

### BIG IDEAS:

- The different communities in early-nineteenth century Canada influence the way we live today. (Social Studies)
- Plants are the primary source of food for humans. (Science)
- Humans need to protect plants and their habitats. (Science)

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS:

#### Social Studies (Strand A)

Identify some of the communities in Canada around the beginning of the nineteenth century, and describe their relationships to the land and to each other

#### Science (Understanding Life Systems)

Assess ways in which plants have an impact on society and the environment, and ways in which human activity has an impact on plants and plant habitats

### LEARNING GOALS:

- Understand Indigenous perspectives on the land and environment
- Learn about whose traditional territory the school sits on
- Consider the role we play to honour, respect and care for the environment
- Act as Treaty partners

**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: CONNECTING WITH THE LAND

- *These activities would work best in a space off school property such as a local reservoir, pond, stream, ravine, forested area or park. An example of such a space is Waterdown's Souharissen Natural Area - see video here: <https://youtu.be/NXiDxk8zcBg>*
- *Listed as one lesson - but these activities are meant to have students connect with the land and ideally would take place over a series of days in the same space.*
- *Before engaging in these explorations – you may want to develop some norms around outdoor exploration and learning.*

Find a local reservoir, pond, stream, ravine, forested area or park to visit with your students (ideally within walking distance of your school).

As you document student thinking during this series of explorations - pay close attention to ideas and questions students come up with. This may prompt you to go in different directions, allowing students to develop great ideas in terms of connecting to Indigenous perspectives on land.

### DAY ONE:

- Invite students to walk around the space - giving them some free time to explore and play - connecting naturally to the space you have taken them to.
- Invite students to find their own space in the outdoor area you are visiting.
- They should be on their own, not close to any of their classmates. Have students remember the space they are in and refer to it as their "nature spot." You may want to have students bring something to sit on, or cut up pieces of tarp for them to sit on in wet weather.
- Instruct students to close their eyes and focus on what they hear.
- Invite students to make two lists in their heads: "Natural sounds" "Not natural sounds (human generated)".
- Invite students back to a [Knowledge Building Circle \(KBC\)](#) - in the circle ask students to reflect on the experience: what did they like about it? How did it make them feel? Is there anything they didn't like about it? Document student thinking.
- Create a list of "Natural sounds" and "Not natural sounds" to be displayed in the classroom.
- This discussion might naturally go into human impact - document anything that comes out of the KBC that might provoke further inquiry, explorations or provoke student thinking.

### DAY TWO:

- Invite students to walk around the space, giving them some free time to explore and play, connecting naturally to the space you have taken them to.
- Invite students to go back to their nature spot (the same spot as before).
- This time, invite students to focus on what they notice as they sit in their spot.
- Encourage them first to focus closely on what is very near to them, and then to expand where they are looking.
- Once again, meet back in a KBC, to debrief the experience, and list everything that students noticed.
- As students build on ideas there may be important elements that come out of these discussions.



## DAY THREE:

- Invite students to walk around the space - giving them some free time to explore and play - connecting naturally to the space you have taken them to.
- This time have students bring sketchbooks or paper with clipboards and a writing utensil to the outdoor space.
- Invite students to return to their nature spot.
- This time have students focus on something in their nature spot and sketch it.
- Return to a circle and have students share what they drew and why they decided to focus on that particular scene/item.

## DAY FOUR:

- Invite students to walk around the space - giving them some free time to explore and play - connecting naturally to the space you have taken them to.
- This time have students bring sketchbooks or paper with clipboards and a writing utensil to the outdoor space
- Returning to their nature spots, invite students to respond to the following prompts:
  - I see...
  - I think...
  - I wonder...
- Invite students back to a KBC to share their observations, ideas and wonderings.
- Document all of this learning and display in the classroom.

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## LESSON 2: CONSIDERING CONNECTIONS

- Return back to the space with students
- Ask them now to focus specifically on connections
- As they move through the space have them observe, sketch or take note about how they notice elements in the environment are connected.
- These sketches can be displayed in the classroom - and used to provoke further inquiry around plants and habitats.
- Guide students in a KBC around this - documenting their thinking.
- As they build knowledge together - ask students to consider the questions:
  - How am I connected to the land?
  - How are we connected to the land?
  - What responsibilities do I have to the land?
- As the educator you may decide to have students engage in some formal reflection around these questions, through written work, oral, visual art, or drama

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## LESSON 3: WHOSE TERRITORY ARE WE ON?

- This lesson is best done back at the outdoor space if possible
- Invite students to walk around the space - giving them some free time to explore and play - connecting naturally to the space you have taken them to.
- Guide students in a discussion around the history of the land - what do they think was here before them?
- Who was here before settlers (will need to explain and unpack this term)
- Who was removed from this land so settlers could settle here and live here?
- Who are the original human inhabitants on this land?
- Who are the people who have rights to this land?
- Who are the original caretakers of this land?

*These questions are meant for you to understand what students know and it is your responsibility to be able to guide them in this discussion.*

*Guide students to important words like “First Nations,” “Indigenous,” and “Nation” as opposed to “Tribe.” Also, it is very important to consider how you frame this discussion to ensure you do not speak of First Nations people in past tense - but as still here today. Stories of resilience and resistance within the narrative are key.*

- Bring students back to the classroom.
- Building on the KBC - have students investigate this map: <https://native-land.ca/>
- It is important to give students context around the map.
- This map shows the thriving Indigenous nations (important we recognize and help students understand that Indigenous nations are not monolithic) pre contact, and that people would have to had to be removed from the land in order for settlement of Europeans (this can lead to a discussion around colonization).
- From this map, see if together you can determine nations that have thrived on this land, and who your treaty partners are (Example: Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation).

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## LESSON 4: EXPLORING PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS

*There are connections to the art curriculum here - you could also look at Indigenous Art and how Indigenous artists have used visual art as a form of resistance and resilience. Isaac Murdoch, Philip Coté and Christi Belcourt are three artists you could look at specifically. Another excellent resource is the Lloyd S King Library/Mural Room. A lot of expanding that can be done with this exploration.*

- Use these [visual art pieces](#) by Indigenous artists as a provocation (you may decide to find other pieces - these are some suggestions).
- Have students observe these images carefully with the following prompts (students can share thinking on stickies on chart paper with the following prompts written at the top - for each piece of art) :
  - I see...
  - I think...
  - I wonder...
- Once students share their thinking, bring them back into a knowledge building circle.
- Make sure students can see the pieces, and the responses
- Have students verbally share some of their thinking and discuss the pieces and what they saw and thought in the circle.
- Once they have done that - pose the question:
  - What symbols do you see in these art pieces?
  - What do these art pieces and their symbols tell us about that land and Indigenous Peoples’ relationship to the land?
  - What do these art pieces have to teach us about how Indigenous Peoples care for and use the land and waters?



## LESSON 5: GUIDED INQUIRY INTO INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES ON THE LAND

- Building off of the previous exploration - have students investigate how early First Nations communities lived in relationship to the land. *It is very important here to recognize that Indigenous People continue to live and thrive in Canada now - but you can talk to the students about the fact that Indigenous Peoples were forcibly removed from their traditional lands by the government during colonization.*
- A key big idea to uncover here with students is that the land is intrinsic to their identity, as is the idea of being in balance with the environment.
- This would be a fantastic opportunity to have an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper or community partner come in to share with the class.
- Here are some sources that could be used to guide the investigation:
  - [FNMIEO Website](#)
  - Lloyd S King Library/Mural Room
  - [Earth To Table](#): Story of a Project (Chandra Maracle- 9:50 into video)
  - [Earth to Table](#): Rick Hill, explains Dish with One Spoon
  - [Indigenous Peoples Atlas](#)
  - Picture Books: [Shin-chi's Canoe](#), [Indigenous Communities in Canada Series](#), [When We were Alone](#), [Elders are Watching](#), [Nibi's Water Song](#), [The Water Walker](#), [We Are Water Protectors](#)
  - Another good source to investigate and look into here would be your school/ board land acknowledgement (and the connections to the land that exist there).
- In this guided inquiry, lead students to the idea that Indigenous People are still the ones who fight for our land and waters (you could look into modern day pipeline protests, Water Walkers (Autumn Petlier and Nokomis/Grandmother Josephine Mandamin) treaty and inherent rights (hunting, fishing, harvesting rights) to land).

## LESSON 6: MOCCASIN IDENTIFIER AS AN ACT OF TREATY

- 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.
- Take students back out to the outdoor space you spent time in as a class
- Building off of what you have learned, ask students how they see the Indigenous perspectives represented in the space.
- Chances are, there will not be any representation of Indigenous voice around the area, or marking the space as traditional territory of an Indigenous nation.
- Engage in conversation with the students about this - and why they think it is important that people learn about Indigenous Perspectives on the land, and should know about the First Nations who thrived on this land pre-contact.
- Ask these questions:
  - Has your connection to land changed after learning about Indigenous connection to land? If yes, how?
  - How can you help spread the word about what you have learned today?



# GRADE 3

*Perhaps you want to go into deeper work with the students around this space - it could turn into a great project based learning opportunity for the class - incorporating even more than just the Moccasin Identifier.*

- Watch Carolyn's [video](#) with the class and have a discussion about the fact that she did not see herself represented on the land.
- Use this as an opportunity to mark the outdoor space you have connected with and explored as a class with the Moccasin Identifier as an act of treaty.
- Have students select the most appropriate location[s] in your outdoor space for the Moccasin Identifier.

