

# GRADE 3

## EDUCATION KIT

### BIG IDEAS:

The different communities in early 18th and 19th-century Canada influence the way we live today (Treaty Education).

Canada was already a multicultural society in 1800.

Human activities and decisions about land use may alter the environment.

Human activities affect the environment, but the environment also affects human activities.

Humans need to protect plants and their habitats.

### OVERALL EXPECTATIONS:

Language Overall Expectation

Social Studies

(Strand A (A2, A3, B1, B2, B3))

### LEARNING GOALS:

- Students understand Indigenous perspectives on the land and environment
- Students learn about whose traditional territory the school sits on
- Students consider the role we play in honouring, respecting and caring for the environment
- Students learn about the traditional territory on which their school is located

**Notes about lessons:** It is important that these activities are completed in order, as they build off of one another. While they are titled as “lessons,” 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 may arise.

*Because self-identification is confidential, you may not know who the Indigenous students in your classroom are. It is important to create an environment that is mindful of, and responsive to, student well-being when learning sensitive content, which includes respecting Indigenous students' right to opt out. Informing all students and families about the upcoming subject matter can support learners in the classroom. 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 First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team, or review 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 Social Studies). These lessons simply provide a framework and ensure that Indigenous perspectives are embedded when diving into both the science and social studies 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](#).

Although listed as one lesson, these activities are meant to have students connect with the land, and ideally, they would take place over a series of days in the same space.

Before engaging in these explorations, you may wish to develop some norms around outdoor exploration and learning.

The following is a place-based activity where students move from relevance to respect to responsibility to reciprocity. As you document student thinking during this series of explorations, pay close attention to the ideas and questions students come up with. This may prompt you to go in different directions, allowing students to develop deeper ideas in terms of connecting to Indigenous perspectives about the land.



### DAY ONE:

**Invite students to walk around an outdoor 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 "nature spot" 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 wish 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" and "non-natural (human-generated) sounds."
- **Invite** students to come together in a [Knowledge Building Circle \(KBC\)](#). In the circle, ask students to reflect and orally share their experience with others: What did they like about it? How did it make them feel? Is there anything they didn't like about it? (Document student thinking.)
- As a group, create a list of "natural sounds" and "non-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 or exploration, or provoke student thinking.



### DAY TWO:

**Invite students to walk around the outdoor space, giving them some free time to explore and play, connecting naturally to the space you have taken them to.**

- **Invite** students to return 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.
- **Invite** students back to 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 outdoor space, giving them some free time to explore and play, connecting naturally to the space you have taken them to.**

- **Invite** students to return to their nature spot. This time, have students bring sketchbooks or paper with clipboards and a writing utensil to the outdoor space.
- **Invite** students to focus on something in their nature spot and sketch it.
- **Invite** students back to a KBC to share what they drew and why they decided to focus on that particular scene or 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.**

- **Invite** students to return to their nature spot.  
This time, have students bring sketchbooks or paper with clipboards and a writing utensil to the outdoor space.
- **Invite** students to respond to the following prompts:
  - On the land, I am responsible for ...
  - I feel connected to the land when ...
  - How does the land show that it cares for me?
- **Invite** students back to a KBC to share their observations, ideas and wonderings.

**Reading Activity:** Read [\*Stand Like a Cedar\*](#) to discuss connecting senses to the land.

**Document all of this learning and display it in the classroom.**



## LESSON 2: CONSIDERING CONNECTIONS

Return back to the outdoor space with students.

- Ask them now to focus specifically on connections.
- As they move through the space, have them observe, sketch or take notes 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 what they observed, documenting their thinking.
- Read *Sila and the Land* by Shelby Angalik, A Roundpoint, L. Dupre: <https://outdoorlearningstore.com/product/sila-and-the-land/>
- **Reflect:** At the beginning of the story Sila asks her grandmother, “What is our culture’s relationship to the land”?
- **Respond:** What does Sila learn from each of the things she encounters on her journey?



## 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:
  - How do you think the land has changed over time?
  - Who do you think has lived on this land (please consider human and non-human kin)?
  - 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 guide them in this discussion. For instance, 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 Indigenous people in past tense. Indigenous People are living here NOW. Stories of resilience and resistance within the narrative are key.**

- Bring students back to the classroom.
- Building on the KBC, have students investigate this **“Coming Home” map**: <https://umaine.edu/canam/publications/coming-home-map/>
  - It is important to give students context around the “Coming Home” map.
  - Shift to exploring the language in the “Coming Home” map.
  - Doug Williams’ maps in the back of *This is Our Territory* would support this if you want to show territory that is Mississauga territory.

- From the following resources, see if you can determine together the Indigenous Peoples that have thrived on this land, and who your Treaty Partners are (e.g., Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation):  
<https://www.whose.land/en/>  
<https://native-land.ca/>  
<https://natural-resources.canada.ca/maps-tools-and-publications/maps/atlas-canada/10784>  
 - A free Treaty map can be ordered from <https://www.publications.gov.on.ca/301068>



## 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. This exploration can be expanded a great deal.**

- Use these [visual art pieces](#) by Indigenous artists as a provocation. (These are intended as suggestions. You may decide to find other pieces.)
- Have students **observe** these images carefully. Students can share thinking on sticky notes 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.
- In a circle, have students verbally **discuss** and share their thinking and feelings about the pieces of art they just engaged with.
- Once everyone has had an opportunity to share, extend the thinking by posing the questions below's:
  - What symbols do you notice?
  - How does the art and the symbolism in the art, show the deep connection and relationship some Indigenous peoples have with the land?
  - How might these art pieces teach us about the deep relationship, responsibility and stewardship, some Indigenous peoples have with the land"?



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

Building off of the previous exploration, have students investigate how early Indigenous communities lived in relationship to the land. *It is very important to recognize that Indigenous People continue to live and thrive in Canada today, however, you should discuss with the students the impact colonization has had and continues to have, on Indigenous Peoples living in Canada now. (including environmental stewardship, forcible removal from Traditional lands, Treaty relationships etc).*

- A key big idea to uncover here with students is that the land is intrinsic to Indigenous Peoples' 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 their perspective with the class.

- Here are some sources that could be used to guide the investigation:
  - [FNMIEO Website](#)
  - Lloyd S King Library/Mural Room
  - [Moccasin Identifier Grade 3 video](#)
  - [Indigenous Peoples Atlas](#)
  - **Picture Books:** [Shin-chi's Canoe](#), [When We were Alone](#), [Nibi's Water Song](#), [The Water Walker](#), [We Are Water Protectors](#), [Water warrior](#)
  - 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 Peoples are still the ones who fight for our land and waters. (For examples, you could look into modern day pipeline protests, Water Walkers (Autumn Peltier 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 to ground your learning. Consider creative ways to stencil with layering colours to add dimension and depth.
- Take students back to the outdoor space you explored / connected with as a class.
- Building off of what you have learned, ask students how they see the Indigenous perspectives represented in the space.  
 “Do you notice any representation of Indigenous voices/ ideas or knowledge systems on the land you are on?” (for example some spaces have community gardens which could be considered a form of reciprocity or environmental stewardship).
- Give space and opportunity for the students to discuss why they think it is important that people learn about Indigenous perspectives about the land? What do they think people should know about the First Nations who thrived on this land pre-contact?  
 Ask these questions:
  - Has your relationship with land changed after learning about Indigenous connection to land? If yes, how?
  - How can you help others understand the importance of environmental responsibility, reciprocity and stewardship?

**Perhaps you would like 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 the Moccasin Identifier.**

- Watch [this video](#) from Carolyn King, founder of the Moccasin Identifier, 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 connect to the land and show your understanding of the responsibility to care for it by stenciling a Moccasin Identifier outside.

### **Additional Resources:**

*Mashkiki Road*

Author: Elizabeth S. Barrett

Illustrator: Jonathan Thunder

Publisher: Minnesota Historical Society Press

<https://goodminds.com/products/mashkiki-road-the-seven-grandfather-teachings>