

BIG IDEAS:

- Significant events in different communities have contributed to the development of the identities of those communities and of Canada.
- Different groups may experience the same development or event in different ways.

OVERALL EXPECTATIONS:

Social Studies (Strand A)

Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experiences of a few distinct communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada (FOCUS ON: Perspective)

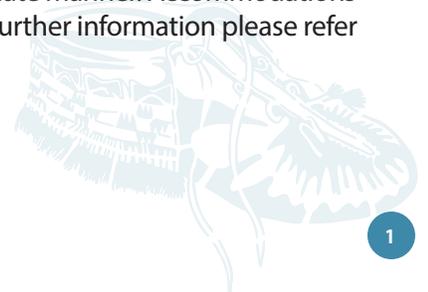
Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of significant experiences of, and major changes and aspects of life in, various historical and contemporary communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, in Canada (FOCUS ON: Significance; Continuity and Change)

LEARNING GOALS:

- Students explore and understand the short and long term impacts of the Residential School System.
- Students understand the Canadian Government’s goal in the creation of the Residential School System.

Notes about lessons: It is important that these activities are completed in order, as they scaffold 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 *communicated* (p.91) with families/guardians, informing them about the upcoming subject matter (e.g., Residential Schools, The Indian Act, racism, colonial structures). This allows the students’ support network to prepare to support the student and themselves should their own life situation be impacted and/or triggered by these on-going systemic issues. It also allows families to be a part of the process if they wish to contribute to the class discussions in an age-appropriate manner. Accommodations may need to be made at the request of the family/guardians. For further information please refer to: [Trauma Informed Schools](#)



It is highly recommended that teachers supplement the lessons provided with some of these detailed units/lessons available online, to support the learning necessary to build understanding and empathy for the long term impacts on our communities.

Resources to build knowledge with respect to Residential Schools:

[Residential Schools and Reconciliation](#) lessons

[Mohawk Indian Residential School-The Mush Hole](#)

[Woodland Cultural Centre](#) Virtual Field Trips (in-person soon to come)

[What Can I Contribute to Meaningful Reconciliation?](#)

[Map of Residential Schools in Canada](#)

[Legacy of Hope Foundation](#) Review materials for age-appropriateness

LESSON 1: THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT IMAGES

Resources:

[Sample Parent Letter-modify as needed](#)

[Sharing Circles explained](#)

[Sharing Circles](#)

[Grand Erie Talking Circle Video](#)

[Do I need permission to share this story?](#)

Materials:

[I see, I think, I still wonder...](#) Graphic Organizer

[Photos](#)

- Begin in a Sharing Circle
- Guiding questions:
 - Question #1 “What is culture?” Possible prompts:
 - “Can you give some examples from your own cultures?” “Where did you get your culture from?” “Where did you learn these things?”
 - Question #2 “Can someone lose their culture?. How might that happen?”

In groups: Students participate in an image [carousel activity](#) and at each image they will use their graphic organizer [I see, I think, I still wonder...](#) to share back in the whole group upon completion.

[FIND PHOTOS HERE](#)

- The home group will return to the image they started with and they will share responses recorded throughout the activity with one another.
- Meet back in a Sharing Circle. Have students share thoughts, observations, connections and debrief their experience with the photos. For some, this could be quite confusing with the religious connections. Time may need to be spent to unpack these questions.

Assessment: Exit Pass (check for understanding): What was one thing that you learned today that was new?

- What is one thing that surprised you?
- What is one question you are going to research further?



LESSON 2: IDENTITY WEBS

Resources

[Stolen Words](#)

[Senator Murray Sinclair](#)

Materials:

Paper

Writing Utensils

This lesson asks students to brainstorm things that have shaped them into the people they are today.

- On a piece of paper, students write their name in the centre, creating a mind map connecting it to all of the things that have shaped them into the person they are (examples: parents, music, sports, hobbies, being outside, friends, family friends, pets, etc.). It is important that students provide examples that are as specific as possible (What sports? What hobbies? Where do you like to go outside?)
- After students have had enough time to work on their individual mindmaps, the teacher draws a person on the board and asks students for examples of what makes them who they are - each one is written around the drawing, creating a class mindmap. If students do not come up with these examples, it is important that the teacher includes the following concepts: language, family, friends, peers, stories, songs, music, food, teachings, elders, grandparents.
- When the class is satisfied that they have enough examples, the teacher will draw a line around the person, separating them from all of the examples provided by the students. "This was the intent of residential schools: to remove children from the things that made them who they are - specifically their families and their language. By doing this, they attempted to sever the link between a child and their community."

As a class read aloud, [Stolen Words](#), Melanie Florence (2017). It is easier to facilitate the conversation in a Sharing Circle with the expectations established. Follow along with the questions asked and probe students for their thinking, comprehension and critical inquiry.

- **Provocation #1:** "Why was destroying Indigenous languages a goal of the Residential School System?"

Teacher note: Language contains a worldview - we express our understanding of the world using the language that is given to us. It depends on the language you speak as to how you will be able to express your understanding of the world around you. Remove a language and you remove a world view.

- **Provocation #2:** Watch the [Senator Murray Sinclair](#) video. "Why do you think Senator Murray Sinclair says, "it was education that got us into this mess and it will be education that gets us out of it"? Many Treaties in Canada committed to providing First Nations with schools on reserve, where Indigenous children could gain education. This is not what happened as the Canadian Government instead used this Treaty commitment as a colonizing tool through an elaborate residential school system, supported by United, Presbyterian, Anglican and Catholic churches, to take children away from home, often at very far distances at very young ages.



LESSON 3: FOUND POETRY

Resources:

[*I Lost My Talk, Rita Joe*](#)
[Choral speaking](#)

Materials:

Strips of Paper

Model Lesson:

[*I Lost My Talk, Rita Joe*](#) Teachers

This lesson can be executed with any texts related to Residential Schools. It is very important that the texts and books are vetted for authenticity of voice and age appropriateness.

- Students are provided with a variety of texts related to Residential Schools. Picture books, excerpts from novels, non-fiction texts all work well.
- Students are each given 3 strips of chart paper.
- Encourage students to explore the Residential schools texts that have been laid out around the room.
- Students choose 3 strips (2-3 phrases or sentences) of text that resonate with them in explaining the experience or impact of the Residential School System. They write these on the provided strips of chart paper.
- Students form groups of 4 or 5 and arrange their strips into a found poem.
- Students rehearse the reading of their found poem - focusing on [choral speaking](#).
- Follow up with a Sharing Circle to share and discussion choral poem presentations.

LESSON 4: I SEE, I WONDER, I HOPE...

Resources:

[Canada's Residential Schools](#) - Google Earth resource

Materials:

Paper
pencil

[Graphic Organizer](#)

- Display images from Lesson #1 Residential School activity that students shared questions and ideas about
- Distribute graphic organizers for "Bird's Eye View" (3 paragraphs or stanzas. One section begins with "I See", the second begins with "I Wonder" and the third begins with "I Hope") [Graphic Organizer found here](#)
- Present students with the website, [Canada's Residential Schools](#) that shows a Residential School from the perspective of a bird, observing from above (it is important that students frame their notes from an observer's perspective)
- Guide students through an individual brainstorming activity. Encourage students to record their ideas using [dot jots](#), and to use the images to help trigger ideas. They should also reflect on everything they have learned about Residential Schools through read alouds and discussions.
- This activity works best if students work independently to explore (consider playing some quiet music).
Invite students to work on the section that speaks to them first, using dot jots.

- Encourage students to have at least 2-3 items in each column, at a minimum.

Assessment check-in. Students can submit their organizer for feedback.

- An option for teachers is to work with the ideas students have generated and arrange ideas into free form poetry, a written response, a piece of art or drama/song.
- Possibly illustrate with symbols and images or photography

LESSON 5: THE MOCASSIN IDENTIFIER PROJECT MARKING THE CLASSROOM AS AN ACT OF RESILIENCE

Resources:

[Mocassin Identifier Project](#)

Materials:

Mocassin Identifier Kit

Colouring Utensils

- As a class stencil the Mocassin Identifier as a group exercise to ground your learning.
- Consider creative ways to stencil with layering colours, to add dimension and depth.
- Carolyn King's [video](#) (start at 11:55 minute timestamp) telling the story of driving to Toronto from New Credit and "not seeing herself in her own territory" and how the Mocassin Identifier Project was born out of this.

After watching Carolyn King's video, pose these question to students:

- *"How does the Mocassin Identifier resist the intended purpose of Residential Schools?"* This question is intentionally broad, and can be explored through various lenses including: land, identity, connection to territory, education, etc.
- *"How can marking our classroom with a Mocassin Identifier highlight resilience in the face of Canada's Residential School Program?"*
- As a class stencil the Mocassin Identifier as a group exercise to ground your learning. Consider creative ways to stencil with layering colours, to add dimension and depth.

