

BIG IDEAS:

- Understanding the diversity that exists among families and within the local community leads to an appreciation of diverse perspectives.
- Canada is made up of various communities that have diverse traditions and celebrations.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS:**Social Studies (Strand A)**

Compare some significant traditions and celebrations among diverse groups and at different times, and identify some of the reasons for changes in these traditions/celebrations (FOCUS ON: Perspective; Cause and Consequence)

LEARNING GOALS:

Students understand the importance of learning about Indigenous communities, their traditions and cultures

Notes about lessons: It is important that these activities are completed in order, as they build off of one another. They are titled as ‘lessons’ however, the explorations may end up unfolding over several periods or days. They may also serve as starting points for deeper inquiry and knowledge building. Although the activities are written up as “lesson plans” it is important to be responsive to student ideas, questions, insights, and misconceptions as you move through the learning. It is best to position yourself as a co-learner, but understand your power and responsibility as the educator in the classroom to disrupt racist/oppressive ideas, language and internalized biases that arise.

*It is important that, before beginning this series of lessons, the teacher has spoken directly with any Indigenous students and their families, informing them about the upcoming subject matter (Residential Schools, The Indian Act, colonial structures). Accommodations may need to be made in order to avoid placing racialized students in uncomfortable, or traumatizing situations. For guidance as to how to navigate this respectfully, please contact your Board FNMI Team, or check out the following from Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres: [Trauma Informed Schools](#)

NOTE : There are many opportunities within these lessons to branch off into inquiry (specifically in Science and SS). These lessons simply provide a framework and ensure that Indigenous Perspectives is embedded when diving into both the science and SS curriculums.

Any opportunity to integrate a visit from a community member, knowledge keeper or elder from your treaty partners would be excellent within the context of these explorations.

LESSON 1: EXPLORING OUR TRADITIONS

- Before beginning the series of lessons that follows, it is important to engage students in thinking and celebrating their own identities, cultures and traditions. Perhaps you have already explored this with students, at the beginning of the year.
- A mini-inquiry and sharing project where each student shares a tradition or piece of their own family, culture, or identity would work really well here.
- Students could share in any number of ways - creating a video, photo display with explanations, written piece (e.g., poetry, personal memoir), creating a picture book, art, slideshow.

LESSON 2: REFLECTING ON OUR LEARNING

- Invite students to reflect on some interesting things they learned from their classmates' sharing of traditions.
- Have students write or draw their learning, as a reflection and add all of them to a class chart - making student thinking visible.
- Invite students to sit in a *Knowledge Building Circle*. As students share during this circle, be sure to document their ideas.
- Guiding questions for Knowledge Building Circle:
 - Why do you think it is important that we learn about our classmate's traditions?
 - Why is it important to learn about all of the communities and people that call this land (Turtle Island) home?
 - Why is it important that settlers on Turtle Island learn about the traditions, and cultures of the original people (Indigenous Peoples) of this land?

In this conversation it is very important that the educator ensures that students understand that there are Indigenous People thriving here NOW - that we not discuss Indigenous Peoples in the past tense. Emphasizing that Indigenous Peoples now live all across Canada - in our community, across all cities, towns, and on-reserve communities.

- If you explored Orange Shirt Day with your class, this might be a good opportunity to discuss the fact that Indigenous People were not always allowed to have Pow Wows because the Canadian government forced unjust laws on them. You may be able to connect this with your students to Residential schools and learning on Orange Shirt day.
- **Exit Pass:** Pose question: What is one thing that is sticking out to you from the conversation we just had (students might draw or write). Anchor student thinking in the classroom.

LESSON 3: IMAGE PROVOCATION

- Before beginning, revisit the Knowledge Building Circle you had previously with students. Discuss the importance of learning about Indigenous traditions and perspectives (as settlers on Turtle Island).
- Explain that today you are going to focus on the cultural tradition of pow wows that many Indigenous Nations host (it is very important that Indigenous Nations are not talked about as monolithic - we imagine that some FNMI communities do not have Pow Wows - but many do. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation host an annual Pow Wow called the Three Fires Homecoming Pow Wow in the summer). See here for more information: <https://www.new-creditcc.ca/>
- Set up a provocation for the students by printing off images of Pow Wows around the room. *These images are a starting point (image 1, image 2, image 3, image 4, image 5).*
 - I see, I Think, I Wonder activity can be done using different images of Pow Wows. The four provided were taken at the 2017 and 2019 Three Fires Homecoming Pow Wow.
- Have students share back their thinking orally and consolidate their questions. *This would be a good opportunity to explore the concept of creating strong inquiry questions.*

LESSON 4: GUIDED INQUIRY INTO POW WOWS

- Once the class has co-constructed some strong inquiry questions around Pow Wows, guide students through a Guided Inquiry, where they seek to answer the questions they came up with. Some example questions:
 - Why are Pow Wows so important to many Indigenous People?
 - What happens at Pow Wows?
 - What can Pow Wows teach us about some Indigenous cultures?
 - Would you like to go to a Pow Wow? (research what Pow Wows are held close to your school - The Three Fires Homecoming Pow Wow held by the Mississaugas of the Credit is held every summer at New Credit)
 - Why were First Nations unable to have Pow Wows at one time?
 - How do you think it impacted Indigenous Peoples when the Canadian Government forbid them to have Pow Wows?
- Have students watch the video [DJ Shub - Indomitable ft. Northern Cree Singers](#) which shows an Indigenous man's journey to, and experience in, a Pow Wow.
 - Why do you think he needed to go to that Pow Wow?
 - How do you think he felt when he was dancing at the end?

Possible Sources for Inquiry (when gathering sources for inquiry, it is very important to consider who is telling the story, aim for authentic voice):

- Clips from the [30th Three Fires Homecoming Pow Wow](#) held by the Mississaugas of the Credit.
- Pow Wow Dancing Styles and Meanings: <https://youtu.be/MONgmqlpaW8>
- Jingle Dancer: <https://goodminds.com/jingle-dancer-hardcover-ed>
- The Gathering: <https://goodminds.com/gathering-hardcover-ed>
- PowWow Celebration: <https://goodminds.com/powwow-celebration-through-song-and-dance-hardcover-ed>
- Long powwow nights <https://goodminds.com/long-powwow-nights-hardcover-ed>
- Video: <https://youtu.be/gXplyYol06E>
- Video: <https://youtu.be/EVkgqmpyDfg>

LESSON 5: MOCCASIN IDENTIFIER AS AN ACT OF HEALING

Students may have noticed that many of the Pow Wow dancers (including in the music video by DJ Shub) wore moccasins - this is what connected them to the land. Many dances performed at Pow Wows are connected to healing.

- In your classroom, and as a class, stencil the Moccasin Identifier as a group exercise to ground your learning. Consider creative ways to stencil with layering colours, to add dimension and depth.
 - The question can be asked to students (this can be turned into a reflection piece) *“Thinking about what you learned about Pow Wows, and knowing that many of the dances are considered medicine that can heal, how can marking this space honour and respect our Treaty Partner's traditions and cultures?”*
- Carolyn King's [video](#) would be perfect to show here.

