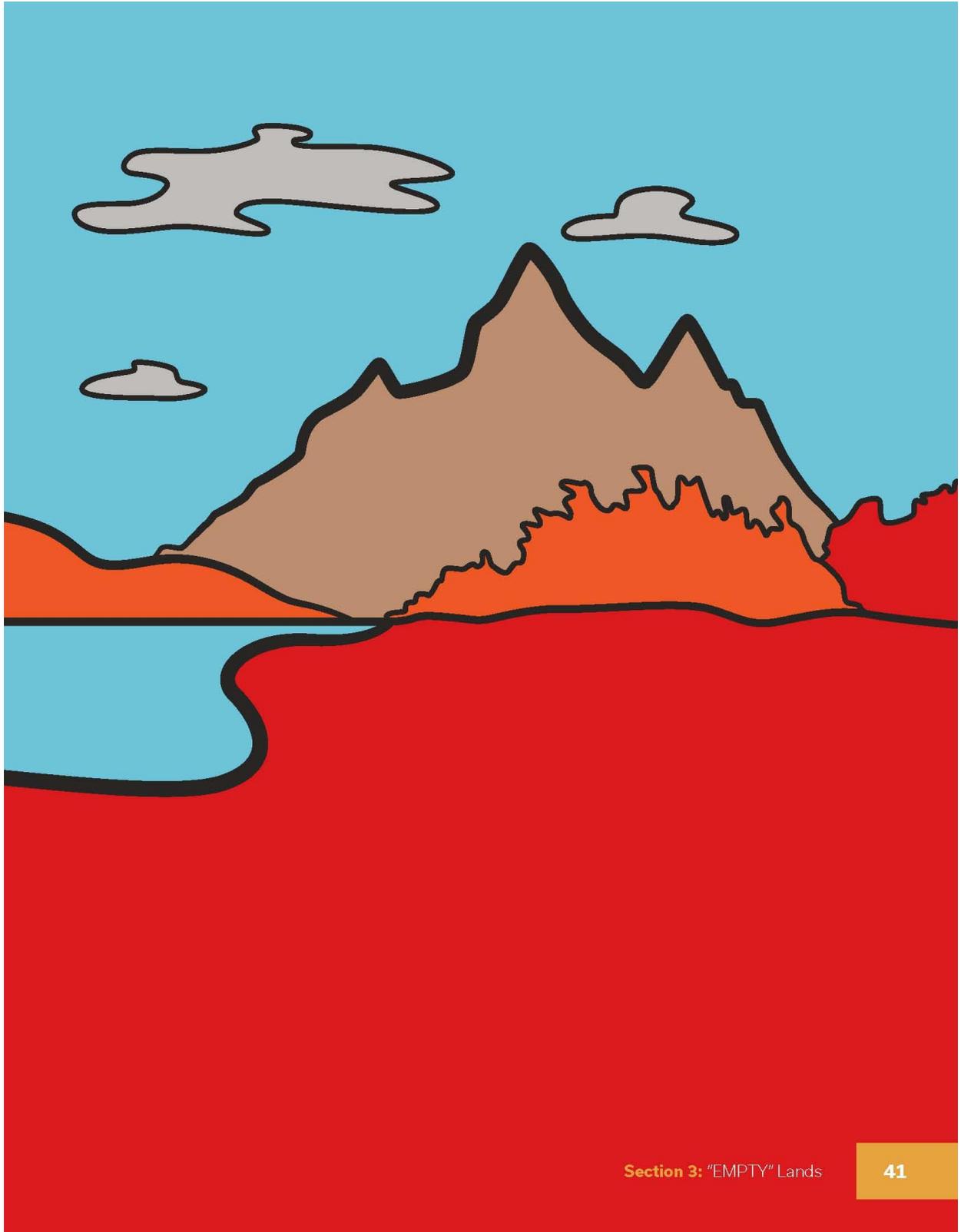
"I always want to ask the Indian agents that still come on Treaty Day to give us our Treaty money...Don't you feel ashamed to come here and give us this \$4.00 for all that you have taken from us."

Leonard Naveau, Elder

"The James Bay Treaty was used to control us, they made reserves and we weren't allowed to live freely anymore the way we always did. Hunting grounds were eventually limited to surrounding areas, the government gave townships to restrict hunting areas, which changed culture by not allowing us to follow animals for harvesting anymore. The shift began at that time because of restrictions on culture."

Morris Naveau, Elder

First Nations understood treaties to be a solemn vow that was made between two nations, which guaranteed First Nations ways of life would not be interfered with or restricted by settlers or the Crown. Instead, the British Crown, which became the Government of Canada, manipulated the understanding of treaties and used this agreement as a means to displace First Nations peoples from their traditional lands.





LESSON 1: EARLY TREATIES

GRADE 5

Expectation Social Studies

A1.1 Describe some of the positive and negative consequences of contact between First Nations and Europeans in New France and analyze their significance.

Concept: *Promises and Agreements*

Teacher Information:

Long before settlers arrived on the shores of North America, agreements or Treaties already existed between sovereign nations. Treaties between various First Nations have existed for thousands of years within long standing, effective governance systems.

Throughout North America, First Nations people had their own laws, customs and trade relationships among existing Nations. Examples of historical trading relationships and alliances exist throughout North America and include Cree-Ojibway from James Bay watershed throughout Northern Ontario to Southern Ontario and United States tribes. An Anishinaabek alliance, known as the Three Fires Confederacy consisted of the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations.

"These 3 nations came together to form strong military alliances...and the strong alliances that were formed from coming together saw them being courted by both the French and British governments...the 3 Nations alliance was instrumental in winning the war of 1812."

*Martin Bayer, Lawyer, citizen of Aundeck
Omni Kaning.*

The Two Row Wampum is one of the oldest documented treaty relationships and was made between the Onkwehonweh (original people) and the Europeans. The Treaty was made in 1613 between the Dutch and the Haudenosaunee and forms the basis of all subsequent treaty relationships made between First Nations and settler governments in North America.

"In the 1600's, when the Dutch had settled in what is now Albany and the surrounding area, we were looking at them as people who were coming into our territory with a different language, different culture, different ideas, but a people. Runners came from the Mohawk territory. They came to Onondaga to ask Tadodaho to call a meeting of the leaders of the Haudenosaunee, because we had people coming into our territory. We must decide how we are going to live together with the people who had entered our house and were living in a couple of our empty rooms. They were uninvited and they were destructive..." Based on the address by Chief Powless Jr., Onondaga Nation, at a symposium held at Finger Lakes Community College on October 26, 1994.

<http://honorthetworow.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/IrvPowlessTreaty-makingWEB.pdf>

The Treaty making process was recorded in the making of a wampum belt, with purple and white beads used to represent the existing and future relationship between First Nations and European settlers. Within the wampum belt, one purple row represents a boat, with Europeans and their ways of being. The other purple row represents a canoe with First Nations and their ways of life. Each row runs parallel to each other, never merging but living in peace and harmony, not dictating ways of living to each other.

<http://honorthetworow.org/learn-more/history/>

Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce concept of treaties by discussing the act of making promises. Use a **Mind Map** template and record what it means to make promises. Use the following guide questions:
 - ▶ Have there been times when somebody did not keep a promise that they made with you?
 - ▶ Has there been a time when you've made a promise to others?
 - ▶ What are the essential elements within the act of making a promise?
 - ▶ What should we keep in mind before we make promises to others?
 - ▶ What are some reasons why promises might not be kept?
 - ▶ What can we do when a promise is made to us but is not kept?
 - ▶ What should we do if we make a promise that we break?
2. Use Smartboard to display Two Row Wampum Belt to class and discuss meaning and intent of wampum belt, the symbolism of the colours used in the wampum belt, and the responsibilities of the Nations represented in the Wampum Belt.
3. Brainstorm ways that treaties could be symbolized using various patterns and images.
4. Students will create a draft pictorial representation of a promise or treaty, which will be symbolized and expressed through the image. Following the draft representations, students will use cloth, moose or deer hide and beads to create final representation of treaty or promise. The colours of beads used should have a specific meaning for the story / representation of the treaty promise.
5. Students will give an oral presentation to class, describing the meaning of the colours, the design of beads and the reasons for design and creation.

Enrichment:

In her own way, Mother Earth makes promises to us all of the time. What kind of promises do you think Mother Earth makes to us? How can we honour these promises to her? Teacher should record all of the student's responses.

Teacher:

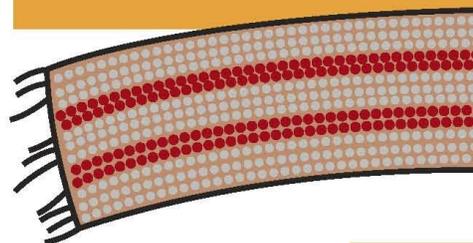
The point of this enrichment activity is to allow the students to understand the elements of nature that we take for granted. The promise to us is conditional upon our understanding of how we need to be stewards of the earth and help to ensure that all that nature provides is protected, conserved, and utilized with care.

Follow up activity:

Have each student make a promise to Mother Earth. Students should write out this promise to be displayed on a bulletin board or somewhere in the class. The teacher should take a moment each week in a talking circle to ask each student how they honoured their promise to Mother Earth that week. Students can add promises to the board at any time.

Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Smartboard
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Pencil Crayons
- ✓ Moose or Deer Hide
- ✓ Variety of Beads
- ✓ Needle and Sinew



LESSON 2: THE WAY WE SEE IT

GRADE 5

Expectation Social Studies

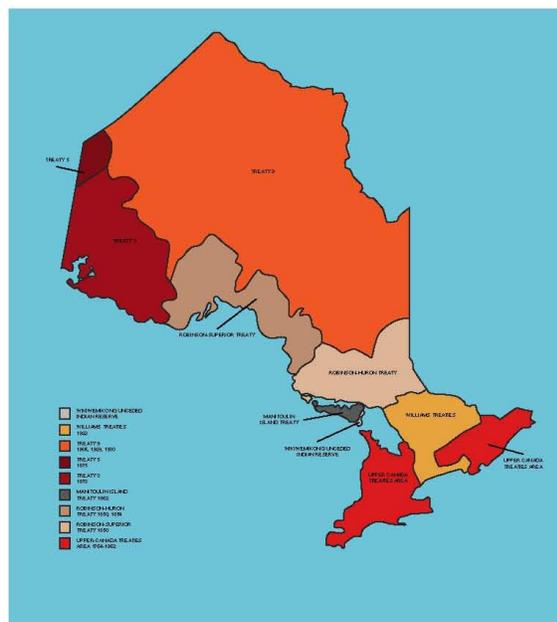
A2.3 Analyze and construct maps as part of their investigations into interactions among and between First Nations and Europeans

Concept: *Sacred Relationships*

Teacher Information:

Treaties are legally recognized agreements between First Nations peoples within Canada and the Crown. First Nations understand and interpret Treaties as being sacred covenants that were made between two sovereign nations. Treaties provide the context of the unique relationship that exists between the signatories of the Treaty, and it binds First Nations and settlers in a sacred relationship for as long as we continue to occupy and share the lands within Canada. Treaties between First Nations and the Crown are constitutionally recognized in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* using the words, “existing Aboriginal and treaty rights” to affirm First Nations rights are entrenched within the ‘supreme law of Canada.’

In spite of the legally entrenched rights of First Nations peoples within the *Constitution Act, 1982*, non-First Nations peoples who developed and implemented the treaties tended to interpret them as non-binding deals that were drafted within a framework to ensure settlers and the Crown could have access to great wealth yielded from the ancestral lands of First Nations peoples. First Nations regarded Treaties in the highest regard, as sacred agreements between sovereign nations, while the Crown manipulated the Treaties to strip First Nations of access to their ancestral lands and the maintenance of traditional ways of life throughout their ancestral lands.



Treaty Map of Ontario

Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce concept of Sacred Relationships:

- a. Show video: Heritage Minutes: Naskumituwin (1:00 min).

<https://www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/naskumituwin-treaty>

- b. Display and discuss the following, record student answers:

- ▶ "For George Spence the core of Treaty is to help one another"
- ▶ "Treaties were essential to the creation of Canada"

2. Display Treaty Map of Ontario.

https://files.ontario.ca/pictures/firstnations_map.jpg

Discuss the different Treaties that exist within Ontario, taking note of the sizes and locations of each Treaty.

3. Distribute Treaty Map of Ontario (located in Activity Sheets section of document) to students. Use a piece of yarn or string and glue yarn / string on map around James Bay Treaty #9. Highlight James Bay Treaty #9, size and location within Ontario. Use a symbol to indicate location of Mattagami First Nation within the map. Students will colour Treaty Map of Ontario.

4. Students will draft and edit reflection on the following quote from Elder, Leonard Naveau:

"There were lots of reasons why the settlers wanted a treaty signed...around 1905 the railway was coming through these territories and they wanted our people to sign the treaty. The government tried to make it sound good, but we now know it wasn't and they still give us a hard time about a lot of things that they promised."
Leonard Naveau, Elder

Enrichment:

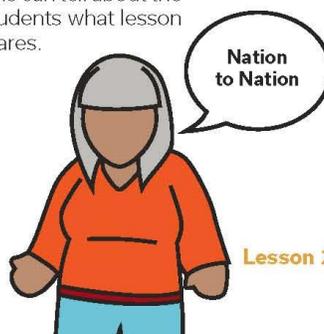
Invite an Elder into the classroom who has a full understanding of treaties, including: how they are formed, what they intend and what obligations both parties have that are fundamental to fulfilling the elements of the treaty.

Be sure the Elder has been informed of the work already done in this area, and have the students prepare for her/his visit by establishing questions to which the Elder can respond.

Entreat the Elder to come with a story that she/he can tell about the James Bay Treaty, #9. Have her/him ask the students what lesson might be learned from the story that she/he shares.

Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Treaty Map of Ontario
- ✓ Yarn / String
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Pencil Crayons
- ✓ Paper



LESSON 3: CONSTRUCTING CANADA

GRADE 6

Expectation Social Studies

A2.3 Analyze and construct print and digital maps as part of their investigations into different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experience of communities in Canada

Concept: *Treaty People*

Teacher Information:

The Anishinaabe (Northern Ojibway) and Mushkegowuk (Northern Cree) became signatories to the James Bay Treaty, also known as Treaty #9, between the years 1904-1905. Treaties are formal agreements that cemented a sacred relationship between First Nations and the Crown. Differing views and interpretations about treaties emerged throughout history. Language barriers, differing worldviews and contrasting intentions between the two parties lead to damaged relationships, many broken promises by the Crown, and continuous disputes over lands and resources. Treaty negotiations between First Nations and the Crown were solidified not only through legalistic language, rather from a First Nations perspective the binding and sacred treaty contract was solidified through ceremony and an exchange of presents.

Despite the sacredness of treaties, it continues to be evident that the people who made and implemented the treaties do not view them with the spirit and intent with which they were created. Differing perspectives and interpretations of the languages used within Treaty #9 have emerged throughout communities, as has been expressed by the Elders, community members and political leadership. As a result of First Nations and the Crown entering into a treaty relationship, certain implicit and explicit expectations and obligations were placed on each party, First Nations and the Crown.

"When we signed the treaty, they promised us one suit of clothing a year as long as there was an Indian alive, but when I went to the Indian agent and applied for clothing I was turned down. They also told us that the only license we would have to buy would be a marriage license. We were [deceived]."
Willie Moore, Elder

Historically, the Crown drafted and framed treaties in a way to strip First Nations' title from most of the lands throughout Canada. In this way, the Crown and settlers would largely benefit from the plentiful resources that existed throughout First Nations territories. From a Crown perspective, First Nations peoples "ceded, surrendered and yielded" their ancestral rights and titles to the lands in exchange for annual payments. First Nations' understanding of treaties continues to be cemented with 2 sovereign nations entering into agreements which allowed them to share the lands and resources. Treaties do not surrender First Nations' rights to lands and resources, in fact, they confirm First Nations' rights. After all, why would First Nations ask for lands and rights that they freely exercised prior to settler contact.

"Without us agreeing to sign the treaties, Canada wouldn't exist in the same way that we know it today. It wouldn't exist. Canada came together through treaties, that's why we are all treaty people. Non-native people benefited from the treaties, they got lands. The James Bay Treaty was used to control us people, they made reserves and we suffered because of it. Hunting grounds were eventually limited to surrounding areas, the government gave townships to restrict hunting areas. These things changed us, it changed our culture by not allowing us to follow animals anymore or do the things we could before. And we couldn't because there were towns everywhere now and the animals were not there anymore. The shift began for us First Nations people because of the restrictions on our culture."
Morris Naveau, Elder

Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce concept of People of the Treaty by:

- a. Display the word "Treaty" on whiteboard and have whole group discussion about a treaty. Record student answers.
- b. Show video: "Charlie Angus on Treaties"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3IOV1j_-8
- c. Following the video, engage in whole group discussion and record student answers for the following:
 - ▶ What is your understanding about a treaty relationship?
 - ▶ What would you like to tell Canadians about the treaty relationship?
 - ▶ How long do the treaty obligations last?
 - ▶ How was Canada created?
 - ▶ How have treaties benefitted Ontario?
 - ▶ "Treaties were essential to the creation of Canada"

2. Display Treaty Map of Ontario.

https://files.ontario.ca/pictures/firstnations_map.jpg

Discuss the different treaties that exist within Ontario, according to the sizes and locations of each treaty within Ontario.

3. Distribute Treaty Map of Ontario (located in Activity Sheets section of document) to students. Students will use scissors to cut the Treaty Map of Ontario along the various treaty boundary lines.

4. Engage in whole group exercise with students:

- a. Ask students to remove the following pieces of the Treaty Map of Ontario and following each piece, discuss how different Ontario would be if the treaty did not exist:
 - ▶ Robinson Superior Treaty
 - ▶ Robinson Huron Treaty
 - ▶ Williams Treaty
 - ▶ Upper Canada Treaties
 - ▶ Treaty #3
 - ▶ Treaty #9

5. Students will draft and edit reflection on the following quote from Elder, Morris Naveau

"Without us agreeing to sign the treaties, Canada wouldn't exist in the same way that we know it today, it wouldn't exist. Canada came together through treaties, that's why we are all treaty people. Non-native people benefited from the treaties, they got lands."
Morris Naveau, Elder

6. Students will colour Treaty Map of Ontario and will glue treaty pieces together, onto cardstock. Use a symbol to indicate location of Mattagami First Nation within the map, in James Bay Treaty #9.



Enrichment:

Invite students to research each treaty area in Ontario. Students can include 1-2 interesting facts about the treaty area or about a community within the particular treaty area.

Invite Member of Parliament, Charlie Angus, to speak with the students with regards to his understanding of these issues that present themselves in treaty agreements. (Teacher: may wish to invite through Skype if not available otherwise)

Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Treaty Map of Ontario
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Pencil Crayons
- ✓ Pencil

LESSON 4: NATION TO NATION

GRADE 6

Expectation Social Studies

A2.2 Gather and organize information from a variety of primary and secondary sources using various technologies

Concept: *Perspective*

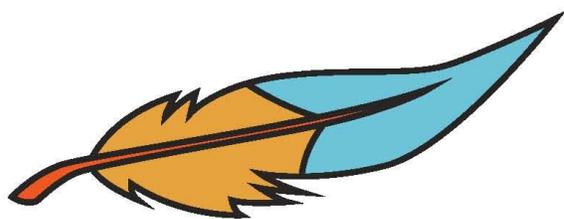
Teacher Information:

Treaties within Canada are very diverse and lay the foundation for the historical and contemporary relationships with respect to the lands; as well, they define the relationships between First Nations and the Crown. Treaties set out the rules and responsibilities for both parties in the agreement. They establish the consent for new settlers to settle on First Nations territories, which is only possible due to First Nations signing treaties. We have obligations to each other and to the lands by virtue of the treaty relationship. We all live and benefit from the lands and resources, and we all have obligations to ensure that the lands do not run dry.

As the original inhabitants of these lands, First Nations entered into treaties with the clear understanding that they would have inherent rights as original inhabitants. First Nations have a sovereignty and connection to the lands, and have always had rights to lands, through pre-existing societies and governance structures. The Crown negotiated treaties with First Nations across Canada because of the existing societies and structures; otherwise, the Crown would not have had to negotiate with First Nations.

Since the inception of the treaties, the Crown has presented and interpreted them in a way that has led to the treaties not being implemented properly. The Crown's interpretation lacks accuracy, both historically and currently. During the time of treaty making, many First Nations were facing extreme pressures including poverty and manipulation by the Crown to sign treaties. First Nations peoples had full intentions of extending their hand in friendship and peace, but truthful history reveals that the same cannot be said for the Crown. The Crown does not honour the treaties in the spirit in which they were written, intended to be implemented and in fairness to the original peoples of this country.

Tensions between the Crown and First Nations exist because the treaties are not being honoured. When treaty obligations are not met, First Nations communities are negatively affected. First Nations have honoured treaty obligations through opening the lands to settlers, and this has allowed Canadians to flourish to the point of defining Canada in a way that excludes Indigenous peoples. Most First Nations communities continue to live in poverty with inadequate housing, restricted land use and live under boil water advisories for decades.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce concept of Differing Perspectives:

a. Display the word "Perspective" on whiteboard and have whole group discussion about understanding of perspective. Record student answers.

b. Show video: Ontario Regional Chief, Isadore Day: (End at 17:00 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pj1tHoGT-1P8&list=UUPRvQMUBVPRKXztbDEmbfEXQ&index=32>

3. Display and discuss quote from Elder, Lawrence Naveau. Record and display student responses. Students will draft and edit reflection on the following quote from Elder, Lawrence Naveau:

"We need our treaty protected Silence is consent. A long time ago, before settlers came here, our Nations travelled from the East coast of Canada to the West coast of Canada, hunting and fishing and sustaining ourselves from the lands. Why can't we still do that today? Now we have restrictions and borders and things weren't supposed to be like that for our people."

2. Following the video, engage in whole group discussion and record student answers for the following:

- ▶ What does it mean to honour a treaty?
- ▶ How can treaties be better upheld today?
- ▶ What do you think can be done to improve relationships between First Nations and people of Canada?
- ▶ If you could make a contract with settlers, how would you do it and what would you include in it?
- ▶ Is there anything in your life that you can compare to creating a treaty? Explain.

4. Students will research facts about James Bay Treaty #9 using books, internet and community resources.

a. Students will create 10 playing cards for James Bay Treaty #9 (located in Activity Sheets section). Each card will have 1 fact or quote from a community member about James Bay Treaty #9. The front of the playing card will have an illustration that represents the information on the back of the card. Students will create a rough draft for each card, use cardstock paper to create cards following the approval of the rough draft.



Enrichment:

Students will research interesting community members and historical figures within Treaty 9 and represent information in a news cast or slide show.

Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Pencil Crayons
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Playing Cards Template

LESSON 5: WHOSE LAND IS IT ANYWAYS? GRADE 7

Expectation Writing

1.3 Gather information to support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and a wide range of print and electronic resources

Concept: *The Treaty Relationship*

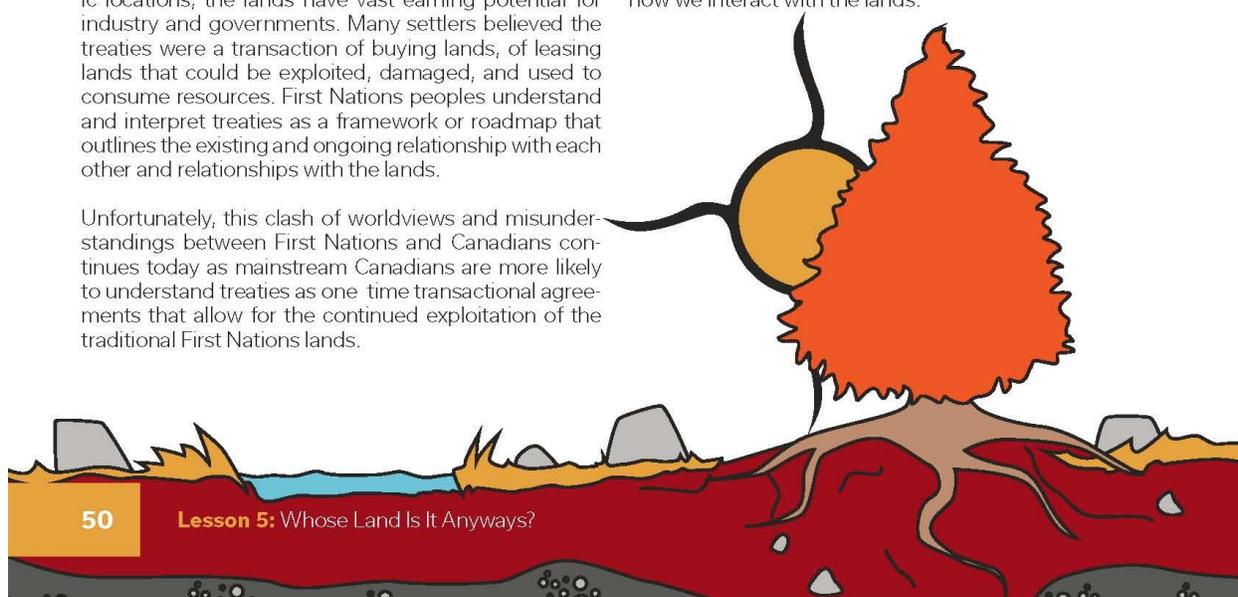
Teacher Information:

There has been a long history of treaty making throughout North America: treaty making among First Nations and treaty making with the Crown. The sacred pacts between First Nations and settlers are cemented in the treaties and they set out the obligations to each other and to the lands. Treaties are sharing agreements that set to define how First Nations and settlers are going to live with each other on the lands; however, treaties within Canada have been plagued with issues from the onset and they remain contentious today.

In many areas across Canada, the lands are bountiful with large masses of natural resources, such as timber, minerals, water and rocks. In many Canadian geographic locations, the lands have vast earning potential for industry and governments. Many settlers believed the treaties were a transaction of buying lands, of leasing lands that could be exploited, damaged, and used to consume resources. First Nations peoples understand and interpret treaties as a framework or roadmap that outlines the existing and ongoing relationship with each other and relationships with the lands.

Unfortunately, this clash of worldviews and misunderstandings between First Nations and Canadians continues today as mainstream Canadians are more likely to understand treaties as one time transactional agreements that allow for the continued exploitation of the traditional First Nations lands.

Canadians, for the most part, consider treaties as something that existed in history and no longer have force. This is not true. The treaties signed by our Elders were signed in perpetuity meaning that they continue today. Our expectation is that these many different treaties throughout Canada continue to be honoured. Treaties were created and signed over many different time periods, including modern treaties, and they are diverse and constantly evolving. First Nations people fight for the true spirit and intent of each signed treaty with an expectation that they be acknowledged, understood and applied. According to Hayden King, "...it doesn't matter when treaties were made, the treaties set out the rules and regulations for how we interact with each other and how we interact with the lands."



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce concept of Treaty Relationship:
 - a. Display the words "Treaty Relationship" on whiteboard. Engage in a whole group discussion about the Treaty Relationship. Record student answers.
 - b. Show video: Kairos Canada – On the Treaties, featuring Elder Taz Bouchier (2:49 mins)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rsjACzRc-4
2. Following the video, engage in whole group discussion and record student answers for the following:
 - ▶ What are obligations?
 - ▶ What are Treaty obligations to First Nations peoples?
 - ▶ How do we ensure the Treaty relationship is honoured in the future?
3. Display Treaty Map of Ontario:
https://files.ontario.ca/pictures/firstnations_map.jpg
 - a. Use Mattagami First Nation logo and have student volunteer place logo on map to locate Mattagami First Nation on Treaty Map.
 - b. Referring to Treaty Map of Ontario, have student volunteers place names of surrounding First Nations communities on map, including:
 - ▶ Matachewan
 - ▶ Flying Post
 - ▶ Wahgoshig
 - ▶ Brunswick House
 - ▶ Chappleau Cree
 - ▶ Chappleau Ojibway
 - ▶ Moose Cree First Nation
 - ▶ Kashechewan
 - ▶ Albany
 - ▶ Attawapiskat
4. Distribute Treaty Map of Ontario (located in Activity Sheets section of document) to students. Students will use glue and yarn to outline the boundary of James Bay Treaty #9.
5. Students will select a First Nations community that is located within James Bay Treaty #9, territory and will research interesting facts of the community using books, internet and community resources.
 - a. Students will create 10 facts or quotes from a community member about the selected community. Each fact will have an illustration that represents the information.
 - b. Students will compare and contrast the similarities and differences between Mattagami First Nation and the selected community for research.



Guiding Question:

What similarities do communities share and what makes the chosen community different than Mattagami First Nation?

Students will create a rough draft for this research and will draft final copy following the editing and approval of the rough draft.

Enrichment:

Students will create a video, using <https://www.moovly.com/blog/make-your-own-cartoon-video-for-free> that highlights their community research.

Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Crayons
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Treaty Map of Ontario
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Yarn

Lesson 5: Whose Land Is It Anyways?

LESSON 6: HONOURING THE TREATY

GRADE 7

Expectation Writing

1.3 Gather information to support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and a wide range of print and electronic resources

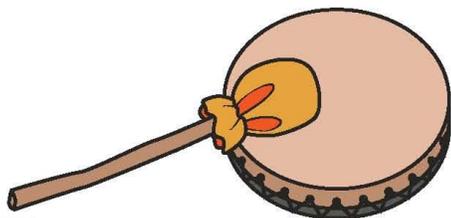
Concept: *The Treaty Relationship*

Teacher Information:

Within Canada, Treaties are a part of the *Constitution, 1982*. They are the building blocks for the creation of Canada. The Supreme Court of Canada continues the slow process of providing fairer interpretations of the true spirit and intent of the Treaties. The United Nations, a powerful influence on the rights of First Nations peoples in Canada, continues to work to affirm our rights to self-determination, including reaffirming First Nations rights to Nationhood.

The James Bay Treaty is a central component of our identity as first peoples of the James Bay, Mushkegowuk and Watershed territories. Within a contemporary context, we must work to give life to the original spirit and intent of our treaty. The signatories of the James Bay Treaty intended for the Treaty to guide our relationship with the Crown, and by extension, with the peoples within Canada. Our Elders negotiated the Treaty to ensure our future generations would be respected and to ensure that our relationship with the lands would not be compromised.

"Treaties were not designed to have one party deprive the other of its rights and interests."
Phil Fontaine



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Lesson 6: Honouring The Treaty

The experiences of First Nations peoples as a treaty partner within Canada have seen our people living impoverished lives, while the other party to the treaty reaped the benefits provided from stolen lands. For the Crown to truly honor Treaties in Canada, there would be shared burdens of hardships with First Nations peoples. For the Crown to truly honour the Treaties in Canada, First Nations leaders would sit as equals with the federal government. Instead, the Treaty relationship established the Indian reserve system. It allowed settlers to prosper and settle on Indian lands. Colonial policies were established, and Indian agents and the Indian Act were created.

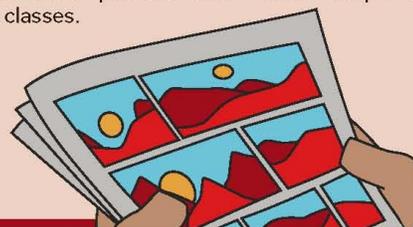
Under the restrictive terms of the *Indian Act of 1876*, small tracts of land, referred to as Indian Reserves, were set aside for the exclusive use of an Indian Band. The *Indian Act, 1876* is a federal law that governs many aspects of First Nations' people's lives, including Indian status, First Nations governments and the management of First Nations reserve lands. With the passing of this Act, the federal government essentially stripped First Nations of their inherent and Treaty rights as all power over First Nations day to day life was transferred to politicians and bureaucrats on Parliament hill.

What First Nations people were left with was a long, hard battle to reveal the truth about the misrepresentations and misinterpretations of the Treaties, a struggle to reassert their self-determination and fight to be recognized as a founding nation upon which Canada was built. This battle continues today, and despite indications of changing perspectives, and some gains that have largely been made through long fought court battles, First Nations people are far from achieving their rightful place in Canada.

Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Reinforce concept of Treaty Relationship:
 - a. Display the word "Honour" on whiteboard and have whole group discussion about understanding and student definition of honour. Record student answers.
 - b. Have students share their understanding of honour through personal stories or stories that they may have read about.
 - c. Have each student answer this question: *What is the most honourable thing you have done in your lifetime?* Ask students to share if they are comfortable doing so.
2. Students will watch the video, The Next 100 Years: Commemorating the Centennial of James Bay Treaty 9:

<http://www.nan.on.ca/article/the-next-100-years-commemorating-the-centennial-of-james-bay-treaty-9-526.asp> (24:00 mins).
3. Following the video, engage in whole group discussion and record student answers for the following:
 - ▶ What was the understanding of the relationship between First Nations and the Crown upon entering into the Treaty?
 - ▶ What makes the James Bay Treaty 9 so significant?
 - ▶ How large in land size is the James Bay Treaty 9 compared to other provinces?
 - ▶ How has James Bay Treaty 9 contributed to the wealth of Ontario and Canada?
 - ▶ What is the understanding about the spirit and intent of the James Bay Treaty 9 by Nishnawbe Aski Peoples? As a First Nations person, what would you have expected from the interpretation of the treaty?
- ▶ How have the Treaty promises and assurances made by the Crown been understood and passed down to members of Treaty 9?
4. Provide students with handouts of a variety of comic strips from newspapers or project comics from a website, such as GoComics for review. Ensure that they have an understanding of the pace and focus of any given comic strip such that they appreciate the conciseness and precision of a single frame that tells a very specific and salient piece of a much longer narrative.
5. Students will develop comic strips to reconstruct sequence of events from the entering into the James Bay Treaty #9.
 - a. The students will depict the story related to video, The Next 100 Years: Commemorating the Centennial of James Bay Treaty #9.
 - b. Students will set up each comic frame and add captions and dialogue to construct comic strips that retell a part of the story of the James Bay Treaty #9.
 - c. Students will create a rough draft and will draft final copy following the editing and approval of the rough draft.
4. Place comic strips on Bristol board and display in the hallway and/or around the school. Have students present their comic strips to primary classes.



Enrichment:

Students will interview community members and create comic strip based on community / family stories.

Working in small groups students will find similarities and differences in the story depicted in their comics.

Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Bristol Board
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Comic Strips Samples
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Crayons
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Comic Strips Templates

LESSON 7: WE ARE SOVEREIGN NATIONS

GRADE 7

Expectation Writing

- 1.3** Gather information to support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and a wide range of print and electronic sources

Concept: *Inherent Right of Self-Government*

Teacher Information:

Long before the arrival of European settlers, First Nations people were sovereign nations that used traditional systems of governance based on traditional knowledge to ensure harmony within communities. First Nations sovereignty includes the right to lands, the right to practice our own culture, customs and languages, traditions, and our right to self-government.

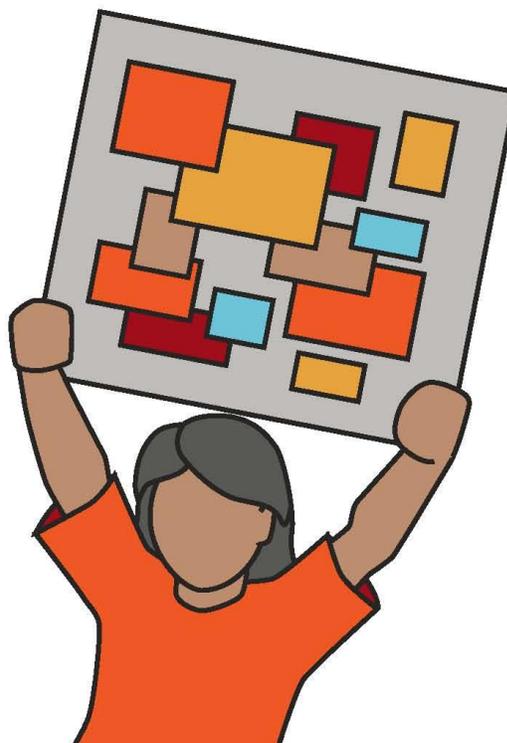
In 1876 the *Indian Act* was imposed on First Nations peoples which dismantled our traditional systems of governance and ensured that First Nations people became dependent upon the Crown for survival.

Over a hundred years of an imposed foreign system of governance resulted in First Nations people not having equal access to the same quality of living as non-Indigenous people throughout Canada.

"It is simply unacceptable that Indian Status is an indicator of health, poverty and education in Canada. First Nations have worse health and educational outcomes, worse housing and less access to critical services than any other population in Canada. This is entirely due to federal practices, policies and discriminatory legislation – some of which has been on the books since 1876."
Isadore Day

<http://aptnews.ca/2015/10/17/top-5-indigenous-issues-all-canadians-should-care-about/>

Increasing disputes over natural resource development along with devastating social and living conditions on reserves throughout Canada resulted in a growing political presence and activism from First Nations across Canada. First Nations people demanded our inherent right of self-government be recognized and affirmed by the Government of Canada under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Introduce concept of First Nations Self-Government:
 - a. Display the word Government and list the responsibilities of government to the people that they serve. Record student answers.
2. Students will watch the video, Implementing Our Right to Self-Governance:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtJraM-egyUI&t=118s> (5:20 mins).
3. Following the video, engage in whole group discussion and record student answers for the following:
 - ▶ Where does inherent right to self government originate?
 - ▶ Why is understanding your community, history and knowledge important to these inherent rights?
 - ▶ If you could design self-governance for Mattagami First Nation, what would it look like for our community? Students brainstorm ideas and record them.
4. Provide students with A Declaration of First Nations (located in Activity Sheets section).
5. Engage in whole group discussion, discussing the following questions:
 - ▶ What statement does the Declaration of First Nations convey?
 - ▶ According to the Declaration of First Nations provided by the Assembly of First Nations, where does the right to self governance come from?
6. Students will create a collage that expresses their thoughts and understanding of self-determination of First Nations peoples in Canada.
 - ▶ Place collages on bristol board and display in the hallway and/or around the school. Have students present their collages to Chief and Council.



Enrichment:

Students will interview community Elders and Chiefs and Council to create collage based on community / family stories.

Materials:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| ✓ Internet | ✓ Glue | ✓ Magazines |
| ✓ 11 x 17 paper | ✓ Pencil | ✓ A Declaration of First Nations |
| ✓ Bristol Board | ✓ Crayons | |
| ✓ Scissors | ✓ Pencil | |
| | ✓ Newspapers | |

LESSON 8: FULL CIRCLE

GRADE 8

Expectation Writing

2.1 Write complex texts of a variety of lengths using a wide range of forms

Concept: *Looking Back to Move Forward*

Teacher Information:

Federal policies and legislation aimed at assimilating First Nations people across Canada had devastating effects. First Nations culture and ways of life became threatened by colonial powers, and over time, the standard of living fell to the lowest levels of any people in this country. For over 500 years, First Nations people have been trying to adapt to a governance structure that does not belong to them, a foreign system of governance that did not reflect their values and beliefs. The Spirit of First Nations people needs to be at the heart of a governance system.

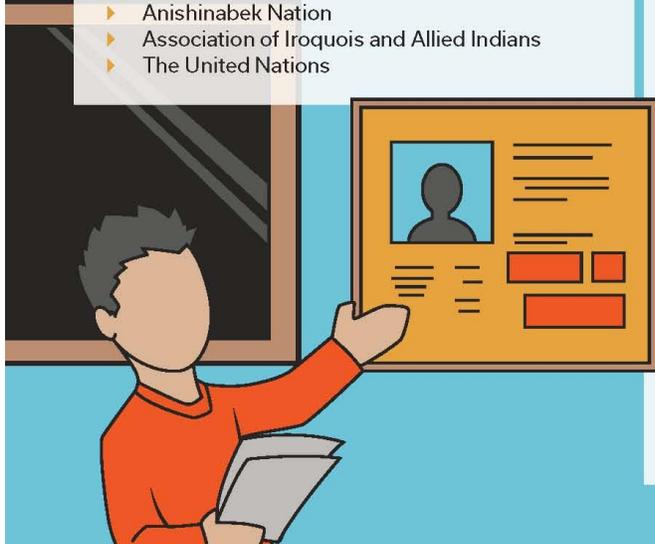
For many First Nations people across Canada, returning to our traditional forms of governance is foundational to transforming and decolonizing our communities. Our right to govern ourselves within our own structures and systems that better reflect our own values, principles and beliefs is a natural right, an inherent right. Our languages, our identity and the many sacred ceremonies help form our systems of governance within our communities.

First Nations people need to look to themselves, their Elders and community members to understand their history. Representing the values of First Nations cultures will work to recreate First Nations identity and better represent the values of First Nations cultures. First Nations systems and approaches to governance will be authentic instead of fitting or adapting the non-Indigenous identity that demands that First Nations people fit into mainstream society. First Nations right to self-government exists by prior occupation of lands, and this truth is the crux of inherent right of self-government.



Learning and Teaching Activities

1. Students will research a First Nations person who works towards, and advocates for, First Nations self-government in Canada. From this research, they will write a biography.
 - a. Use the internet to search for and review First Nations peoples and organizations that advocate for First Nations self-government. This may include:
 - ▶ First Nations communities
 - ▶ Nishnawbe Aski Nation
 - ▶ Chiefs of Ontario
 - ▶ Assembly of First Nations
 - ▶ Anishinabek Nation
 - ▶ Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians
 - ▶ The United Nations
2. Students will identify their chosen person to profile and begin research through use of interviews, internet and books to answer the following questions:
 - ▶ What is First Nations self-government?
 - ▶ Why is it important to First Nations community to achieve First Nations self-government?
 - ▶ What is the most important part in achieving First Nations self-government?
 - ▶ In what ways are you working to help your community move towards more traditional forms of governance?
 - ▶ What are the barriers to First Nations for achieving First Nations self-government?
 - ▶ Why is the non-Indigenous community so resistant to First Nations Self-Government?
 - ▶ How can we help them understand our position?
 - ▶ What strategies should we employ to bring awareness to this issue in a way that informs, entreats and asks for understanding and commitment to rectify the situation?
 - ▶ What strategies have been used in the past to do this, and how have they worked?
 - ▶ What strategies are being used today by First Nation groups to fight this cause?
3. Students will design a poster display to accompany the written report and will present to the class.



Enrichment:

Students will write a letter to the city newspaper advocating for First Nations self-government.

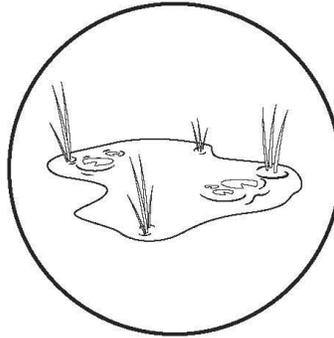
Materials:

- ✓ Internet
- ✓ 11 x 17 paper
- ✓ Bristol Board
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Pencil Crayons
- ✓ Pencil

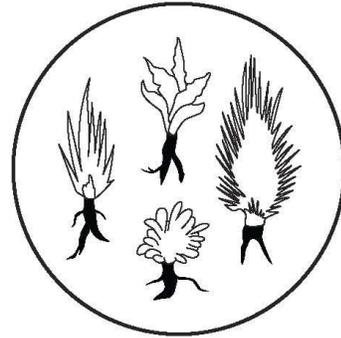
GRADE 1 SACRED SPACES
LESSON 2: MAPPING SPACES AND PLACES IMAGES:



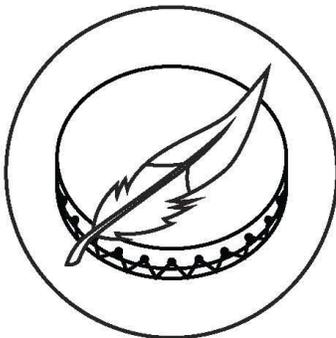
Trees



Water



Traditional Medicines



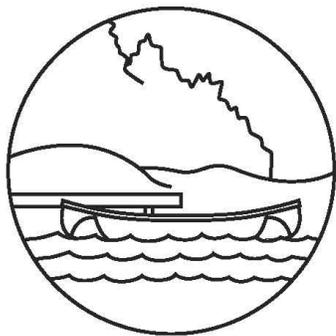
Pow Wow Grounds



Houses



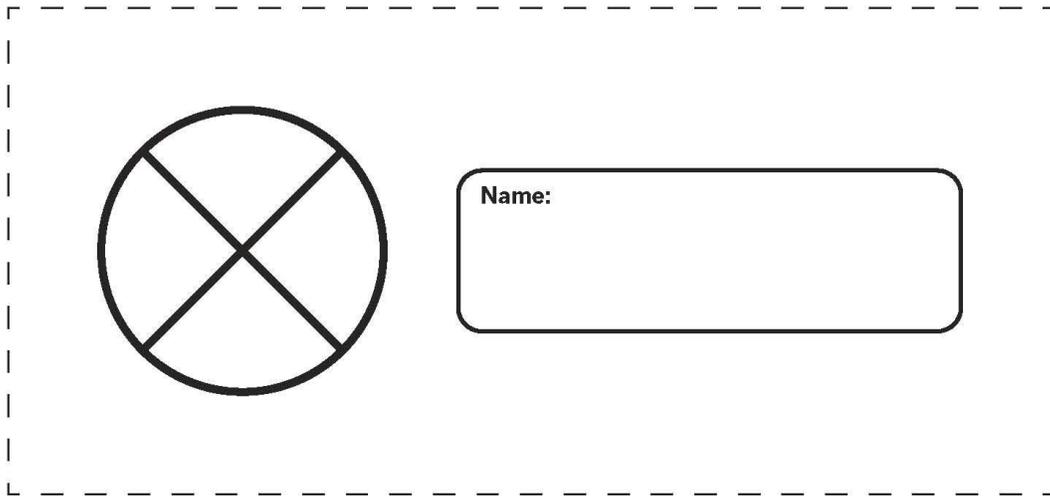
Community Store



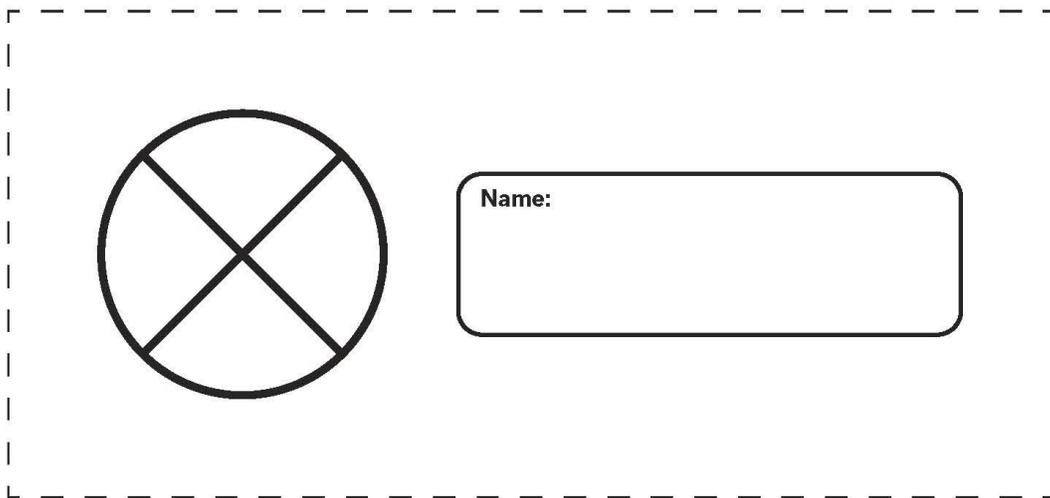
Boat Launch

Activity Sheets

GRADE 3 CELEBRATION OF SEASONS
LESSON 4: NAME TAG TEMPLATE:



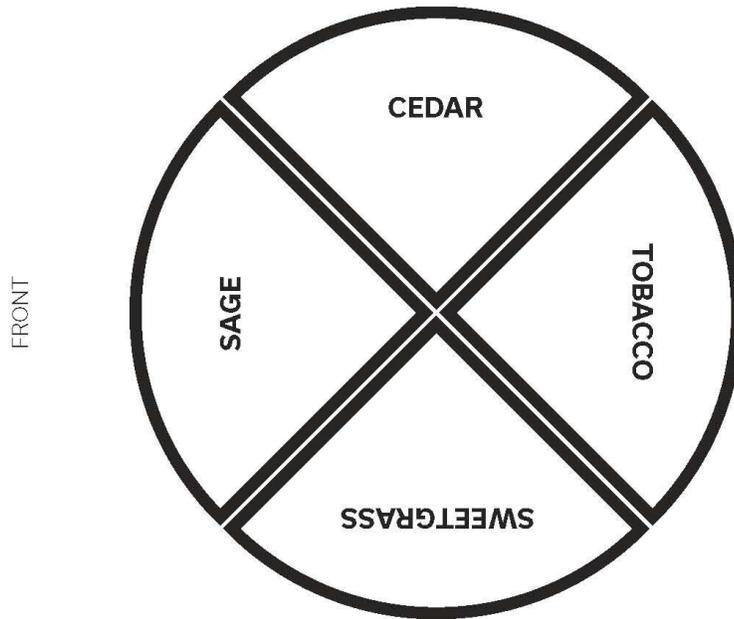
A dashed rectangular border containing a circle with an 'X' inside on the left and a rounded rectangular box on the right. The box contains the text "Name:" followed by a blank space for writing.



A dashed rectangular border containing a circle with an 'X' inside on the left and a rounded rectangular box on the right. The box contains the text "Name:" followed by a blank space for writing.

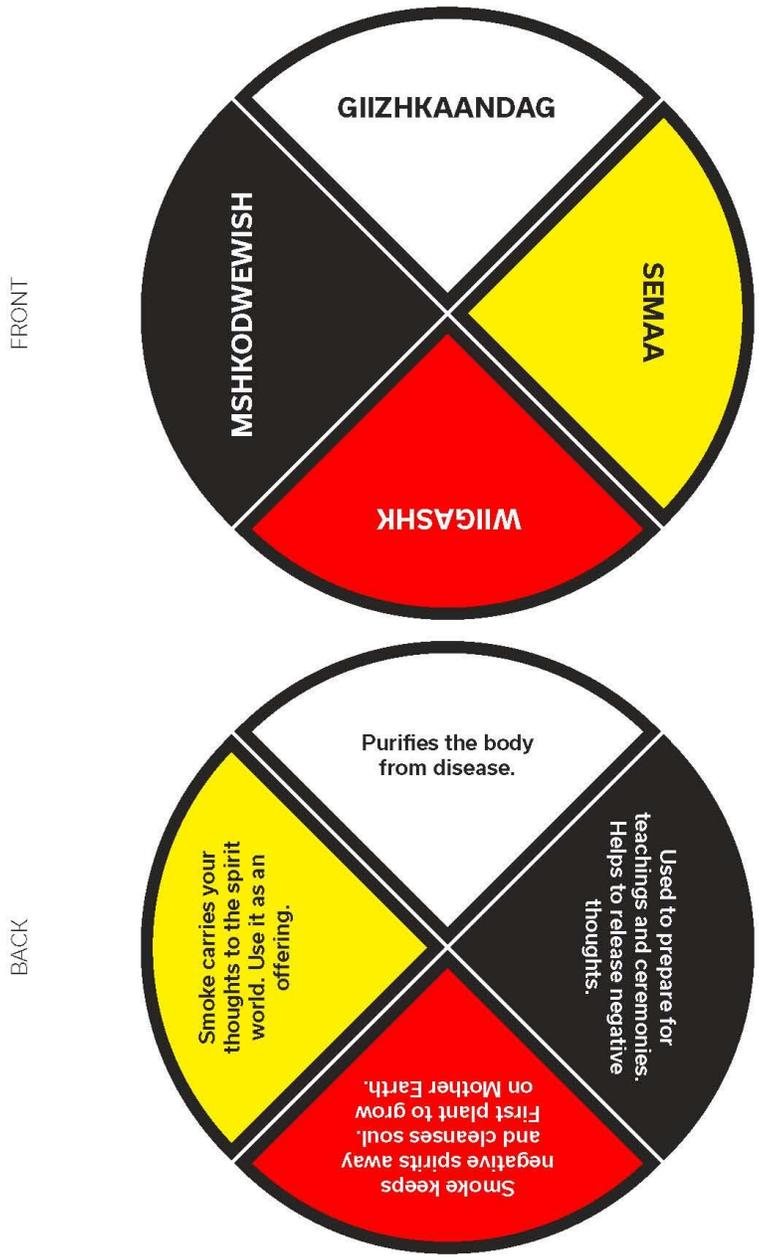
GRADE 2 SACRED MEDICINES

LESSON 2: MEDICINE WHEEL



GRADE 3 SACRED MEDICINES

LESSON 2: SACRED MEDICINE DESCRIPTIONS



GRADE 6 CONSTRUCTING CANADA

LESSON 3: TREATY MAP



GRADE 6 CONSTRUCTING CANADA

LESSON 3: TREATY MAP



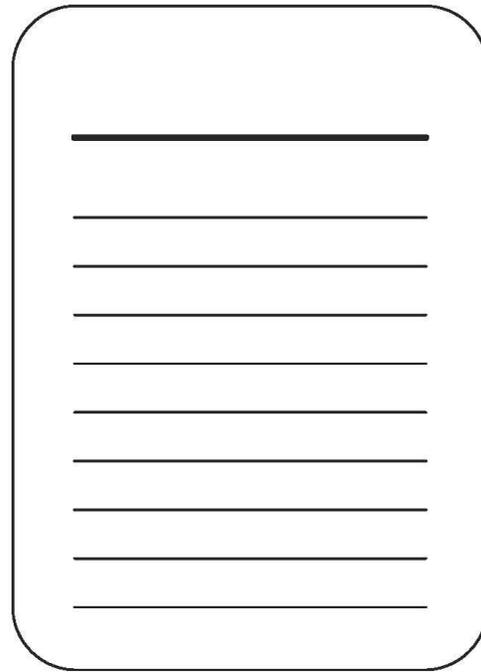
GRADE 6 NATION TO NATION

LESSON 4: PLAYING CARDS

FRONT



BACK



GRADE 7 WE ARE SOVEREIGN NATIONS LESSON 7:

A DECLARATION OF FIRST NATIONS

**We the Original Peoples of this land know the
Creator put us here.**

**The Creator gave us laws that govern all our rela-
tionships to live in harmony with nature
and mankind.**

**The Laws of the Creator defined our rights
and responsibilities.**

**The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, our lan-
guages, our culture, and a place on Mother Earth
which provided us with all our needs.**

**We have maintained our Freedom, our Languages,
and our Traditions from time immemorial.**

**We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill the
responsibilities and obligations given to us by the
Creator for the land upon which we were placed.**

**The Creator has given us the right to govern our-
selves and the right to self-determination.**

**The rights and responsibilities given to us by the
Creator cannot be altered or taken away by any
other Nation.**