



SHARING THE WAY

An Introduction to the Aboriginal World

a backgrounder for all teachers

Working Together for Catholic Education

www.eoccc.org

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This manual has been created for the purpose of providing background information for teachers and students as they learn more about the Aboriginal way. It is general, research-based information with a bibliography following most sections and web sites cited throughout. At the time of publication all the web sites were active; however, the web is a tool that is constantly in a state of transition. This document is an initial step in addressing the vision expressed in the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework that “all students in Ontario will have knowledge and appreciation of contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis and Inuit traditions, cultures and perspectives.” (Building Bridges to Success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students p. 3). This resource is not meant to be all inclusive in content but rather to be a springboard for further study and research.

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A. THE FIRST NATIONS: THE FIRST PEOPLES

Although recent Canadian history has suggested early explorers ventured over the Bering Land-Bridge and entered into what would, approximately 10,000 years later, be known as Canada, the First Peoples' cultures share rich Creation stories which demonstrate their own understanding of having been here since time immemorial.

Since the beginning of time, the various nations of Aboriginal Peoples shared a profound agreement with the natural environment within which they thrived. They, from the earliest beginnings, had and still have - a profound respect for both plant and animal life which sustains all human beings. There is also a very close connection to the land and all the forces of nature which is indicative of a deep, spiritual sense of being: one that is cognizant of the Great Mystery of existence and aware of a Creator of all things.

With a multitude of diverse languages, customs, rituals and celebrations, the indigenous peoples of this land mastered the knowledge of natural medicines and how to live in social, political and environmental harmony. They did not rely on a written system of communication, but skillfully developed the tradition of an oral history as a means of record keeping. With that came the high moral code of ethics for Truth, Honour and Respect. They also developed an effective system of sign language in order to be able to communicate inter-nationally upon which the American Sign Language for the Deaf was based. Knowledge, traditions and beliefs are kept alive to this day through storytelling, music, song, visual art and ritual.

When European explorers and settlers began to arrive, the First Peoples received the foreigners as guests to host and respect. The indigenous peoples shared their profound knowledge of the skills of sustenance to apply to their often harsh but bountiful lands. The descendants of the explorers and settlers owe their very survival in this country to Canada's First Nations peoples.

Canada is now a nation made up of many distinct cultures, peoples and traditions, but the ancient peoples of this land, and their descendants, uphold a most significant presence upon which this country was founded. The unique cultures, histories and contributions of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples enrich the lives and society of all Canadians. It is the focus of this manual to help educators, students and administrators understand and respect the rich heritage and identities of the First Peoples.

B. GEOGRAPHY AND THE FIRST PEOPLES

On the pages that follow are two maps; one covering all of Canada and the other, Ontario. While every effort has been taken to represent the boundaries of the various First Nations bands accurately, it must be acknowledged that there is not one definite and truly accurate delineation of territories.

The various First Nations peoples either inhabited one region - if they were agriculturally based - or they ranged over large areas in pursuit of game - if they were hunters. Some bands did both, so they had firm settlements as well as larger territories where they roamed.

The only traditional territorial information provided is based on those recorded in the memory and storytelling tradition of each of the bands. In the broadest sense, they show where each group lived prior to the settlement of Canada by Europeans.

Many, historic and current land claims are uneasily resolved due to the conflicts arising in the opposing forms of record keeping. Many of the lands claimed by the various First Nations bands do not coincide with the records provided by either the provincial or federal governments.

When considering the territories of the First Peoples in any geographic area, it is important to realize there are many Nations, all with their own unique systems of belief, spirituality, customs, language and history. In current society, one could encounter students and families from any of the diverse groups living far from their traditional territories.

Notes concerning the following chart and maps:

The chart lists all the tribal or Band (see pg. A-9) groups located within the stated geographic boundaries with the view to relating them through their linguistic families.

The maps identify the main groupings of Aboriginal peoples by their area of inhabitation. The first map establishes all the main groups found in Canada, the second does so for Ontario.

NOTE:

Every effort has been made by the creator of these maps to represent these boundaries accurately; however the various sources consulted all vary as to the precise delineation of these boundaries, and the mean of all these has been used to establish the area boundaries in the maps that follow.

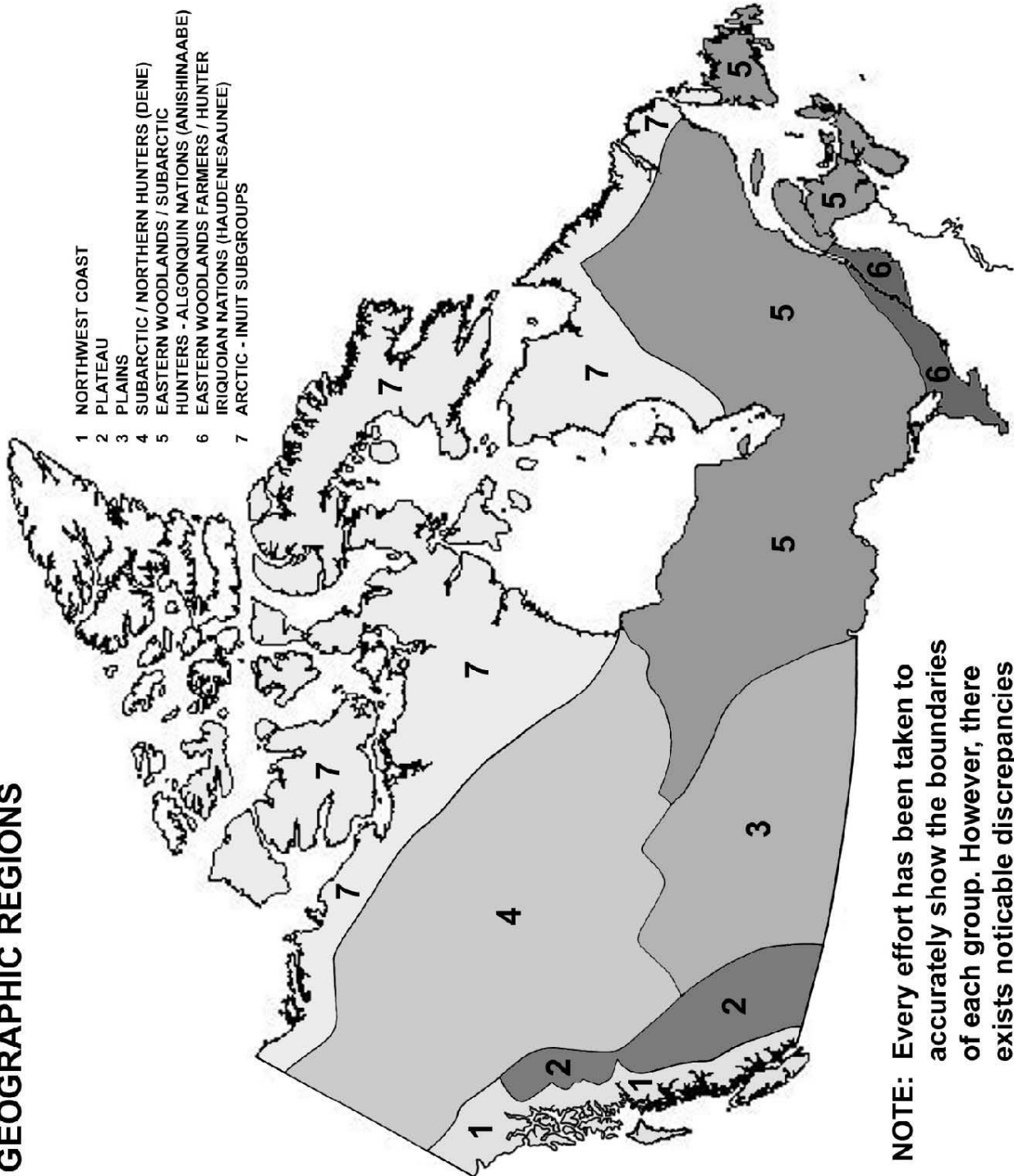
Aboriginal Peoples Cultural Areas across Canada: Broad Contact - 16th to 21st Century

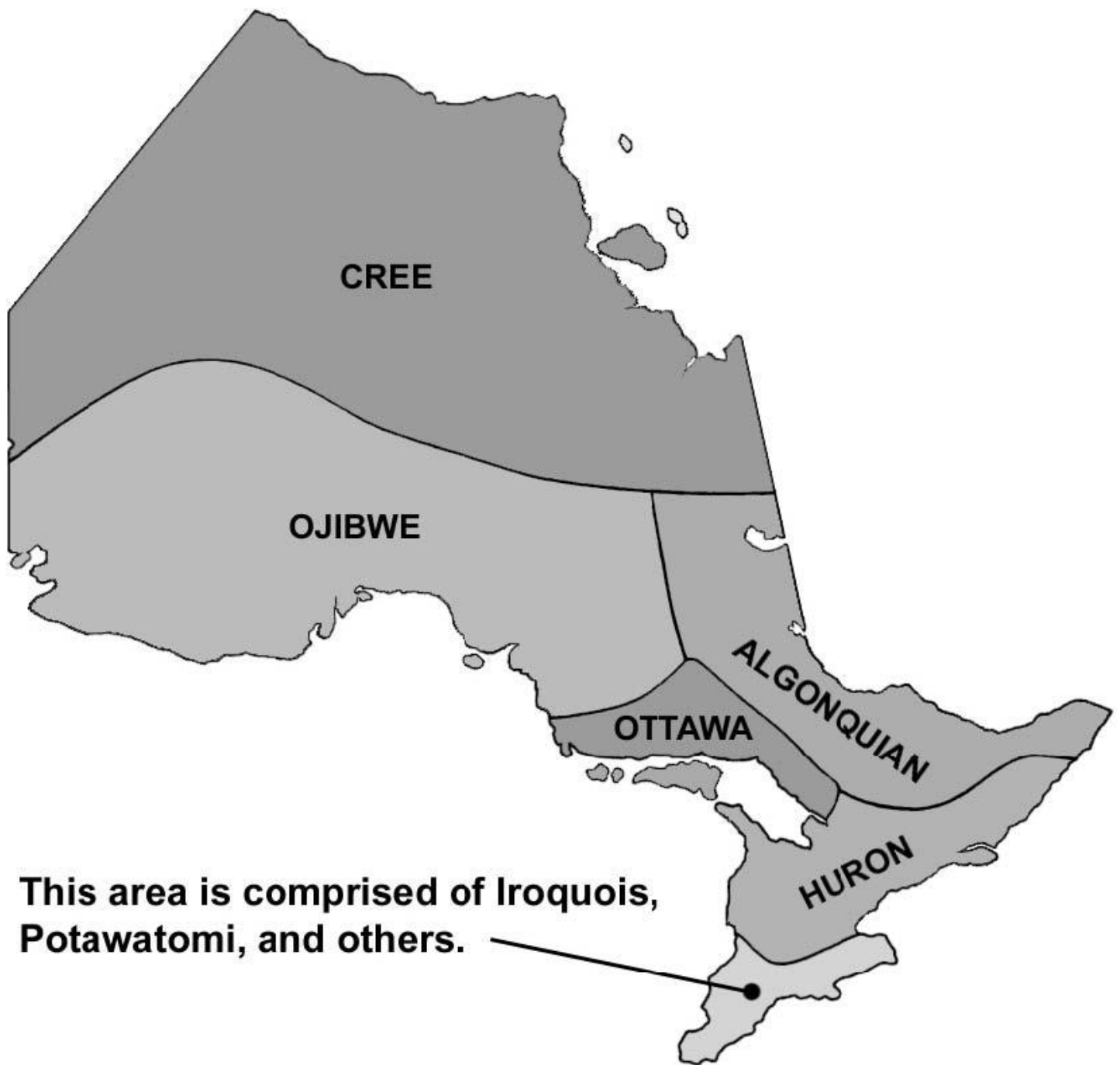
NOTE: Some of the names are words from Aboriginal languages and others are from English or French.
There has never been a standardized spelling of them and you might find the same name spelled differently in other sources...

Aboriginal Nations						
Northwest Coast	Plateau	Sub-Arctic / Northern Hunters (Dene)	Plains	Eastern Woodlands Hunters (Anishinabe)	Eastern Woodlands Farmers / Hunters (Haudenosaunee)	Inuit
Tlingit language family: - Tlingit Haida language family: - Haida Tsimshian language family: - Tsimshian - Gitksan - Nisga'a Salishan language family: - Bella Coola - Coast Salish Wakashan language family: - Haisla - Heiltsuk - Southern Kwakiutl - Nootka (Nuu-chah-nulth) - Sechelt - Bella Bella - Cowichan - Kwagiulth	Interior Salish language family: - Lake Shuswap - Okanagan Lillooet - Thompson Athapaskan (Dene) language family: - Chilcotin Nicola - Carrier - Tahltan - Tsetsaut Tagish Tlingit language family: - Inland Tlingit Kootenayan language family: - Kootenay / Kutenai - Lytton - Mount Curve - Williams Lake	Athapaskan language family: - Kutchin (Loucheux) - Hare - Mountain - Kaska - Slavey / Slave - Dogrib - Chipewyan - Beaver - Sekani - Yellowknife - Han - Tutchone - Old Crow - Dog Rib Rae Siouan language family: - Assiniboine (Stoney) - Dakota (Sioux) - Blackfoot - Thunderchild - Blood Algonquin language family: - Eskasoni - Lennox Island - Metepenagiag - Moose Factory - Mnjikaning (Ojibway) - Rama - Rainy River - [Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung] (Ojibway) - Mississauga First Nation (Ojibway)	Algonquin language family: - Blackfoot (Siksika) - Blood (Kainai) - Piegan (Pikuni) - Plains Cree - Gros Ventre - Plains Ojibway (Salteaux) Athapaskan language family: - Sarsee / Sarsi Siouan language family: - Assiniboine (Stoney) - Dakota (Sioux) - Blackfoot - Thunderchild - Blood Algonquin language family: - Eskasoni - Lennox Island - Metepenagiag - Moose Factory - Mnjikaning (Ojibway) - Rama - Rainy River - [Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung] (Ojibway) - Mississauga First Nation (Ojibway)	Algonkian language family: - Cree - Ojibway / Ojibwa / Chippewa - Algonkian - Potawatomi - Odawa / Ottawa - Nipissing - Mississauga - Delaware - Abenaki - Mi'kmaq / Micmac - Malecite / Maliseet - Naskapi (Innu) - Montagnais - Beothuk (lived in Newfoundland, now extinct) - Burnt Church - Big Cove Iroquois Confederacy of Five (Six) Nations - (Haudenosaunee): - Mohawk - Seneca - Oneida - Cayuga - Onondaga - Tuscarora (joined the Five Nations Confederacy around 1722, which then became the Six Nations-Confederacy) - Loretteville, Quebec (Huron) - Six Nations of the Grand River (Iroquois) - Mohawks of Quinte Bay (Tyendinaga) - Akwasasne	Iroquoian language family: - Huron Confederacy - Wendat (Ouendat / Wyandotte / Wyandot) Iroquois Confederacy - - Mohawk - Seneca - Oneida - Onondaga - Tuscarora - Cayuga Petun Confederacy - - Tobacco or-Tionontati	Inuit: - Nunavut - Pond Inlet (Mittimataik) - Pangnistung - Resolute Bay

Adapted from Aboriginal Voices, TDSB, 2006 and other sources

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL AREAS AND CANADA'S ECOLOGICAL / GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS





This area is comprised of Iroquois,
Potawatomi, and others.

Aboriginal Place Names

The name of Canada itself, and the names of some provinces and territories, comes from place names in Aboriginal languages.

Canada: This word is from Kanata, meaning "settlement" or "village" in the language of the Huron.

Saskatchewan: The province got its name from the Saskatchewan River which the Cree called Kisiskatchewanipi, meaning "swift-flowing river."

Manitoba: The likeliest source is the Cree maniot-wapow, "the strait of the spirit or manitobau." This name refers to the roaring sound produced by pebbles on a beach on Manitoba Island in Lake Manitoba. The Cree believed the noise sounded like a manito, a spirit, beating a drum. It has also been suggested that the name comes from the Assiniboine words mini and tobow, meaning "Lake of the Prairie."

Ontario: The Huron name, first applied to the lake, may be a corruption of onitariio, meaning "beautiful lake," or kanadario, which translates as "sparkling" or "beautiful" water.

Quebec: Aboriginal peoples first used the name kebek for the region around the city of Québec. It refers to the Algonquin word for "narrow passage" or "strait" to indicate the narrowing of the river at Cape Diamond.

Yukon: This name belonged originally to the river, and is from a Loucheux word, LoYu-kun-ah, meaning "great river."

Nunavut: The name of Canada's newest territory, which came into being on April 1, 1999, means "our land" in Inuktitut.

Many Canadian towns, cities, rivers and mountains also have names that come from Aboriginal sources. The following is a short list of some of Canada's larger towns and cities whose names originate with Aboriginal peoples.

Chilliwack (British Columbia) It is the name of the local tribe, ch.ihl-KWAY-uhk. This word is generally interpreted to mean "going back up." It refers to the people's return home after visiting the mouth of the Fraser River.

Coquitlam (British Columbia) This word is derived from the Salish tribal name Kawayquitlam. It can be translated as "small red salmon." The name refers to the sockeye salmon common to the area.

Kamloops (British Columbia) It is likely from the Shushwap word kahm-o-loops, which is usually translated as "the meeting of waters." The name refers to the junction of the North and South Thompson rivers at Kamloops.

Penticton (British Columbia) - The name comes from an Okanagan word meaning "the always place," in the sense of a permanent dwelling place.

Fort Chipewyan (Alberta) - The town was named for the Chipewyan people, and means "pointed skins," a Cree reference to the way the Chipewyans prepared beaver pelts.

Medicine Hat (Alberta) It is a translation of the Blackfoot word, saamis, meaning "headdress of a medicine man." According to one explanation, the word describes a fight between the Cree and Blackfoot when a Cree medicine man lost his plumed hat in the river.

Wetaskiwin (Alberta) Wetaskiwin is an adaptation of the Cree word wi-ta-ski-oo cha-ka-tin-ow, which can be translated as "place of peace" or "hill of peace."

Qu'Appelle (Saskatchewan) - The town name is from the river, known to the Cree as kab-tep-was. This means "the river that calls." The legend associated with the name tells of a Cree man paddling to his wedding, when he heard his name called out. He recognized the voice of his bride, who was still many days travel away. He answered, "Who calls?" and a spirit mimicked him: "Who calls?" He then hurried home to find that his bride had died, uttering his name with her last breath. French settlers in Saskatchewan perpetuated the legend by naming the river Qu'Appelle, meaning "who calls?"

Saskatoon (Saskatchewan) - The name comes from an edible red berry native to the area, which the Cree called mis-sask- guah-too-min.

Grand Rapids (Manitoba) It is a translation of the Cree word misepawistik, or "rushing rapids."

The Pas (Manitoba) The Pas originated with the Cree opa, meaning "a narrow place" or opaskweow, "narrows between high banks."

Winnipeg (Manitoba) - This name, from the Cree win-nipi, can be freely translated as "dirty water" or "murky water," to describe the lake and river.

Etobicoke (Ontario) It comes from the Ojibway word wah-do- be-kaung, which means "the place where the alders grow."

Kapuskasing (Ontario) Kapuskasing is a Cree word meaning "the place where the river bends".

Mississauga (Ontario) Mississauga is named after the Mississauga people who live in the area, and describes the mouth of a river. Michi or missi means "many," and saki, "outlet" a river having several outlets.

Oshawa (Ontario) It is a Seneca word that means "crossing of a stream" or "carrying place," describing an old portage in the area.

Ottawa (Ontario) - The word comes from the Algonquin term adawe, "to trade." This was the name given to the people who controlled the trade of the river.

Chibougamau (Quebec) It is a Cree word that means "where the water is shut in," describing a narrow outlet of the lake.

Chicoutimi (Quebec) - This name of Montagnais origin comes from the word shkoutimeou, meaning "the end of the deep water."

Gaspé (Quebec) Gaspé is a name believed to come from the Mi'kmaq word for "end" or "extremity," referring to the northern limits of their territory.

Listiguj (Quebec) This name comes from the Mi'kmaq lustagooch, likely meaning "river with five branches."

Rimouski (Quebec) It is a word of Mi'kmaq or Maliseet origin, which has been translated as "land of moose" or "retreat of dogs," perhaps referring to its fine hunting grounds.

Oromocto (New Brunswick) - Oromocto is derived from the Maliseet word welamooktook, meaning "good river."

Baddeck (Nova Scotia) This word is a possible version of the Mi'kmaq petekook, meaning "the place that lies on the backward turn." The word refers to Mi'kmaq travel on the river from Bras "Or Lake.

Musquodobit (Nova Scotia) - It comes from the Mi'kmaq mooskudoboogwek, which can be translated as "rolling out in foam" or "suddenly widening out after a narrow entrance at its mouth."

Shubenacadie (Nova Scotia) - Shubenacadie is a name of Mi'kmaq origin that comes from the word segubunakadik, meaning "the place where groundnuts (Indian potatoes) grow."

Tuktoyaktuk (Northwest Territories) This word is an Inuit name that can be translated tuktu, "caribou," yaktuk, "looks like," or "reindeer that looks like caribou."

Pangnirtung (Northwest Territories) It is an adaptation of the Inuktitut word said to mean "place of the bull caribou."

Inuvik (Northwest Territories) - Inuvik comes from the Inuktitut word meaning "the place of man."

Place Names Reveal Aboriginal Peoples' Contributions

Place names are never just meaningless sounds; rather, they embody stories about the places to which they are attached. They give us valuable insights into history and provide clues about the country's cultural and social development. A study of place names will always reveal the astounding diversity and depth of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples' contributions to contemporary Canada.

Aboriginal Place Names: <http://www.aincinac.gc.ca/ai/mr/is/info106eng.asp>

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A. GENERAL OVERVIEW

While there is a variety of belief systems among the First Nations peoples, many common values are shared: primarily, the linking of the spiritual world to the physical. Recurring themes appear in the prayers, customs, philosophies, sacred objects and histories of the various Nations of the First Peoples.

Historically, each band was self-governed and the well-being of the entire band was of great importance for the survival of the whole. All decisions affecting the whole were decided by the traditional band council. Personal and communal wealth was measured by physical health, solid relationships, spiritual harmony, a balanced family life, and the wisdom of their elders.

The various First Nations peoples tended to migrate over time as conditions of weather and environment changed. With the imposed Reserve system, many were re-located to areas that are not their traditional homelands. It is therefore important to distinguish between the current locations of tribal lands from the historical ones.

Special Note

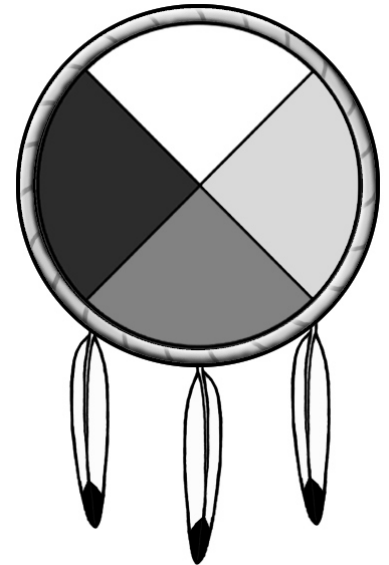
It is vital for all educators to be aware that many aspects or items of First Nations culture are considered sacred. Before embarking on any Aboriginal themed courses of study or activity, be sure the use of cultural symbols, items, stories, etc., will not demean or insult, in any way, the First Nations, Métis or Inuit student. Central to the traditional mindset is a strong code of respect.

B. THE FIRST NATIONS WORLD VIEW

The First Nations peoples see the world with a unique perspective. They see themselves as part of - not masters of - the natural world around them. The forces and mysteries of nature and the universe hold special spiritual power and significance. This is reflected in all aspects of culture, ceremonies, art, music and traditions.

The Circle and the Medicine Wheel Teachings

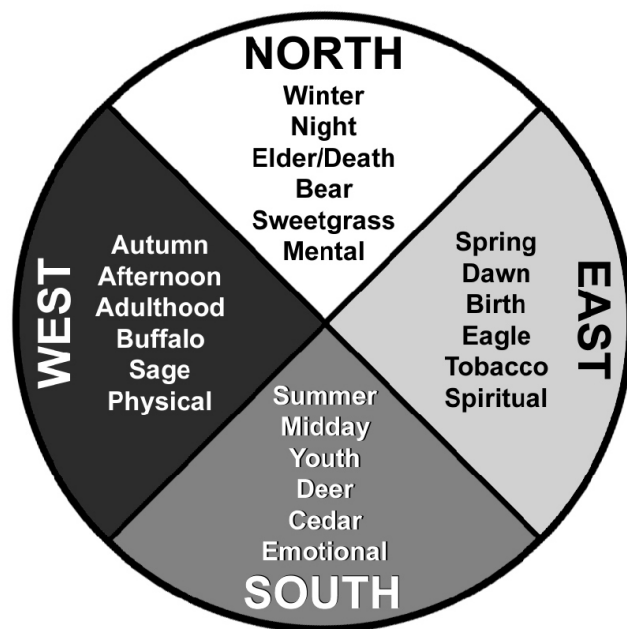
Indigenous Peoples, since millennium, have observed the cyclical nature of Life. These profound perceptions are visualized in the traditional teaching tool known as the Medicine Wheel. A circle, divided into four equal quadrants of specific colour, with each section or direction - representative of a



The charm above is filled with the colours of the four cardinal directions and each represents a colour of the human being.

Yellow is East, red is south, black is West and white is North

multitude of lessons or Teachings. For example, the four cardinal directions: North, East, South and West; the four natural elements: Air, Fire, Earth and Water; the four major races of humankind: White, Yellow, Red and Black; and the four aspects of the human being: Spiritual, Intellectual, Emotional and Physical. Life is also seen as a great circular path: the seasons, the years, Earth's circling of the sun, etc. The human life cycle is such that children are born, grow up, nurtured by their parents and elders and, in turn, become parents and elders themselves to raise and influence subsequent generations.



The designated colours of the Medicine Wheel are always White, Yellow, Red and Black, which symbolize the many teachings mentioned above, as well as, but not limited to, the four sacred medicines, four sacred animals, the four seasons and the four stages of life. There is a profundity of knowledge and wisdom represented in this traditional teaching tool, many layers thick.

As is evident, the cycles of life and the universe fit within the Great Circle, which serves as a basis for the perceived cosmology and spirituality of the First Nations peoples. And, like a circle - which has no beginning or end - nor do these great cycles that exist within the Great Mystery of the universal & natural worlds.



Photo of the Bighorn Medicine Wheel; U.S. Forest Service

All these cycles fit naturally into the perceptions of Aboriginal Peoples and are meant to exist in a balanced state. This is the traditional belief system, the model for how to live, in other words, the medicine for personal and communal health as well as for ensuring the continuation of life itself.

The Eagle

Among many First Nations Peoples, the eagle is considered the most sacred of beings for it has been observed as the creature who can fly the highest, therefore the closest, to the Creator. It symbolically carries the messages or prayers of the people up to the Creator towards the sky. Ofttimes, an Aboriginal person may affiliate oneself with this majestic winged-one, especially in times when one is praying for the good of others.



For many Aboriginal cultures, the eagle is a symbol of the honour and respect bestowed upon others. It may also symbolize the teaching of grace and the concentrated effort required to be able to soar i.e. achieve one's goals.

Traditional Medicine

Medicine is not an element restricted to the use of curing a physical ailment. It is a substance that may also be applied to the spiritual and emotional well-being of the individual. The essential focus of the Aboriginal belief system is the interaction between supernatural and natural elements. It is the connection of the human with the divine. As the Medicine Wheel demonstrates, the spiritual essence of the human being deserves equal attention to the more obvious components of the human being. Striving for and maintaining a balance between the Creator's teachings and the human element is symbolic of true medicine.

Sacred Plants: Four Original Gifts from the Creator

The Creator gave four sacred plants to the First Nations peoples. All four of these plants are used as spiritual medicine and are highly revered. Used personally or in communal ceremony, the four sacred medicines are: Tobacco, Sage, Cedar and Sweet Grass. The medicines are used to open the barriers between the spiritual world and the earth plane. They are burned individually or in combination when prayers are offered; however, a pinch of dried tobacco is traditionally “offered” by placing it down onto the Earth floor as a gift of exchange to acknowledge an appreciation for having taken something from the Earth necessary for survival. Tobacco is held in the palm of one's hand when praying and then left either in a special place, or burned in a ceremonial fire. Again, reverence and respect for creation is central to the Aboriginal belief system and tradition.

Sage is referred to as a “woman's medicine”. In many women's circles, sage is the only plant used in the smudge ceremony. It is used to purify the mind, body and spirit.

Cedar is used as a symbol of protection. It may be laid out in a protective circle around a group gathered in meeting or ceremony. Boughs of cedar are sometimes hung on the doors of one's home. Cedar tea is a medicinal beverage often offered as a tonic to participants in ceremony.

Sweetgrass teaches by its example, namely, it bends without breaking. Sweetgrass symbolizes the hair of Mother Earth. When braided, the three blades of sweetgrass represent the unification of mind, body, and spirit. In a smudge ceremony the use of sweetgrass is considered to invoke positive energy.



*Photo of Sweetgrass:
Canadian Museum of
Civilization.*

Seven Gifts of the Grandfathers of the Anishinabek

These gifts or teachings are the founding principles of a good and healthy life:

- Respect
- Love/Kindness
- Truth
- Bravery/Courage
- Honesty
- Humility
- Wisdom/Understanding

These gifts are central to the beliefs and behaviours of the Anishinabek First Nations. These values are not mere civility; they are a very real code of life and conduct. Other nations across the country have differing codes of conduct, for example, the Haudenosaunee Laws of the Great Peace call for: Righteousness (Justice), Peace (Good Mind) and Power (Strength & Unity). The guiding principles of the Inuit are: respect for individuals; concern for the collective well-being and the willingness to share. Ultimately, the teachings share the same moral and ethical foundation.

Smudging

Every Aboriginal society has rituals of purification that prepare a person for communing with the Spirit World, from praying to the Creator to taking part in celebrations with the community or participating in ceremony & ritual.

The most common method of smudging involves the burning of the sacred plants in a large shell such as abalone (because it can withstand the heat stresses in fire). The shell brings into representation the last of the four elements: water. The match used to light the smudge represents fire, as does the actual burning. The sacred plants and their ashes represent the Earth, and the smoke (an exact analog to incense in the Judeo-Christian tradition) represents the air. Once lit, a feather is commonly used to fan the embers and create the actual smoldering of the smudge. The rising smoke symbolizes the prayers of the person smudging or being smudged are being brought to the Creator. It is a traditional practice to offer the smoke to The Four Directions, starting with either north or east, and to say a prayer at each of them.

Smudging is usually done when spirits are low, after being around someone who is sick or depressed, during meditation, in prayer or at the opening of a ceremony or meeting.

Smudging is a sacred act; therefore, the ashes remaining must be treated with reverence. These are returned to the Earth in a respectful manner or placed in a sacred fire. In some Aboriginal cultures

these ashes are gathered throughout the year and buried at a special ceremony.

[Http://www.nald.ca/clr/chi_kiken/page30.htm#teach](http://www.nald.ca/clr/chi_kiken/page30.htm#teach)

The Four Sacred Plants and Smudging:

<http://www.aboriginal-culture.com/native-American-incenses-smudging.htm>

The Sweat Lodge

There exists a wide variation in the actual use, and methods, of conducting a Sweat Lodge ceremony. It is an important aspect in the lives of many Aboriginal people. The actual Sweat Lodge structure follows specific protocol in its construction. There are several types of sweat ceremonies including those specifically led for women, men or children. Purification, healing or cleansing of the body, mind and spirit are the benefits derived from the ceremony. There are other types of Sweat Lodge ceremonies which can be for the unifying benefit of the community including: Clan, Fasting, Ceremonial, or Name Quest sweats. An Elder or Medicine Person may determine for which purpose a specific ceremony is conducted. The ceremony responds to what the participant needs.

The men and women who conduct Sweat Lodge ceremonies have trained, for many years, in the teachings and medicine of their band. They have undergone many ceremonies themselves to learn and to search for the gifts they need to be able to conduct these ceremonies themselves. They know the protocol and history of their lodge.

The Sweat Lodge is a dome-shaped structure constructed with a framework of a specific number of birch or willow saplings. The

Sweat Lodge is a very sacred place and often referred to as the womb of Mother Earth. Traditionally, the frame was covered with hides of moose, buffalo, or deer. Nowadays tarpaulins and blankets may be used instead of, or as well as, hides. The coverings keep the light out and the heat in. Once the Sweat Lodge is finished, a ceremony is held before it is used for the first time.

The placement of the entranceway depends on the teachings and medicine of the band that constructs it. Some bands make the door in the east, others in the south. It depends on the instructions given to the conductor which determine the orientation of the door. Before one enters the lodge, offerings are made at an exterior altar or sacred fire. Sacred tobacco is used as a traditional offering.

Inside the Sweat Lodge, participants sit in a circle around a central fire pit. The number of people attending the ceremony varies depending on the reason for the sweat. A fire-keeper may be present to tend a sacred fire burning outside the lodge. At the request of the conductor, the fire-keeper will bring

heated rocks used to the lodge door. They are then placed in the pit at the centre of the lodge by the conductor's helper. Even though the fire-keeper is not inside the Sweat Lodge, he is very much a part of this ceremony and may receive teachings, cleansing and healing as well. In some traditions, the number of rocks is specified for each type of sweat.

When one enters the Sweat Lodge, one is seeking communion with the Creator, spirit helpers or guides. Songs and prayers are offered during the ceremony. Sometimes a pipe and other traditional items are used. Each person has a chance to speak or pray within the lodge.

“When you come out of the Sweat Lodge your spirit feels new and alive. You can feel the healing energies and you are more aware of all Creation and the beauty that is there.”

Cree & Ojibwe description of the Sweat Lodge ceremony.

The Sweat Lodge: [Http://www.aboriginal-culture.com/sweatlodge-ceremony.htm](http://www.aboriginal-culture.com/sweatlodge-ceremony.htm)

<http://www.aboriginal-culture.com/native-American-incenses-smudging.htm>

C. TRADITIONS AND CELEBRATIONS

There are two kinds of feasts in the Anishinabek and other First Nations peoples' traditions: traditional and contemporary.

Traditional Feasts

Traditional feasts have very strict ceremonies and procedures and take place during, for example, the Midewiwin (Ojibwe Medicine Lodge) ceremonies which intend to thank all of creation for Life. These feasts are held during the spring, summer, fall, and mid-winter. The feasts are held every day for four days at the beginning of each of the aforementioned seasons to celebrate the season's arrival.

There is also a traditional feast called the Midewiwin Spirit Journey which is held whenever a member of the Three Fires Medicine Lodge passes away.

There are feasts held to honour sacred items such as drums, eagle feathers, eagle staffs, and pipes. Whatever the reason is for the traditional feast, the structure is the same in most regards.

An Elder or traditional teacher is given tobacco as a gift and out of respect, and is asked to come and say the prayers for the people. The four sacred medicines are present and a smudging is conducted.

Sacred foods are also present and these are also smudged and celebrated in the ceremony before the celebrants begin to feast. Four of the most sacred foods considered are: strawberries, corn, wild rice and venison. In each of these traditional ceremonies, men and women have specific roles to honour. These roles are based on the traditional stories and beliefs of the ancestors. For example, men are traditionally responsible for keeping the fire and smudging and women are traditionally responsible for saying the prayer for the food and the water. The Elder begins the feast by explaining the purpose of the feast to all gathered there. A Spirit Plate is given a place of honour at the feast to commemorate the ancestors.

Contemporary Feasts

Contemporary feasts have been adapted to today's culture and influences. The biggest difference is that substitution is allowed as sacred food items; for example, one may use beef, chicken, or pork instead of venison. Other types of berries can be substituted for strawberries if they are not in season or available. Traditionally prepared corn can be replaced by cornbread. Wild rice can be replaced by white, brown or basmati rice. In these modern feasts, the Spirit Plate is often the only thing that is smudged. The main, contemporary feasts readily show the reverence for life, spirituality, and creation. Both the ancestors and future generations are honored.

Some of the main feasts are held at the time of the Summer and Winter Solstices, the Maple Syrup Season, for Receiving a Name or at the time of marriage or harvest. Each of these celebrations shows reverence for all aspects of life. The gifts of the Creator and Mother Earth upon which we are fed, clothed and raised. It is central to the beliefs of the First Nations peoples that one must give thanks for everything that one has and receives from Creator. The link with the ancestors is also the continuing gift of the Creator, and death does not sever the bonds of family and friends. It is a unique and marvelous perspective of life, one of thanks and praise which walks in harmony with, not over, nature.

D. THE POWWOW

Important Note:

Never refer to the dress of the dancers, Elders, or any others at a Powwow as "costumes". Everything to do with these vestments has a spiritual significance to the Aboriginal Peoples; therefore, the proper term is "regalia". Do not touch the regalia without first obtaining permission from the person adorned.

[Http://www.nald.ca/cir/chi_kikeb/page31.htm](http://www.nald.ca/cir/chi_kikeb/page31.htm)

It is suggested the name "powwow" comes from the Algonquin word "pau wau", meaning "he dreams".

Up to the late 1800s and into the 1900s, the settlers and governments perceived the powwow, as well as other traditional ceremonies, as a threat. Misinterpreting the powwow as a war dance as a plan to rebel against the colonizers, steps were swiftly taken to officially prohibit powwows from being held.

In actuality, the powwow is a gathering of First Nations tribes for celebration, unity, cultural renewal and bonding. A contemporary powwow offers competitions in dance and drumming with prizes and great honour for the winners. A powwow is one of the most impressive ceremonial and festive functions that one is invited to observe and take part in. The opportunity to experience the culture, heritage and beliefs of the various First Nations bands is open to all cultures. Some powwows attract literally thousands of attendees, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

Dancing, of which there are many types and styles, is the main activity of importance held at the powwow. The varying dances share great beauty and significance. The regalia worn by the dancers reflect the culture and beliefs of the Peoples, and their band and/or clan heraldry is usually reflect the culture and beliefs of the Peoples, and their band and/or clan heraldry is usually beautifully incorporated into the design of the regalia. The dances are ceremonial and carry the traditions of the ancestors; great care is exhibited by all to execute every step according to the prescribed formula for a particular dance. The competitions between dancers of each tribe or band are intense and great honour and respect is earned by the winners of the competitions. Traditional powwow dancing is for the love of the ceremony for which no competition is entered into.

[Http://epe.lacbac.gc.ca/100/205/301/ic/cdc/clan/index.html](http://epe.lacbac.gc.ca/100/205/301/ic/cdc/clan/index.html)

Powwow Set-up

Powwows, depending on the time of year, usually take place in large, open fields with a large circular area cleared for the dancing and ceremonies; this area is often referred to as the “arena”. In the centre of the arena, is a circular cedar arbour where a large, sacred drum and drummers are situated. Every participant enters the arena from the east which is the only opening into the dance area. All the ritual involved at a powwow has much significance, most often spiritual in nature.

Sacred Items Essential at Powwows

The Sacred Fire

Outside the central dance field is a special place reserved for the sacred fire, usually in the direction of the east and lit at sunrise of the first day of the celebration. The traditional role of the men makes them responsible for the care and maintenance of the sacred fire throughout the powwow. The main fire-keeper is one who is knowledgeable in the traditions and teachings of his people. He is asked to tend the fire for the entire powwow and traditionally thanked with a gift of tobacco. It is the responsibility of the fire-keeper to ensure the fire stays lit as well as ensures that all visitors to the

sacred fire follow appropriate protocols. For example, only sacred medicines such as tobacco and cedar are placed in the fire. One may offer prayers to the sacred fire and then walk around the fire in a direction determined by the Nation's cultural protocol.

The Sacred Drum

The sacred drum is made of the materials given by the earth, Mother Earth, and represents the heartbeat of the Earth which connects all Peoples. There can be several of these large drums located in the central arbour and are beat by several, male drummers seated around them.

The Eagle Staff

This is a very important symbol for Aboriginal Peoples. As the eagle flies highest in the skies, it represents a messenger who takes the prayers of the people up to the Creator. This staff is to honour and thank the majestic eagle for delivering all prayers. The eagle represents strength, beauty and vision. This staff is carried into the powwow grounds by an important member of the assembly. An Elder, a veteran, or a traditional dancer will have the honour of carrying the staff on behalf of the people.

Sequence of Events at the Powwow

The Grand Entry

The staff carrier, flag carrier, war veterans, Elders, head dancers, and all other traditional dancers enter the dance arena through the eastern doorway; this is referred to as the Grand Entry. An arena director will have previously arranged all dancers to enter in a certain order. All spectators are expected to rise and remove their hats during the Grand Entry; it is inappropriate to take any photographs or any type of filming at this time.



Invocation

After the Grand Entry, when all participants have taken their places in the circle, a designated Elder says a special prayer to officially begin the powwow celebration.

Songs

The singing (and drumming) of traditional songs is central to the powwow as it is to these songs the dancers will dance. Utmost respect is given to the singers and drummers; they should not be interrupted by talk or other distractions during their performance.

Flag Song

These songs honour the flags that are brought into the procession at Grand Entry. The flags represent countries, nations, communities, and various organizations. These flags are most often carried into the powwow by veterans and warriors. The songs, therefore, honour these veterans and warriors for their courage and sacrifice in defending their country, Aboriginal nation or community. No dancing takes place during these songs and afterwards a prayer is usually said.



Flag Song and Veteran's Song

Photos: Michael Cummings.

Veterans Song

This song is sung to honour and remember all those who have fallen in battle. It is similar in intent to the Remembrance Day ceremonies held on November 11th each year.

Honour Songs

In keeping with the Veterans Song, these songs honour an individual or a group for some special deed or accomplishment and/or contribution to their community. During these songs all those present, even spectators, rise and remove their hats. The person or group being honoured during the song usually dances around the circle, followed by their family. After this has been done, the honoured person (with his/her family), or group stops at the eastern doorway and the entire community comes over to offer greetings and congratulations. Then, all present join in behind the family or group and dance around the perimeter of the circle until the Honour Songs are finished.

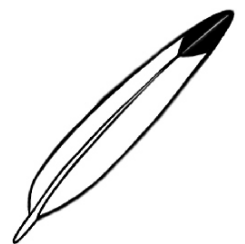


Intertribal Songs

These songs are played for the benefit of all Nations. Everyone, from the various Nations present, is invited to join in the dancing to symbolize the unification of the one great Nation of humankind. This is one of the main reasons for a powwow, to bring all tribes, bands and nations together, as the Creator intended. During the powwow, many intertribal songs are sung.

Eagle Feather

If and when an eagle feather drops from the regalia of a dancer during the powwow it is respectfully retrieved by a warrior as it represents one who has fallen in battle. This ritual is beautifully represented in dance and is another example of the profound spirituality of First Nations protocol.



Types of Dances

Dancing is as central to the traditions of the Aboriginal peoples as is singing and drumming. The dances are a way of giving thanks to the Creator, celebrating all the rhythms of life, family and community and honoring both happy and sad times. Each dance has special meaning and is intrinsically tied in with what is being celebrated or honored. The items worn or carried, as well as the design and symbols of the regalia, pay respect to the tribe and its relationship to the purpose of the dance.

Women's Traditional Dances

These dances celebrate and represent the connection that all women have with Mother Earth and the giving of life through the process of birth. The traditional regalia women wear consist of full length dresses, usually made from deer hide, sometimes mixed with cloth elements as well. These dresses have long fringes and are usually decorated with bead work, shells, and/or ribbons. The women often wear folded shawls over their arm during the dance. They may also wear beaded hairpieces, earrings, chokers and/or full bone breastplates.



The dancers move in a slow, stately manner, slightly bending their knees as they walk. They often carry fans or small bags during the dance. The fringes on their garments move rhythmically as they dance and these represent the rhythm of life, the movement of the grasses in the breeze, and the waves upon the waters. During the honour beats of the song, the women raise their fans and give thanks to the Creator and Mother Earth for the gift of life.

Men's Traditional Dances

There is a slightly different focus to many of the dances of the men. The particular movements of the dances express stories of battles, hunting, courting, or other life experiences. The dancers often show the movements of birds or animals.

The traditional regalia of the men often consist of bustles of many eagle feathers which are worn in the back over their hips. They wear headdresses made from an animal skin, head, or hair. The regalia vary from Nation to Nation. The dancers may wear bone breastplates and carry shields, staffs or eagle feather fans. Their faces may be painted with different colours and design.



Men's Traditional Dance and Women's Jingle Dance: Photos: Michael Cummings

Depending on the type of dance being performed, actions and movements will vary. If a dance commemorates a battle, there is usually a motion that portrays the throwing of a spear, or raising of the shield. Dances connected with hunting will feature the actions and motions of particular animals as

well as the stalking motions employed by the hunter in tracking his game.

Women's Jingle Dance

This is a dance of healing; therefore, the dancers performing it are considered healers. In many traditions, women are natural healers so many enjoy performing this dance. The regalia consist of knee-length dresses made of cloth, and the dress has rows of jingles sewn onto the fabric. These jingles were traditionally made of shell but, since the beginning of the 20th century, they are commonly made of metal. The women also wear beaded moccasins with matching leggings and belts. They wear bandanas around their necks and may carry feather fans, beaded bags or eagle feathers. The dancers perform a hopping step in a zigzag pattern in time with the drumbeat. This motion makes the jingles sound; their steps stop precisely when the drumbeat stops.

Men's Grass Dance

The Grass Dance Warrior Society of the northern plains nations originated this dance. They had the responsibility of the first dance at the site to prepare the grounds for the powwow by flattening the grass to ready the area for the rest of the dancers.

The regalia are made of cloth decorated with fringing around the waist that was originally made of grasses. Today the regalia are usually trimmed with a coloured, decorated fringe or yarn. Further decorative embellishments consist of bead work or sequins.

This dance is especially notable for its intricate and precise footwork. Each step must be in time with the drum beat and requires much stamina and flexibility. Each dancer must stop with both feet on the ground in time with the final beat of the drum. Their motions are designed to move the long fringes on their regalia in imitation of the long grasses of the plains swaying in the wind.

Women's Fancy Shawl Dances

This is a recent addition to the dances performed at powwows. It originated with the western nations. The regalia consist of a skirt that ends mid-calf. A blouse is worn along with beaded moccasins and matching leggings. The women wear beaded hairpieces, a yoke and shawl that drape over the shoulders. All of the regalia are made of colourful cloth adorned with ribbons, and very often with bead work or sequins.

The movements of this dance resemble the movements of the butterfly and the intricate and energetic steps require great stamina and endurance. Most notably, the footwork consists of spinning, high-stepping motions.

Men's Fancy Dance

Sources indicate this dance originated in Oklahoma in the early 1900s. The dance is recognized as a war dance because the vigorous movements help physically prepare warriors for the demands of battle, much like calisthenics or a workout does for contemporary soldiers.

The regalia consist of two feather bustles, one behind the shoulders and the other behind the hips. The regalia are often very colourful, decorated with beadwork, sequins, ribbons and fabric. Quite often, the warriors wear a beaded headband and/or hair roach and often carry a small staff.

The movements in this dance consist of high-stepping spinning movements. This requires very high levels of stamina, endurance and agility.

<http://www.nald.ca/clr/chiki ken/page31.htm>



Warrior Dancing:
Photo:
Michael Cummings.

The powwow is indeed a magnificent and special opportunity to participate in the rich and diverse cultures of the First Nations. The reverence and symbolism imbued in each dance and virtually every action make for a wonderful and rewarding experience for all visitors and participants.

The Giveaway Ceremony

A central belief system of all Aboriginal Peoples involves gratitude and giving thanks, not only to the Creator for all that has been provided for humankind's sustenance, but to, and for, each other. So it is with the Giveaway Ceremony.

This gift giving ceremony takes place when an individual or group wants to show gratitude for their blessings or good fortune.

The giving of gifts, or personal wealth and abundance, is indicative of the communal mindset of the culture and provides an opportunity to share or distribute good fortune with the community.

These ceremonies often take place at the end of a powwow in order to thank those who participated, including the organizers of the celebration. Very often, new dancers will hold a giveaway ceremony in gratitude for being given the privilege of dancing in the powwow.

<http://epe.lacbac.gc.ca/100/205/301/ic/cdc/clan/index.html>

E. ANCIENT ASTRONOMY: MEDICINE WHEELS, the GEARS of TIME

Ancient Peoples observed the celestial bodies i.e. the sun, moon, stars etc. and the movements across the heavens, season after season. While many in the modern world may know about the Ancient

Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks, and more recently about the Maya and their incredible astronomy, very few know about the accomplishments of the Aboriginal Peoples of North America.

The Peoples of the Great Plains created enormous ring structures of stones which mystified settlers of the Americas for quite a long time as they could not deduce any meaning for them. It wasn't until 1975 that archaeo-astronomers gave legitimate recognition to the astronomical instrumentation of the Bighorn Medicine Wheel in Wyoming and the Moose Mountain Wheel in Saskatchewan.

Often referred to as Medicine Wheels, the circular structures, carefully designed thousands of years ago with a combination of stones, boulders and pebbles, indicate the First Peoples' depth of observation and awareness of celestial bodies connecting with elements of the Earth. The vast majority of these stone cairn alignments were centered on the mid-summer or mid-winter rising and/or setting of the sun or the moon. For example, the alignment of an outer cairn through a central larger one points directly to the position of either the rising or setting of the sun, the moon or a particular star at a specific time of the year. Stars were used to herald the arrival of a solstice, specifically spring or autumn. These key celestial events correspond with the equinoxes and the change of seasons. Whether these structures were designed as calendars, observatories or for ceremonial purposes, there is no doubt these enigmatic, awe-inspiring “medicine wheels” provoke a deep sense of spiritual connection on many levels.



Anishinaabe Drum:

Photo: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

For more information about the ancient astrological calendars, monuments, and wheels...

F. PETROGLYPHS: STORIES IN STONE

Aboriginal Peoples left ancient designs on rocks at and around several settlement areas they held, many around the large lakes in what is now called Ontario, or along other waterways well-travelled by their people.

Petroglyph Provincial Park

Located in southern Ontario, 55 kilometers northeast of Peterborough, this park is described as one of Canada's archaeological and cultural treasures. The park contains a large area comprised of rocks of the Canadian Shield, and encompasses deciduous and boreal forests, two small lakes, marshes, and a myriad of hiking trails and picnic areas for visiting tourists. While the territory is quite beautiful, it is the historic petroglyphs that are most impressive.

The word “petroglyph” comes from two words; “petrus, petra”, etc. which is Latin for “rock”, and “glyph” meaning “carving”. These petroglyphs were carved into a large, roughly rectangular area of gently sloping marble measuring about 60 metres by 35 metres. Upon this surface may be found approximately 900 carvings of symbolic shapes and figures, including humans, animals and reptiles, and other images that cannot be readily identified. These enigmatic figures, carved into the stone, were most likely designed by Algonquian-speaking peoples somewhere between 600 to 1100 years ago. It is the largest known single concentration of Aboriginal rock-art in all of Canada.

The Algonquian Peoples who lived - and still live - in the region consider this area sacred. The ancestors of the Algonquian Peoples carved these figures long ago and the carvings are visible, physical evidence of their lives and their teachings. To see these carvings is to automatically remember the ancestors. This is a sacred place requiring the greatest respect. These areas must be protected and treasured.

The Anishinabek call these petroglyphs “Kinoomaagewaapkong”, meaning “The rocks that teach.” They believe the images of humans, snakes, turtles, and other figures and symbols are teachings of great significance and are very important for that reason. There are messages here for all nations and can only be learned by direct contact with the petroglyphs in their sacred space. The Elders of the Curve Lake First Nation, who still live near the park, remember stories about these Teaching Rocks, but the petroglyphs themselves were not identified to the public until 1954. Their full meaning remains a mystery.

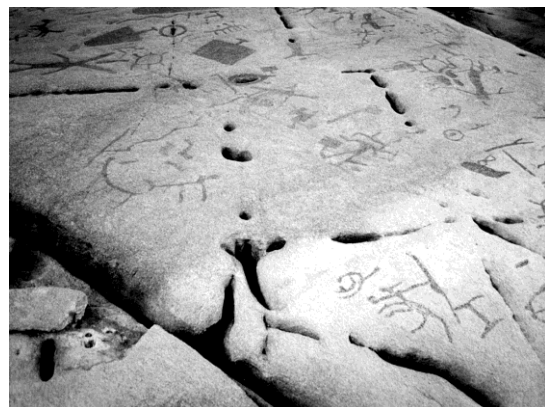


A special glass building was constructed to cover the exposed outcropping and its precious petroglyphs so they would be better protected from acid rain, frost, algae, and other destructive and eroding forces of nature and humankind. This is to preserve the rock carvings for many generations to come.



*Petroglyph Provincial
Park Structure:*

Photo: Serge Lemaître



*Petroglyphs in
Petroglyph
Provincial Park*

Photo: Karen Milligan.

Serpent Mounds Park

Thousands of years ago, Aboriginal Peoples lived in the area, hunting, fishing, and building camp. Rice Lake was used by the Native peoples for purposes of trade and transportation and is currently part of the lakes and rivers forming the Kawartha Lakes region. The lake got its name for the rice fields that were planted and harvested by the Aboriginal Peoples of the region. Nowadays, the rice fields have all but vanished under water due to the construction of the Trent Canal.

Formerly a provincial park, now run by the Hiawatha First Nation, a group of the Mississaugas who are part of the Anishinabek Peoples, the Serpent Mounds are located on the north side of Rice Lake, approximately 30 kilometres southeast of Peterborough, and about 170 kilometres northeast of Toronto. Situated on a high point of land are nine ancient burial grounds. These contain the remains of the Point Peninsula Native Peoples who lived in the area some 2,000 years ago. The present Aboriginal Peoples treat this area as sacred and great respect is expected from any visitors to the area. The park itself acquired its name from the largest of the mounds shaped like a large snake; it is the only one of its kind in Canada.

For further information regarding educational programs at the park, see the Canada Parks website

For further information, see the Canada Parks website

[Http://www.eagle.ca/VictorialInn/spiritwalks/petroglyphs-park.html](http://www.eagle.ca/VictorialInn/spiritwalks/petroglyphs-park.html)

Sacred Sites and How to Visit Them

It is vitally important to approach these sacred places with utmost respect. Always instruct and monitor children to behave as if they are in their own religious structures and institutions. There is never an acceptable time to behave in a fashion that would offend.

Part 3: Looking Back to Move Forward: Residential Schools

Residential Schools

41

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Imagine that it is legal for a government official to cruise through your neighbourhood and entice your child to get in the car. Imagine that it is the law that your child is taken to a boarding school kilometres away, location to you unknown, to be taught new customs and to be only spoken to in an unknown language. Imagine finding out that while there, your child was subjected to beatings or other punishment for speaking the only language they have known, never given a hug or a kind word or even worse, been abused in unspeakable terms. Imagine that you didn't find this out until years after their return [if they returned] and you could not understand what had drastically changed the happy child you once knew. This was the experience of thousands of First Nations families during the time of the Residential Schools. (Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board. (2008), Nurturing the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Spirit in Our Schools. P. 49)

Introduction

The Residential School System was set up to eliminate First Nations' identity, language, culture, and spirituality. The first school opened in 1863 and the last residential school closed in 1996. It is estimated that approximately 5,000 children died within the schools due to maltreatment, neglect, and physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Those who survived often did not come out knowing how to find their family nor how to function as a member within one- those who did find their families, could no longer speak their mother and father's tongue.

In 1920, Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, stated the Canadian government's intention: "Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian department."

Historical Overview

In 1847, Church and State entered into partnership to "Christianize and civilize" this country's indigenous peoples. Ten years later, the Gradual Civilization Act was passed into law and in 1863, the first catholic residential school opened in Mission, British Columbia. Government officials decided the best way to assimilate Aboriginal Peoples into British/Canadian society was by segregating Aboriginal children from their families and communities and immerse them into the colonizers' language, education system & style of learning, Christian religion and European culture.

In 1867, The Indian Act was made part of the British North America Act, the founding document in the

establishment of Canada. The Indian Act made all aspects of Aboriginal life and culture the responsibility of the federal government. Total assimilation was the focus of the policy. The Residential School System was established and administered by religious leaders from the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and United churches. One of the goals of the system was for the children “to have the Indian educated out of them.” The Indian Act of 1876 To Control Indian Education was a specific act that allowed for the involuntary removal of children from their communities and their mandatory placement in residential school. Priests, Indian

Affairs agents and/or police agents were legally sanctioned to go onto reservations and forcibly remove children from the ages of 5-15 to take them away to a residential school. The schools were located far away from the children's families so that parents and community could have no further influence on the children. There was no recourse available to grieving, traumatized families. Their children were taken and never returned to them. Nothing of indigenous culture and tradition was tolerated at the institutions and punishments for disobeying were cruel, immoral and debilitating. In 1907, an article in the Montreal Star newspaper Reported that 42% of children attending residential school died, due to disease, abuse, neglect or suicide.

By 1945, there were over 9,000 Aboriginal children attending residential school yet none in a level of education greater than Grade

8. Although the policy was to assimilate Aboriginal children into Euro- Canadian culture, the schools focused upon grooming Aboriginal individuals for domestic work or labour.

In 1950, data suggested that the Residential school system was failing in its integration strategy of Aboriginal children into Euro- Canadian culture. By the late 1950s, many Aboriginal children were then directed into the mainstream public school system.

In 1965, the Canadian government dissolved formal partnership with the Catholic and Protestant churches and assumed full control of the system with the development of the Provincial Child Welfare Agreement. The agreement enabled Child Care Workers to seize children for adoption into white families this era would later be referred to as: The 60s Scoop.

By 1969, there were 52 Residential schools left, with close to 8,000 children in attendance. By the 1980s, seven schools remained open nationwide. It wasn't until 1996 that, finally, the last residential school (situated in Saskatchewan) closed and the Residential School era had officially ended. By then, death rate statistics had increased to 65%.

The Legacy of Damage

The theory behind, and the establishment of, Canada's Residential School System is seen - in today's more enlightened society - as the darkest event of the last century. The implementation of these educational institutions resulted in the cultural genocide of thousands of First Nation, Métis and Inuit

Peoples over the course of one hundred and fifty years. Victimized by racism and discriminated against by the very culture that claimed to want to assimilate them, many of the Residential School System “graduates” fell deep into a state of hopelessness, isolation and despair.

The inter-generational impact of the era has resonated to this very day. For those who were lucky to leave the schools, many could no longer relate to a place they called home. Without a frame of reference with their own people, or not knowing where to find their relatives, or for those returning to a broken spirited community voided of their children, the learned shame of being Aboriginal was and sometimes still is- profound.

The Issues That Still Remain Today

Besides the monumental task of rebuilding good faith and trust between Aboriginal Peoples and the federal government, there is also the task of doing the same with the various Christian churches who worked in partnership with the federal government. This process of building trust between the Canadian and Aboriginal societies is a long and delicate one.

In 1998 the Assembly of First Nations established the Indian Residential School Resolution Unit with the aim of addressing the historical effects of the system on First Nations peoples. It sought to influence processes, propose policy and judicial developments on Residential School claims, and ensure that a long-term healing strategy is established for those individuals and communities affected by the system.

In 2003 the government of Canada announced an Alternative Dispute Resolution process. Under this process, Residential School survivors who experienced trauma because of the system could file complaints and complete an application for compensation. By estimate there are some 80,000 survivors of the Residential School system. It is said that over 5,000 children died within the confines of the schools.

There has been, to date, approximately 20,000 claims filed by elderly claimants, either through litigation, or alternative dispute mechanisms. A commission has been formed to provide an historical view of the system and its effects and damages, through the use of public information sessions, testimonies, as well as collected diaries, letters and journals.

Putting It All Into Perspective

For the Aboriginal victims - and descendants of victims - of the Residential School system, many commonly suffer from the devastating effects of:

Loss of Language and Cultural Heritage

- Loss of dignity and hope
- Debasement of self, due to sexual abuse
- Shame of Aboriginal identity
- Loss of parenting skills
- Feelings of extreme isolation
- Re-occurring nightmares
- Suicidal tendencies

A legacy of distrust, betrayal, lack of self-esteem, and even hatred

It was a hopeful sign to all Canadians when, on June 11, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper stood in the House of Commons and, on behalf of the government of Canada, publicly apologized to the First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada for the harm and horrors inflicted during the dark era of the Residential School System.

Trauma & Post Traumatic Experience

Every day, Natives encounter some form of personal prejudice or institutional violence. This comes not only from the proverbial “redneck” but from high and influential places in society from judges, journalists, doctors, teachers and politicians. [...] Unless you are a racially visible person, you would not understand the impact of such situations. In fact, many White people say that you are being too sensitive or you're overreacting when you express your concerns. (Graveline, 1998:98)

Historical Overview

- > Disease: smallpox, TB, cholera, STDs
- > Deceit & defeat: Loss of Traditional Homelands
- > The Reserve system
- > The Status system: status cards; blood quantum; the tattooing of Inuit
- > The Residential School system/Assimilation policy
- > The Prohibition of Religious and Cultural Practices (1884-1982)
- > 1960s & 70s involuntary sterilization of Native Women

- > 1960s Scoop/Adoption policy
- > Recent Assimilation policies: The White Paper of 1969; Bill C-31

The Pass System

Once relocated onto a reserve, overseen by a residing government official, a Government Agent-issued Pass was put into use from the year 1885 through to the 1950s. This meant the Indian Agent had total authority over the activities of reserve-based First Nations peoples. In other words, it was at the discretion of the Euro- Canadian government representative to permit First Nation individuals to leave or enter the reserve.

Land Loss

Many First Nations communities have been waiting for more than 150 years to settle land claims in Canadian courts. To this day, they are waiting - over the course of generations - to officially address the illegal encroachment of their designated areas and traditional territories areas that were never ceded to the Canadian government.

Enfranchisement Act (1869)

The Enfranchisement Act of 1869 was a process for the legal assimilation of Aboriginal peoples, identifying who was “Indian” and who would cease to become “Indian” e.g. the loss of Indian status (Treaty rights) of Native women who married non-Native men; those who obtained a university education, and those who became professionally employed.

The most humiliating thing [...] is how the Federal Government gets to decide who is Native and who isn't. It just seems crazy when you think that there have been cultures here for thousands of years and now one must virtually apply to some faceless bureaucrat to be legitimized in being recognized for one's own identity. The bureaucratization of culture. [...] Categorization for manipulation. (Graveline: 101)

Employment, Poverty & Health Issues

Unemployment rates for all Aboriginal groups continue to be at least double the rate of the non-Aboriginal population. First Nations living conditions and quality of life is amongst Third World conditions, the root cause being poor health. Inadequate and overcrowded housing, mold, and unsafe drinking water contribute to respiratory disease, tuberculosis and Hepatitis A - which are at a rate 10 to 12 times higher than our national average. More than 100 First Nations communities are currently under a Boil Water Advisory for their drinking water.

Depression

Suicide is now among the leading causes of death among First Nations peoples between the ages of 10 and 24 - six times higher than that of the national average.

Loss of Language

Canada's Aboriginal languages are currently amongst the most endangered in the world.

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Part 4: The Inuit Way

Inuit Life

Inuit Life

Traditional Life

"Prior to contact with Europeans, Inuit were entirely self-sufficient. They lived in small, autonomous, nomadic groups, dependent upon hunting, fishing and gathering for survival and for all their physical needs. Customary law was followed, characterized by its informal nature, flexibility, and its reliance upon social pressures to ensure that people acted appropriately. Inuit had developed a rich material culture, based primarily upon hunting and fishing technology. Spirituality centered upon beliefs in animal and human-like spirits, including the spirits of deceased relatives. A variety of taboos affected many aspects of life and a rich mythology explained both the natural and the supernatural world." The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture, p. 4

Inuit lived in small family-based groups and traveled seasonally in pursuit of food. They developed a number of technologies including: the igloo, kayak, ulu (women's knife), quilliq (small stone stove), fur clothing and toggle-head harpoons. With the arrival of the fur traders the emphasis changed from the pursuit of required food to one of trapping furs for trading purposes. Materials that were obtained through trading included: rifles, tea, tobacco and flour. This change resulted in a move into larger communities and caused a major disruption to the Inuit traditional culture and values.

www.civilization.ca

(Browse through the article on The Inuit Way in Canada's Arctic as well as the Treasures Gallery for illustrations and information on Inuit parkas, toys, art, language etc...)

Residential Schools

Like the First Nation people the introduction of residential schools caused hardship and misery for the Inuit people. The schools strictly forbade the speaking of the Inuktitut language and there was a disruption to the passing on of traditional culture and traditions. The family traditionally passed on the Inuit way of life but it was replaced by various government agencies. To this day there exists a legacy of social ills from this experience. Journey Forward: National Inuit Residential Schools Healing Strategy available from Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada. ISBN #1-894396-61-8 (613-238-3977)



Inuit Ulu:

Canadian Museum of Civilization.



Traditional Law

The main priority in traditional Inuit law was the maintenance of a harmonious and peaceful community. Customary laws were not written down; however, there were clear codes of behaviour that were understood by the community. Rules of behaviour were passed on orally from generation to generation and were based on a complex set of values, beliefs and taboos. Some of the common types of misbehaviour included: lying, stealing, laziness, excessive gossiping, being volatile or unpredictable, jealousy and excessive bragging. Individuals with the responsibility of upholding the law were non-existent. The community was self-governed and responsible for maintaining order. Those who did not follow the law were subject to various reactions from the people. These might include: shaming, embarrassing, ridiculing or for a more serious offence, social ostracism. Since the camps were small with little connection with others outside their group and since there was a high degree of interdependency these methods were very effective. In cases where there was a question about the penalty to be imposed, the Elders would meet and reflect on the situation as well as past experiences. In cases of serious threats to the community, adult public meetings were held. "Once the group decided that the person's behaviour had changed and that the offence would not likely be repeated, normal relations would be re-established." *The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture*, p 12

Customary Inuit law started to erode with the arrival of the traders, missionaries, R.C.M.P. and the increased time spent by the Inuit at the trading sites as well as the move into permanent settlements. Many of the modern legal practices were foreign to the Inuit and until recently Inuit were allowed no input into how offenders from their communities were dealt with. Inuit and Elders are now acting as intermediaries between young people who have broken the law and the court system. While traditional methods of social control are less effective in large settlements, there is still a widely held understanding as to what behaviour is expected.

Children

"Inuit methods of raising children differ considerably from those in southern Canadian traditions. To the outside observer, Inuit children enjoy a substantial amount of freedom, as indicated by the fact that when they are not in school, children stay up much later than southern children, they are often fed when they are hungry and not according to a set meal schedule, and are disciplined in a different manner by their parents. To the uninformed observer, Inuit parents may appear indifferent or overly lax with their children. Again cultural differences account for this misconception." *The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture*, p. 16

Children are dearly loved by Inuit. When a baby is born it is usually given a Christian first name and the father's Inuit surname. Inuit believe that when a child is born it takes on the spirit of a recently deceased relative. The 'soul' is reflected in the child's physical characteristics, skills or personality traits. It is named after the deceased relative and is seen as deserving the same respect; therefore, it is seen as inappropriate to tell the child what to do because it would be the same as giving orders to the adult. To do so would be to violate an important social rule of the Inuit culture. As a result Inuit parents allow

their children a lot of freedom. This being said the parents still make sure that the child does not hurt himself/herself, other people, or items such as hunting equipment. If the child exhibits inappropriate behaviour such as tantrums the adults would ignore him or her. Children are disciplined and this may take the form of being restrained, verbal clues or talking to another person about the child's behaviour within hearing distance of the child.

Education

Traditionally, Inuit children learned by following the example of their Elders. Children learned through their individual effort and observation rather than by instruction. Even now children learn traditional skills through observation of older experienced adults. Naturally, there is concern among the adults that the children are not learning enough about their traditional ways. Attendance at school is compulsory for all Inuit children and previously the curriculum was not compatible with the traditional values of the children. The school system encouraged competition and questioning while at home the children were taught to be non-competitive and not to ask people direct questions. Recently increasing numbers of Inuit are becoming teachers and the curriculum is reflecting the Inuit culture, language and values.

<http://en.wikipedia.org>

(Information on the igloo or snow house, traditional types and construction as well as other links.)

<http://pubs.aina.ucalgary/arctic/Arctic47-2-193.pdf>

(This site features information on the Caribou and Iglulik Inuit Kayaks.)

www.athropolis.com/library-cat.htm#inuit

(This site provides a number of links to sites on beliefs, clothing, history etc.)

Family

The Traditional Family

“The traditional family grouping of Inuit throughout the Arctic included a father, mother, their children, and often other relatives such as grandparents and possibly, an unmarried uncle or aunt. The membership and size of the family unit was flexible and could change quite rapidly.” The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture, p. 22

Even though Inuit spent a lot of their time in camps there was always a distinction made between immediate family and the other members. Traditional marriages took place when a girl was approximately fourteen years of age and when a man entered early adulthood around twenty. Marriages were usually arranged by the parents and may have reflected a desire to strengthen the bonds between families. In some parts of the Arctic there was the tradition that the man would come



*Inuit Harpoon:
Canadian Museum of
Civilization.*

into the camp and “steal” his new wife possibly throwing her over his shoulder or onto his sled and begin to leave camp. This symbolized the fact that the woman and her family didn't want her to leave. There would be a lot of yelling and laughter and then the couple would join the husband's family.

Cooperation was important in the family unit. The husband had primary authority outside the home and was the primary provider of food, shelter and made the tools, weapons and tended the dogs. He looked after the general welfare and safety of the family. The wife had primary authority in the home. Her main responsibility was child rearing although other members of the family, such as older daughters would help. Her tasks included: the preparation of food and drinking water, cleaning and making clothing. There were also tents, skin containers and coverings for boats to create. Elder members of the family were highly respected and children were taught from an early age to respect them and anticipate their wishes

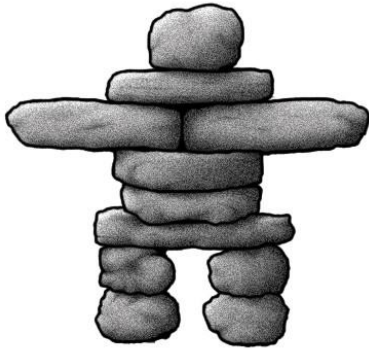
The Modern Inuit Family

“The circumstances of the modern Inuit family have changed considerably from those experienced traditionally. Large communities, access to health care, formal education for children, wage employment, and many other characteristics of modern life have irreversibly affected Inuit family dynamics.” The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture, p. 26

Inuit still maintain a strong family orientation. The basic family unit is still the immediate family but other relatives still live with the family because of a shortage of housing in many communities. Parents and Elders still have influence on marriage plans but young people may disregard their suggestions. There is no stigma attached to having a child prior to marriage. In cases where the young mother is unable to care for the child then the family helps out. The elder members of the family still play an important role and are considered wise and knowledgeable. Young people are not pressured to make decisions about their future and many leave their communities to move to larger settlements or cities. In the home most women exercise a dominant role while outside the man has primary authority. There is a limited supply of full time jobs and the part-time ones are quickly seized. Jobs are supplemented by hunting and fishing and a variety of handicraft, art production and guiding activities. Women are now applying the skills that they have developed in running the home and becoming more active in the formation and operation of economic and political organizations.

<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca>

(Check out Family Literacy and the resources currently being used.)



These stone structures were put up by Inuit to guide or channel caribou into areas where hunters might be waiting. Some of them were so large that hunters could hide behind them. They were also used as markers along the shore of the Arctic Ocean and also inland as travel directions. The longer arm of the inukshuk pointed the way. Some inukshuks also had a hole in the middle from where the traveler could see the next marker.

The Inuit inukshuk has become a symbol of leadership, cooperation and the human spirit. The structure achieves strength through the fit of the stones just as people can achieve greater success with cooperation and team effort.

The Inuit inukshuk has been incorporated into the flag and coat of arms for the Nunavut territory.

It is also the symbol of the 2010 Olympics.

<http://www.freespiritgallery.ca>

(The Free Spirit Gallery web site provides beautiful images of Inuit carvings and prints.)

Inuit Values

"To understand the dynamics of the traditional Inuit community, it helps to have an appreciation of the characteristics held in high esteem by its members and the values that Inuit were expected to live by."

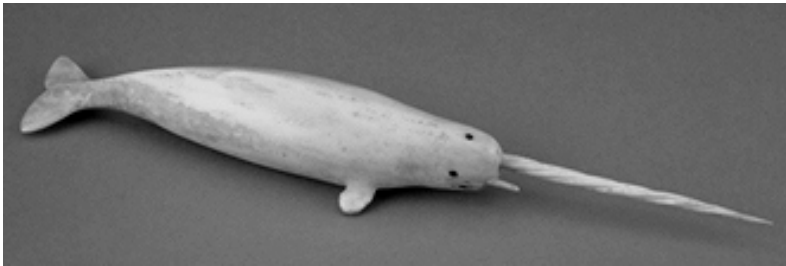
The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture, p. 32

The Inuit have key cultural values that they hold on to. They maintain close ties to the land and pass on the traditional skills and knowledge. Self-reliance is one of the most important and respected characteristics. Life presents challenges and ideally one should meet them with innovation, resourcefulness and perseverance. Patience and the ability to accept things that are beyond one control are also valued. One can see how these qualities were necessary for survival in the Arctic. The demonstration of anger or frustration is considered childish and therefore, as an adult, one would be expected to face the problem and solve it or if it is truly unsolvable to accept it and move on. The independent adult is also expected to be tactful and humble and bragging of one's accomplishments is frowned upon.

Traditionally sharing was regarded as extremely important. Again, the sharing of food, labour and resources were critical if one was to survive in such a harsh environment. Hospitality was essential and those who took advantage were gossiped about in the community. In today's modern household, food, resources and social assistance is shared among the members; however, money from labour remains with the earner as long as contributions have been made to the household. In today's world the

individual may earn material goods but at the same time may be open to criticism because he/she is not sharing with others or being generous enough. There can be confusion between current and traditional values.

Inuit place high value on non-interference in other's lives. This affects the way they interact with one another and presents challenges when they are in positions of authority. Children are taught early to be consider of others and not impose on others.



<http://www.itk.ca/>

(Go the publications section for maps and information on Arctic wildlife and statistical information.)

Leadership is demonstrated by example rather than delegating. Requests are made indirectly because to make a direct request would be considered rude and disrespectful. Indirect hints are given and as such the host/boss may choose to acknowledge them or ignore them pretending not to get the hints. Also, direct questions about people are not welcomed and make the Inuit uncomfortable. They are considered a violation of the individual's privacy and independence. Individuals can change their minds without being criticized; therefore, one can see that traditional Inuit culture can at times be in conflict with aspects of modern Canadian culture which emphasizes commitment to work schedules, signed agreements etc.

Fifty years ago Inuit lived a very traditional lifestyle, one characterized by nomadic hunting, fishing and trapping. They worked closely together with respect and knowledge of their environment. Today they participate in two worlds. It is a challenge to maintain traditional values and live in the modern world. This has led to a number of problems including alcohol and drug abuse, high unemployment, family violence to mention a few. However, these values will continue to be an important part of who they are as a people and an integral part of the foundation of their society.

This only briefly touches on the some of the characteristics of the Inuit way of life. Please consult the documents below for additional information.

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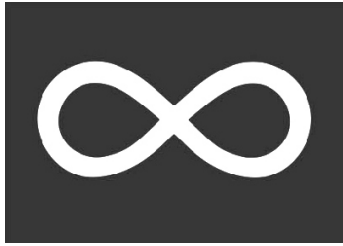
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Part 5: The Métis People of Canada

The Métis People of Canada

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The Métis People of Canada

The Beginning

Métis is a French word meaning mixed blood. Most people believe Métis to be someone who is part Indian and part non-Indian. Many of the French and English men who came to Canada to trade furs married Indian women and the children born from these marriages were the first Métis people of Canada. They are a separate and distinct people as different from First Nations people as the Inuit.

The Cree call the Métis “O-tee-paym-soo-wuk, their own boss. Through the early 19th century they were constantly on the move. They led the way as guides for explorers and their canoes were the conduits to the west. They lived off the land following the buffalo herds and trapping animals and providing food for others. Some built homes but would leave them to follow the herds or hunt and returned only when the weather made it necessary to do so. The Métis people's idea of how to live differed from the Indian and the settler. Like Indians they believed that a good education should teach one how to live with nature and like the settlers began to be divided into Catholic and Protestant groups. The Métis bridged the gap between the traditional Indian civilization and the new arrivals. They made it possible for two very different cultures to communicate. They were the go-betweens.

The Métis went on two buffalo hunts a year. Women and children were part of the hunt and it was governed by very specific rules. These hunts were large consisting of over a thousand men, women, children and more than a 1000 horses and red river carts. It is thought that these carts were constructed by the Métis people. They were very noisy since they were made completely of wood and therefore, could be heard from far away. The cart trails formed by the Red River carts were the basis for many of our current highways. From the meat of the buffalo and other animals the Métis made pemmican, dry meat pounded into a fine powder mixed with hot fat with sometimes berries added. Pemmican was popular because it did not spoil and a small amount could keep one alive for days.

The nation of the Métis people was born in western Canada. As western Canada became more settled the Métis people began working as trappers and hunters for The North West Company or the Hudson Bay Company. Others preferred to hunt and trap for themselves and sell or trade for what they needed. The Métis were well known as excellent shots and skilled fighters and were frequently asked to speak for the fur companies in negotiating hunting or trapping rights.

It is impossible to tell the complete story of the Métis in this booklet. The history of the Métis people is captured in *The Métis People of Canada: A History* by The Alberta Federation of Métis Settlement Associations. It will provide additional detail and was written specifically for use in schools.

It highlights the beginning of the Métis nation, its time at war as well as the rebuilding process. It succinctly captures the problems with the fur trading companies, the battle for rights under Louis Riel and recent developments. From this document comes a poem composed by an elder statesman of the Métis which captures the historical story of the Métis people.



Ode to the Metis

*The stalwart men of Scotland,
France and England too;
Adventure, fortune seeking
In this land so new.*

*The faint heart never ventured;
The weak ones did not go,
The brave, the strong who entered,
Made this country grow.*

*They married Indian maidens,
The best ones they could find,
And built for them log cabins,
And to them they were kind.*

*Their progeny the Métis
Or half-breed if you will,
Had access to both cultures
And a special job to fill.*

*They had a happy, care-free life
Of living off the land.
And they had friends among the whites
And every Indian band.*

*Red River Manitoba
Became their native home
As hunters, traders, trappers
Throughout the West they'd roam.*

*They started a new nation
With equality for all.
But Ottawa's oppression
Finally made it fall.*

*Their lands and homes were taken
And they moved further West
They built themselves new houses
A place where they could rest.*

*But greedy politicians
With big and grasping hands
And evil speculators
Again grabbed at their lands.*

*Batoche they said would be the last
Here we will make a stand
Dumont again called Riel
An educated man.*

*At Fish Creek then they battled
With 56 Métis
Against the mighty Middleton
And his thousand man army.*

*For three weeks there they held them
While mothers prayed for sons
From rifle pits their fire pinned down
The big artillery guns.*

*But then at last with powder low
The Métis did concede
Their leader then was taken
And hung for his "misdeed".*

*A patriot, a leader,
Canadian true was he,
Through all the world now recognized
By all men that are free.*

*So if you are a Métis
My friend hold high your head
They made this land the greatest
No matter what is said.*

Adrian Hope

There are many Métis communities across Canada. Within Ontario, the Métis nation has identified 12 historic communities and Métis people live throughout Ontario in both urban and rural settings. The homeland of the Métis Nation includes: the three Prairie Provinces as well as parts of Ontario, the Northwest Territories, British Columbia, and the north central United States. Another Métis people is located in Labrador and has maritime traditions. Other communities can be found in Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, British Columbia and the North. The table that follows looks at the size and distribution of Métis populations.

Comparison of Size and Distribution of Métis Populations

	Origin	Identity
Prince Edward Island	185	-
Nova Scotia	1,590	225
New Brunswick	975	100*
Quebec	19,480	8,690
Ontario	26,905	12,055
Manitoba	45,575	33,230
Saskatchewan	32,840	26,995
Alberta	56,310	38,755
British Columbia	22,295	9,030
Yukon	565	190*
Northwest Territories	4,310	3,895
Canada	212,650	135,265

Notes:

These figures are unadjusted for undercoverage in the census. Because the Commission has not made any adjustment to the Métis population count in the 1991 census to take account of undercoverage, the unadjusted population counts of Métis in the Aboriginal Peoples Survey are used to facilitate the comparisons made in this table. The adjusted Métis count, used elsewhere in this chapter, is 139,400. Figures suppressed because of small size; their coefficient of variation is higher than 33.3%.

** Figures to be used with caution; their coefficient of variation is between 16.7% and 33.3%.*

Source: Statistics Canada, Age and Sex: Aboriginal Data, catalogue no. 94-327 (March 1993); Census Table 1, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, Table 1.

Contributions of the Métis People

A. Clothing

Métis clothing was very distinctive usually featuring beadwork and embroidery. There were three types of coats. The capote had a hood and was commonly constructed of a Hudson's Bay blanket. The buckskin jacket featured extensive beadwork and fringes and was usually created by the Métis women for sale to settlers and travelers. The Red River coat was cut according to European style with epaulets, beadwork and embroidery. Leather or velvet leggings also known as mitasses were worn over pants and were also highly decorative. Métis hats were also distinctive and made of either fur skins and/or cloth. Moccasins were frequently worn by the Métis and their design was adapted from those worn by the Plains Indians. Both the hats and moccasins included classic Métis embroidery and beadwork.



B. The Métis Sash

The Métis have adopted the sash as part of their proud heritage. It took its name from the Quebec town where it was produced. L'Assomption sash was an integral part of the voyageur dress. It was colourful and identifiable as Métis apparel but it was functional as well, serving as a key holder, first aid kit, washcloth, towel and emergency bridle and saddle blanket. Also, its fringed ends became a sewing kit when the Métis were on a buffalo hunt.

The colours used in the sash are of particular significance. The blue and white threads represent the colours of the national flag and the red is the background of the Métis hunting flag. Black represents the dark periods after 1870 when the Métis were beaten or shot in Winnipeg with bounties placed on those who had collaborated with Louis Riel. During those days many Métis were forced off their land. The yellow, which may be removed from the Manitoba sash, may appear as special recognition. It is woven into a sash and presented by the Métis community to an individual who it wishes to honour. This same system is being contemplated by the Métis National Council and if adopted would be known as, The National Order of the Métis Sash. The green colour signifies the growth and prosperity for the Métis Nation. It embraces a philosophy of moving forward to reclaim the Métis' rightful place in Canadian history.



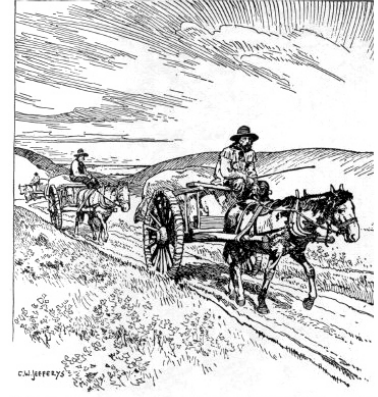
C. The York Boat

The York boat was invented by the Métis and was used for carrying freight. Almost 13 meters long, this boat could carry almost six tons of cargo. The crew of this boat consisted of 18 men, 16 were rowers with a helmsman and a person to steer the craft using the rudder. Even though it could carry large loads it was still portable enough to portage around rapids or other obstacles. It also had a large sail that could be used when winds were favourable.



D. The Red River Cart

The Métis are credited with the development of the Red River cart. This cart was made entirely of wood and the parts were held together with wooden pegs and strips of rawhide. It was known for its durability and was lighter than other wagons of the time. Since it was made of wood it could be easily repaired on a journey. It was also versatile for its wheels could be removed and the cart section could be floated across streams. It was used to haul freight, buffalo meat and hides and for moving belongings from one location to another. It was not unusual to see long lines of Red River carts heading west and south from Winnipeg.



No iron was used. The frame was held together with wooden pegs. The tires were bound round with strips of shagahappi, raw fresh skin of buffalo or cattle, which, as it dried, shrank & held them tightly, forming a hard & durable rim. These carts followed the Métis hunting parties & carried the meat of the slain buffalo. They were also employed in transporting freight. Sometimes they were fitted with a round-topped hood of hide or canvas.

E. The RCMP Musical Ride

It is also possible that the RCMP Musical Ride was modeled on the Métis practice of exercising their horses to the music of the jig and square dance.

F. Fiddle Music

The Métis people were probably first introduced to the fiddle by the Scots and French. The fiddle was usually made as oppose to purchased. Métis music is distinctive a result of the tuning and extra beats incorporated. The music was usually accompanied by the clap of spoons or the rhythmic beats provided by the guests.



G. Jigging

The Métis dance is a blend of European and Indian heritage. Their traditional dances include: the Waltz Quadrille, the Square dance, Drops of Brandy, the Duck dance, La Double Gigue and the Red River Jig. The Red River Jig is played and danced in two sections. The fiddle is tuned differently and when it plays the high section a traditional jig step is done and in the second part fancy footwork is performed.

Conclusion

The Métis have been loyal Canadians battling for their rights within Canada. Their way of life began 200 years ago in the Red River Valley. As a people they respected both the Indian and white man's way of thinking and living and from it emerged the Métis way. Their rights have been debated since the Red River rebellion and they never received the benefits granted to status Indians and the Inuit. In 1982, the constitution of Canada was amended to state that Canada's Aboriginal peoples include the Métis. The Métis people have always known that Canada would be a different place today if they had not played a major role in its development.

In 1983 the Métis nation separated from the Native Council of Canada to form the Métis National Council. This council represents the Métis nation both nationally and internationally. Its mandate and directions are received from the democratically elected leadership of the Métis Nation's governments from Ontario Westward.

In 1998, The Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples stated, "it is unjust and unreasonable to withhold from Métis people the services and opportunities available to other Aboriginal peoples" (<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/pubs/sg/sg-eng.asp>). This statement holds promise for the future for the Métis people of Canada.

They have a distinctive culture, a common way of living and looking at life. As a nation the Métis have an extensive history, common culture, unique language (Michif), extensive kinship connections from Ontario westward, distinct way of life, traditional territory and a collective consciousness.

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Part 6: The Here and Now

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A. ISSUES FACING AND INVOLVING ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

There are many ongoing issues facing today's Aboriginal Peoples, some for generations and others stretching as far back as the European settlement of Canada itself. The following is a brief introduction to some central issues pertaining to the continuing discussions between Aboriginal Peoples and the rest of Canada's peoples and governments.

Land Claims

This has been a central problem in the relationship between the First Nations and the Canadian government since the earliest days of forming the country of Canada. According to Aboriginal Peoples, land and all that lives on it, grows from it, nurtured by it, and buried within it, is a gift to all from the Creator. One cannot, in principle, “own” land but rather must assume responsibility for the stewardship of it - to nurture, protect and live in harmony with. The Aboriginal perspective is to primarily be thankful and secondly, to take great care of the Creator's gift: the land and its resources - for all generations to come. Each generation takes on the responsibility to do the same for the sake of their children, their grandchildren, and so on. For thousands of years, this philosophy kept Turtle Island healthy and prosperous. The arrival of the European and his much different value system, threw the eco-system, the environment, and the lifestyles of the indigenous peoples out of balance. The desire of the newcomers was to reign and control over the land and its resources to the point of destruction. For two different Peoples with fundamentally different views and ways of living, friction was inevitable.

Land claims are defined as unresolved grievances between an Aboriginal band or Nation and the Canadian government. These involve the rights to land and/or resources of these disputed lands. The federal government introduced a formal policy on claims in 1973 which divided all claims into two classifications: Comprehensive and Specific.

The Comprehensive Claim involves a First Nation asserting Aboriginal rights and title to land. Most of these involve Nations in British Columbia where no land surrender treaties were ever made.

The Specific Claim is when Aboriginal Peoples accuse the government of not honoring its treaties, agreements, or legal responsibilities.

Treaties

A treaty is a solemn agreement between two or more nations that create mutually binding obligations. There are 68 major treaties existing between First Nations peoples and the governments of the settlers, spanning a total of 275 years. Many have not been honored.

According to traditional Aboriginal culture, verbal agreement are sacred and binding between all parties concerned: “a person's word is their bond”. Due to this oral tradition, the spirit of the

agreement means far more than mere words scrawled on a document. For this reason, this stand is accepted by the courts while in negotiations of the claims involving the First Nations.

It is important to consider treaties - and land claim settlements - according to the views of Aboriginal Peoples. Settlers were promised (by the colonists) “free land” to live on. This disrupted the traditional land boundaries of various Nations. Agreements were made to preserve areas for the traditional use of the Nations involved, but these were often not honored. Despite this, the overbearing pressure of ever more settlers and their establishment of governments forced the First Nations peoples into these agreements in a desperate attempt to try to preserve anything of their way of life. Facing starvation and the pending way of the “new world”, Aboriginal leaders bargained in good faith, as they had amongst their own for centuries. But convoluted laws, hidden agendas, and endless paperwork left the First Nations unjustly stripped of their lands, rights, and traditional way of life.

The establishment of the influx of settlers took great tolls on the lands and resources. Hunting for recreation, as well as a means to purposely weaken the indigenous peoples, minimized, and even exterminated some game source. Forests were uniformly destroyed to provide for the construction of settlements. Pollution from primitive and destructive mining operations poisoned rivers. Everything held sacred to the indigenous peoples was plundered and destroyed. The settlers also brought diseases previously unknown to Aboriginal Peoples such as tuberculosis, gonorrhea, and smallpox Aboriginal Peoples, across the land, died in uncountable thousands.

Despite all, the First Nations have peacefully abided by the terms of the treaties. Many nations still wait for the words agreed upon to be fulfilled by the Canadian government. Negotiations are still ongoing in the courts, some for over one hundred years. Frustrations rise, especially when both provincial and federal governments, turn a blind eye to the ongoing claims.

Repatriation

The callous raping of sacred places by archaeologists has gone on for over a century. The skeletal bodies of Aboriginal ancestors have been placed on display in museums, or even more degrading, placed into warehouses for storage of expansive museum collections. Their grave goods i.e. personal items have also been displayed in the same cases as their violated remains.

It has only been since the 1990s that requests to have their ancestor's remains and artifacts returned for purposes of reburial has been given serious consideration. Many museums in Canada, the United States, and Australia have complied and returned the remains to the indigenous peoples for proper burial. A new and responsible practice has been adopted by the scientific bodies of archaeology, anthropology, and museums to consult with Aboriginal Peoples prior to any archeological digs. When permission is granted for a dig to proceed, at least one representative from the region's band or Nation is present throughout the process. If any remains are discovered, the band's Elders are brought in and the remains are respectfully taken to be reburied.

Respecting the Aboriginal traditions does not hamper or prevent the discovery of new knowledge; rather, the process builds bridges of respect and trust between two, distinct Peoples.

Other Contemporary Issues

Mining

Many processes, such as open-pit mining and the extraction of uranium ore, are highly destructive to the land and environment. Given the strict belief of Aboriginal Peoples' view of the sacredness of the land, unsurprisingly, many disagreements with governments and corporations involve the destructive mining techniques and practices, whether currently in use or planned.

There are also situations where lands that were ceded to the First Nations by treaty negotiations have been re-appropriated by the government due to the discovery of valuable resources. This has furthered the distrust experienced by the First Nations in their relations with the federal government. This lack of trust adds to the general difficulty of negotiating any further agreements, even outside the issue of mining.

On another note, the resources that are being extracted are resources the First Nations should have the right to administer themselves.

Environment

It is very clear to me that it is an important and special thing to be an Indian. Being an Indian means being able to understand and live with this world in a very special way. It means living with the land, with the animals, with the birds and fish, as though they were your sisters and brothers.

It means saying the land is an old friend, and an old friend your father knew, your grandfather knew, indeed your people always have known....

We see our land as much, much more than the white man sees it. To the Indian people our land really is our life. Without our land we cannot, we could no longer, exist as people. If our land is destroyed, we too are destroyed. If your people ever take our land you will be taking our life. Richard Nerysoo of Fort McPherson, Alta.

*Quoted in "Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland" by Mr. Justice
Thomas R. Berger, 1977.*

This view reinforces the stand of Aboriginal Peoples regarding the above matters of mining and treaties. Pollution, deforestation, mining, oil extraction and refining, tar sands, etc. cause veritable pain to the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples historically, the most environmentally conscious people ever to walk upon the vast lands of the Creator. Land and its living beings are being desecrated and destroyed.

Education

There has long been a desire for Aboriginal Peoples to assume an active role in the formal education of their children.

Canadian students learn about many diverse cultures and traditions from around the world, but for the most part, First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, culture, and current events has not been appropriately included in curriculums across North America. As the original peoples of this land, their “story” deserves accurate, respectful representation for the benefit of all students: Aboriginal, Euro-Canadian and the new Canadian.

Remembrance Day

Aboriginal Peoples have been involved in Canada's wars since the War of 1812. Chief Tecumseh, the great Shawnee warrior, devised very clever military strategies that were instrumental in defeating the Americans during the Revolution.

Aboriginal peoples fought alongside their fellow Canadians during both World Wars, the Korean War, and as Peacekeepers in the Middle East. There were more than 7,000 status Indians and more than 5,000 non-status Indians who fought in World War I and World War II with Aboriginal individual's participation being the highest of any cultural group in Canada. One in three soldiers was of Aboriginal identity. For example, every (Chippewa) male on the Nawash Reserve of Georgian Bay enlisted, and all but three (Algonquin) from the Golden Lake Reserve.



The majority of these brave men fulfilled the roles of foot- soldiers, snipers, and scouts. They won high praise for their efforts on the front lines of battle and many were decorated with medals and honors for their bravery and sacrifice. Aboriginal women also served as nurses and tended to the sick and wounded.

Those who remained at home in Canada donated over \$67,000.00 to war relief through the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Various bands gave up portions of their land for use as defense posts, airports, and training grounds and camps.

Yet after the wars, Aboriginal accomplishments and contributions were largely forgotten by the rest of Canada (and the United States). Aboriginal veterans did not receive the same assistance as other returned soldiers under the War Veterans

Allowance Act

If they were to receive any privileges from having served Canada in war, they lost all treaty rights, or Indian status, thus denying them their right to return to their home communities on reserve.

On November 11, 2008, the offering of the Prayer of Remembrance was given by an Algonquian veteran for the very first time ever- at the National War Memorial in Ottawa.

Self-Government

One of the greatest and most important issues for contemporary Aboriginal Peoples is the right to self-government. In

1982, the government of Canada recognized these rights in Section

35 of the Constitution Act. There has also been proposed changes to the Indian Act which will allow for the development of any resources needed to enable the right to First Nations self-government.

It is important to note the Indian Act and treaties apply only to status Indians (under the regulations of the Indian Act). The rights of many Aboriginal Peoples, including the Métis and Inuit, are not recognized.

B. ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS: THEN AND NOW

There is much that is synonymous with Canada according to world thought and perceptions. The canoe, the kayak, snowshoes and maple syrup are some of the most obvious contributions Aboriginal Peoples have made towards Canadian culture.

Aboriginal Peoples shared knowledge with the newcomers to help them learn how to survive in this vast territory. Uniquely crafted items were necessary to meet the needs of the climate and terrain in which they lived. Many medicinal and food plants, and hunting and fishing techniques were also introduced. The European would have perished if not for the hospitality of their Aboriginal hosts...

Necessities such as canoe and snowshoes were brilliantly designed and crafted. They performed with all the dependability of the finest engineered equipment of today; even better than that which is manufactured today which involves processes and materials that create pollution and toxic waste products. Everything made by the Aboriginal Peoples was made of natural materials, with no wastage or harm to the environment.

There have also been numerous First Nations, Métis and Inuit people who have made their mark in world culture: singers, actors, writers, politicians, historians, entrepreneurs, and many other areas and disciplines. They are a source of great pride to Canada as a whole.

Aboriginal Invention: The Best of the Best!

All peoples have adapted to the environment in which they settle and live. Many of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples spent many generations in a nomadic life style. Their inventions fit their needs in their daily lives. They were experts at using the resources found in nature to make all they needed. Keeping in balance with the land, Aboriginal Peoples survived and thrived in some of the harshest and unforgiving environments on Earth.

The following is a list of only some of the many contributions to Canadian culture:

Cough Syrup

Like peoples everywhere, the Aboriginal peoples learned all about the properties of the plants that grew around them. Many of these plants, or their by-products were medicinal in nature.

Aboriginal Peoples throughout Canada discovered that resins of different pine trees (balsam), honey, and their maple syrup could calm coughs and soothe throats due to colds. These products were mixed with teas made from other healing plants to make the very first true medicinal cough syrups.

The Canoe

Aboriginal Peoples, especially those living around the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway, made sturdy boats out of tree branches, tree bark - especially birch - and pitch which was used not only as glue, but as a waterproofing agent for the whole structure of the canoe.

Canoes were made in many sizes, depending on their specific use. Because of their size and relative lightness they could be carried overland to the next waterway. This made the canoe indispensable for the exploration of Canada and the effective transporting of people and goods. The canoe was also excellent for traversing shallow waterways or navigating more difficult waters with rapids, etc.



Algonquin Canoe: Photo: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

The Kayak

The Inuit live in one of the harshest climates on Earth, and have thrived for thousands of years. With the exception of the most northerly polar Inuit, all used the kayak. It was generally 4-7 metres in length, and had a frame made of driftwood, willow branches, or whale bone. These were covered with de-haired sealskins or caribou skins. The oils in the skins provided waterproofing as did the application of oil from seals and whales.

The double bladed paddles were an Inuit innovation that allowed the highly efficient use of energy in paddling, although normal single blade paddles were used as well. The shape of the kayak allowed for a minimum of water resistance which meant that, along with the efficient paddle design, one could go very long distances without tiring.



Kayak: Photo: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Maple Syrup

Maple products are a unique phenomenon with a rich history. The sweet sap of the Sugar Maple tree was known and valued by the Native peoples of eastern North America long before the arrival of European settlers. French settlers were most likely first to learn how the First Peoples tapped trees to obtain sap, then how to reduce it to sweet syrup or sugar slabs to be stored for later use.

The Ojibwe called the “sugaring off” period the “maple moon” or “sugar month.” The tradition of sugaring off became established in communities in the deciduous forests of North America and has survived to the present time.

Snowshoes

Snowshoes for winter travel were almost universal amongst Native peoples in Canada outside the Pacific and Arctic coasts. The Athapaskans of the West and Algonquians of the northeast made the most sophisticated snowshoes. Frames were generally made of durable, flexible ash wood, and lacing from deer, caribou and moose hide. The toe and tail sections of the shoe were laced with a light babiche, (animal hides fashioned into long strips and used as thread or lacing), and the central body with a heavy babiche for better weight suspension. The moccasin is the traditional snowshoe footwear



Algonquin Snowshoes: Photo: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Lacrosse

Lacrosse originated among the Algonquian tribes of the St Lawrence Valley in eastern Canada. For this reason, it is often described as the oldest organized sport in North America. The game has two forms. Field lacrosse is played outdoors on a ground that is 110 by 64 metres,

Anishinaabe Lacrosse Stick:

Photo: Canadian Museum of Civilization.



by teams of 10 players each. A hard rubber ball is passed and thrown between players by means of large, curved sticks with a pocket of netting or webbing. The object is to score points by tossing the ball into the opposing team's net.

Historians have recorded that French missionary Jean de Brebeuf first saw the game in 1638 and called it “la crosse” because the sticks reminded him of a bishop's crozier or crosse. The original term for the game was baggattaway, derived from the Ojibwe word “pagaadowewin” or “ball”.

Snow Goggles

The resourceful Inuit took bone, antler or ivory and created a form of snow goggles to save their eyesight from the blinding white light of snow in full sunlight. The goggles were fashioned into long rectangular plates that curved to fit the face. They made a long slit through which they could see without getting snow blindness. These goggles were held on with straps or ties attached to holes on the sides of the goggles' plate.



*Inuit Snow Goggles:
Photo: Canadian Museum of
Civilization.*

The Parka (Anorak)

The parka was invented by the Inuit people to protect them from the incredible cold of the far north. It protects the head, arms and torso by trapping the wearer's own body heat inside it. Traditionally made from caribou hides and often decorated in a mosaic pattern, it had a hood that was either ringed with fur or could be drawn close using drawstrings. The parka for women was cut differently and was quite distinctive from the men's version. The women carried their children either on their backs in a special carrier, or they could be held inside the hood of the parka. Today, the only improvement that has been made to this garment is the use of space-age modern materials in place of skins and furs.



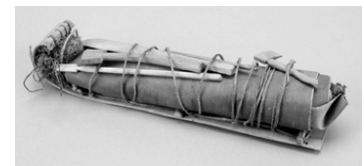
*Labrador Inuit Parka:
Photo:
Canadian Museum of
Civilization*

Chewing Gum

Aboriginal people discovered the first chewing gum, which was collected from spruce trees. In the 1800s, sugar was added, and chewing gum has since become popular throughout the world.

Toboggan

The Mi'kmaq people of eastern Canada invented the toboggan, or taba'gan to use the Mi'kmaq word. Toboggans were first made of bark and animal skins. By the year 1600, Mi'kmaq toboggans were made of thin boards, curved at the front. They were ideal for hauling game out of the woods, moving camp, and for travel. Many winter sports have grown out of this original invention, including luge and bobsledding.



*Algonquin Toboggan:
Photo: Canadian
Museum of Civilization.*

Aspirin

The active ingredient in today's most commonly used pain reliever was known to Aboriginal people in North America for centuries. Salicin, the active ingredient in willow bark, which is found in 15 to 20 different species of the willow tree, including the pussy willow is closely related to Acetylsalicylic acid, from which we get the modern Aspirin.

Cure for Scurvy

Aboriginal Peoples knew the bark and needles of evergreen trees, such as the pine or hemlock, contained an ingredient that kept them healthy throughout the bleak winter times when normal foodstuffs were scarce. They boiled the bark and needles and this yielded a fine tonic, rich in Vitamin C. Scurvy, the result of prolonged Vitamin C deficiency, was a grave danger to all seafaring men and claimed the lives of many European mariners. Many were spared by the shared knowledge of the Aboriginal Peoples.

Wild Rice

Wild rice is actually a delicious and prized cereal grain. It was misnamed by European newcomers because of its rice-like appearance. Some Aboriginal people presented wild rice as treasured gifts to fur traders as a symbol of friendship.



Wild Rice: Photo: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Frozen Food

This is an innovation of the Inuit. They fast-froze their food by leaving it in the frigid open air. It froze so quickly that the actual meat did not get damaged by the formation of large ice crystals inside the meat's cell structure.

An American fur-trapper named Col. Clarence Birdseye was in the Arctic with the Inuit from 1912-1916. He observed their freezing technique and upon returning home to the United States worked on an artificial version of this process. He succeeded in 1929 and founded the Birdseye Company that makes frozen vegetables and meats to this very day.

C. FAMOUS ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE

I. Actors

GARY FARMER - ACTOR, PUBLISHER

Gary Farmer was a regular member of the cast of the CBC's show, *The Rez*, in which he played Chief Tom. He also appeared in *Tales from the Crypt* and the very popular and successful vampire series, *Forever Knight*. He had roles in *Miami Vice*, *Spirit Bay*, *E.N.G.*, *Inside Stories* and *China Beach*, among many others.

Gary is now the editor of Canada's well-known Aboriginal magazine, Aboriginal Voices. He is based in Toronto at the magazine's offices, but travels a great deal in his work to develop a national TV and radio network for Aboriginal people in Canada.

Gary Farmer:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0010379>

CHIEF DAN GEORGE – ACTOR

Dan George was born in 1899 in British Columbia as a member of the Salish Band of Burrard Inlet. His Salish name was Geswanouth Slahoot.

His acting career didn't start until the age of 60! Before that, he worked as a longshoreman and a logger. He was also Chief of the Tsleil- Waututh Band from 1951 to 1963.

His acting career began in 1959, with a series of roles on stage and on CBC Television. He began his Hollywood film career in the role of an Indian who adopts the character played by Dustin Hoffman in the movie Little Big Man. In 1970, he received an Academy Award nomination for this role and a New York Film Critics Award for Best Actor!

Chief Dan George also starred with Clint Eastwood in the 1976 movie The Outlaw Josey Wales. Other films include Shadow of the Hawk with Jan Michael Vincent, Harry and Tonto, and The Bears and I. He died in 1981 after a long and remarkable career.

Dan George:

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0313381/>

GRAHAM GREENE - ACTOR

Graham started out working for many years as a supporting actor in stage plays and TV. He really achieved fame through his role as Kicking Bird in Kevin Costner's film Dances with Wolves. He received an Academy Award nomination for this role!

On TV, Graham's appearances debuted with the CBC's production about the life of Louis Riel and a TV series in the 1970s called The Great Detective. He portrayed Mr. Crabby Tree in The Adventures of Dudley the Dragon and also appeared in the programs, Northern Exposure, Murder She Wrote with Angela Lansbury and North of 60.

He also appeared in the films Thunderheart, Die Hard 3 and Maverick. He won critical acclaim for these roles.

Graham Greene:

<http://www.answers.com/to pic/graham-greene-actor>

TINA KEEPER – ACTOR

Tina Keeper was born in Northern Manitoba, and moved to Winnipeg with her family when she was four years old. Her first experience with theatre was in 1982 when she was recruited by her sister to help out with the wardrobe of a First Nations theatre group. Out of a love of acting, she went on to obtain a double major degree at the University of Winnipeg in both theatre and history.

Tina Keeper is an accomplished Cree actor who plays RCMP constable Michelle Kenidi on the popular and critically acclaimed CBC television series *North of 60*.

Keeper has been well rewarded for her acting work, with three Gemini Award nominations for her performance as Michelle and in 1997 a Gemini for Best Actress in a Continuing Television Series. In 1998 she won the American Indian Film Festival award for Best Actress, again for her role as Michelle Kenidi, but this time in the *North of 60* based movie, *In The Blue Ground*. In addition to these acting accomplishments, Keeper is the host of the Manitoba Television Network's "The Sharing Circle", and the Woman's Television Network's "Hot Topics". She has also directed documentary films for the National Film Board.

Tina Keeper:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tina_Keeper

II. Artists

There are many well-known Inuit artists, especially noted for their carving. All of these artists have introduced the world to their rich cultural heritage and their art-forms. Their carvings are presented by our government officials to visiting heads of state, their paintings grace our stamps, and collectors from around the world seek to possess them!

KENOJUAK ASHEVAK - ARTIST

Kenojuak Ashevak was born in 1927 at a traditional camp named Ikirisaq, in the southern area of Baffin Island. In her younger years, she travelled as her ancestors had, among the hunting camps on Baffin Island and in Quebec's Arctic region. Today, she is one of Canada's best-known Inuit artists. Together with other women in Inuit communities, Ashevak began drawing at the end of the 1950s. These drawings were made into prints which were sold through the local artists' co-operative. Ashevak's best-known artwork features birds in many colours, different shapes and positions. One of her most successful works from 1960 is entitled "The Enchanted Owl," which was commemorated in a postage stamp to mark the centennial of the Northwest Territories in 1969. The National Film Board of Canada produced a film in 1961 about her life. She and her husband collaborated on a huge mural for the Canadian Pavilion at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan.

Her works began to achieve even wider fame with special commissions that began in the late 1970s and early 1980s. A book entitled. Graphic Arts of the Inuit: Kenojuak was published in 1981 about her life and artworks.

In 1990, the Indian Northern Affairs Canada commissioned her to create a commemorative artwork for the signing of the Inuit Land Claim Agreement-in-Principle. She obliged with a work called "Nunavut Qajanatuk" (Our Beautiful Land). Several years ago, Canada Post again selected "The Enchanted Owl" for a special 86-cent stamp.

Kenojuak Ashevak was named as a Companion of the Order of Canada and has received honorary Doctorates of Laws from both Queen's University and the University of Toronto. She has represented Canada many times at major art exhibitions in Korea, Europe and North America.

Kenojuak Ashevak:

<http://www.collectionscana da.gc.ca/women/002026-502-e.html>

KIAWAK ASHOONA - CARVER

Kiawak Ashoona is a master Inuit carver from Cape Dorset in the Eastern Arctic. He is the best-known sculptor of his generation. Ashoona is completely self-taught and developed his own style. It was mostly because of his sculptures that Inuit art began to be widely appreciated across North America and the world.

Ashoona had a big influence on younger carvers because of his strong individual style and imagination, and by the amazing detail in his carvings. His work has been featured in exhibitions across North America and Europe. Many of the finest galleries and collections hold examples of his carvings.

Kiawak Ashoona:

http://www.naaf.ca/html/k_ashoona_e.html

PITSEOLAK ASHOONA - ARTIST

Ashoona was an Inuit artist who was raised on Baffin Island. She was considered to be one of the best Inuit artists from Cape Dorset, and produced more than 7,000 original works of art! She was also an author. Her work demonstrated her love and detailed knowledge of traditional Inuit life. Her published books include, Pictures Out Of My Life and Language: English and Eskimo. Ashoona received many awards, including the Canada Council Senior Arts Grant and the Order of Canada. She was also invested as a member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts.

Pitseolak Ashoona:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitseolak_Ashoona

DAPHNE ODJIG - ARTIST

Daphne Odjig is one of Canada's best-known Aboriginal artists. A member of the Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation, she was born in the community of Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island in 1919. Her career began to develop in the 1960s, with the success of her works featuring the Cree people of northern Manitoba. Odjig works in many different media, including oil on masonite, pastel on paper, acrylic on paper and coloured pencils.

In her long and successful career, she has participated in over 30 solo and 50 group exhibitions of her work. Examples of her work are held in the collections of the Canada Council Art Bank, the National Gallery of Canada, the McMichael Canadian Collection and the Tom Thompson Gallery. She has received commissions from Expo '70 held in Osaka, Japan, and the Museum of Man and Nature in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Odjig was also appointed to the Order of Canada in 1986 and elected to the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in 1989. She has also won many other prestigious awards.

Daphne Odjig:

<http://www.bearclawgallery.com/Artists.aspx?ArtistID=25>

III. Athletes

ALWYN MORRIS, OLYMPIC ATHLETE

Alwyn Morris is a member of the Mohawk community of Kahnawake, near Montréal. He came to international fame as a world-class kayaker in the 1984 summer Olympics in Los Angeles when he won a gold medal for the 1,000-metre two-man race and the bronze medal for the 500-metre two-man race. Morris raised an eagle feather for the Aboriginal people of Canada upon receiving his medal. He was subsequently appointed Ambassador of Youth for Canada and named to the Order of Canada.

Morris studied history and archaeology before taking on the demanding training to become a world-class kayaker. He decided to retire from competition and work with troubled Aboriginal youth, because he had been profoundly moved by the unhappy situation of some Aboriginal young people he had seen on reserves in British Columbia. Because he always knew exactly what he wanted to do, Morris was greatly troubled to realize that some Aboriginal youth had very little self-respect or self-awareness. For the next 10 years, he crossed the country, maintaining and promoting educational initiatives and prevention programs for drug and alcohol abuse. His accomplishments today, based on 14 years of work and dedication, are extraordinary.

One of his first successes was the National Aboriginal Coaching Leadership Program, and he also became the national spokesperson for the Parents Resource Institute on Drug Education (PRIDE). Next, he helped create the Alwyn Morris Educational and Athletic Foundation to offer opportunities to youth. Morris continues today as its president.

Alwyn Morris:

<http://www.morrismohawk.ca/en/media-room/alwyn-morris.html>

BRIAN TROTTIER, HOCKEY

Born to a Cree/Chippewa father in Val Marie, Saskatchewan, Brian Trottier was the 22nd player to be selected in the 1974 National Hockey League (NHL) draft. He and his team, the New York Islanders, won the Stanley Cup four years in a row, beginning in 1980. Throughout his 18 seasons with the NHL, # "19" enjoyed a reputation as a tough player with formidable scoring abilities. Many fans consider him one of the greatest players in the NHL.

At age 17, Trottier played his first professional game and later won the NHL's "Rookie of the Year" award. He later won the Hart Trophy (Most Valuable Player) and in 1980 the Conn Smythe trophy (Most Valuable Player in the Stanley Cup Playoffs). He stands eighth on the list of all-time NHL scorers.

His statistics are amazing: he has played 1,279 games, scored 524 goals, had 901 career assists, received 1,425 total points and a total of 912 minutes in penalties. His almost unbeatable personal scoring records include: the greatest number of goals by a player in a game; the highest number of games by a player in a career; the greatest number of points by a player in a game; and the greatest number of points by a rookie in a single season. Playing as an offensive forward, Trottier led the Islanders to win four Stanley Cups from 1980 to 1983, and then two more while playing with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Trottier worked as an assistant coach for the Pittsburgh Penguins after his retirement in 1994. He has been inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame, and recently received a National Aboriginal Achievement Award for his contribution to professional hockey. He hopes to become an NHL head coach.

Brian Trottier:

www.legendsofhockey.net/html/spot_oneononep199702.htm

WANEK HORN, WATER POLO

Waneek Horn is a member of the Kahnawake Mohawk Nation located near Montreal, Quebec. She is an exceptional athlete and participated in the Sydney 2000 Olympics as co-captain of Canada's national women's water polo team.

In 1989, she attended high school in Ottawa and began playing water polo where it was quickly seen that she was a natural. Waneek's water polo career hit a high point when she won a Gold medal with the Canadian team at the 1999 Pan-Am games. She is considered to be one of the best water polo players in the world!

Waneek graduated from Carleton University in 1999 with a degree in Political Science and while at Carleton, she won the Female Athlete of the Year award three times.

She is involved in a variety of other activities, including holding a position as a part-time television host with the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN).

Waneek Horn:

www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/women/002026-234-e.html

TOM LONGBOAT, TRACK & FIELD

Born in 1887, marathon runner Tom Longboat was an Onondaga who set a record when he won the Boston Marathon in 1907, with a winning time of 2 hours, 24 minutes and 24 seconds! This was 5 minutes faster than the previous best time. He earned the name of the “Bronze Mercury”, (after the classical Mercury, swift messenger of the gods.)

Tom Longboat was inducted into the Canadian Indian Hall of Fame. He retired from distance running and competitions in 1912. He died in 1949. To commemorate and honour him the Akwesasne Mohawk School in southern Ontario holds an annual long-distance race in his honour.

Tom Longboat:

www.histori.ca/minutes/minute.do?id=14298

DARREN ZACK, BASEBALL

Darren Zack is a record-winning professional softball pitcher for the Toronto Gators team. He is an Anishinabe from the Garden River First Nation in Ontario.

In 1993, the Toronto Gators team, with Zack as pitcher, won the International Softball Congress Championship, the first time since 1946 that a Canadian team had won this championship. They then won again in 1995! He was also part of Team Canada and they won two gold medals for softball in the Pan-American Games.

Darren Zack:

Www.naaf.ca/html/d_zack_e.html

IV. Fashion Designer

DOROTHY GRANT - FASHION DESIGNER

Dorothy became famous for her stunning creations in the 1980's which combine high-fashion with elements of the traditional Haida culture of which she is a member. The new style was widely declared to be “wearable art” and since that time she has been a leader in the Aboriginal fashion industry.

Her work has also been well received internationally, and among her clients are: former Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development - Jane Stewart, Assembly of First Nations National Chief - Phil Fontaine, Inuit singing star - Susan Aglukark and several Hollywood stars and entertainers.

In 1994, she opened the Dorothy Grant Boutique in downtown Vancouver, and annual sales are fast approaching the half-million- dollar mark!

Her "Hummingbird Copper Panel Dress," is part of the permanent collection housed in the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Many of her other designs are in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada.

Dorothy Grant:

www.dorothygrant.com/pr/bio.html

V. Filmmakers

ALANIS OBOMSAWIN, DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER

Alanis Obomsawin is a member of the Abenaki First Nation, located on the Odanak Reserve near Montreal. She has 15 films to her credit, as a director, in her more than 25 years of experience. Her films tell the stories of Aboriginal people and their struggles to overcome injustice.

Before becoming a filmmaker, she originally worked as a singer/storyteller in the 1960's, then she began her film career at the National Film Board in 1967. Alanis' films include: Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance, Walker, Poundmaker's Lodge: A Healing Place and Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child.

Alanis Obomsawin:

[Http:archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/02/obomsawin.html](http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/directors/02/obomsawin.html)

VI. Music

SUSAN AGLUKARK - SINGER

Susan Aglukark was born in Churchill, Manitoba. She lived much of her childhood in a small town named Arviat in Nunavut on the shore of Hudson Bay. When she was a young adult, she moved to Ottawa to work for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and later with the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the national Inuit political organization. Not long after moving to Ottawa, she began her successful career as a popular singer.

Her first album was a collection of songs with other performers called Dreams for You. Her own first album, called Arctic Rose, was a great success. She has appeared on national television and radio many times, and in major newspapers and magazines.

She has performed for Queen Elizabeth II and several of Canada's prime ministers. In 1994, she received the first National Aboriginal Achievement Award ever given to an entertainer, and a top Canadian Country Music Association award.

Susan Aglukark is an official spokesperson for Nunavut and a national spokesperson for the National Alcohol and Drug Prevention Program!

Susan Aglukark:

[Http://www.expo4or.ca/program_info/documents/Aglukark-for-web.pdf](http://www.expo4or.ca/program_info/documents/Aglukark-for-web.pdf)

JOHN KIM BELL - CONDUCTOR, IMPRESSARIO

John Kim Bell is a Mohawk member of the Kahnawake Reserve, located near Montreal. He studied music extensively as a young boy, and completed degrees in performing and conducting music from Ohio State University and the Accademia Musicale in Italy. He also received degrees from Lakehead University, Trent University and Mount Allison University, as well as an award from the University of British Columbia.

He is the founder of the Canadian Aboriginal Arts Foundation (CAAF), which gives financial help to young Aboriginal people who are training for careers in the arts.

John Kim Bell has been awarded the Order of Canada and the Governor General's Confederation Medal. He was the first Aboriginal person in Canada to become a professional orchestra conductor when he was apprentice conductor for the Toronto Symphony. He also conducted Canada's first Aboriginal ballet in 1988: In the Land of Spirits.

In 1985 he established the Canadian Native Arts Foundation. Its' name was later changed to the Canadian Aboriginal Arts Foundation. The Foundation developed the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in 1994. These awards showcase Aboriginal people who have made significant contributions to Aboriginal life in Canada.

John Kim Bell:

[Http://www.johnkimbell.com/about/index.htm](http://www.johnkimbell.com/about/index.htm)

BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE - MUSICIAN, ACTOR, ARTIST, EDUCATOR and ACTIVIST

Buffy Sainte-Marie was born on the Piapot Reserve in Saskatchewan in 1941. As a child, she was adopted by an American family and lived in Maine and Massachusetts. She first became known as an

anti-Vietnam protester and Aboriginal rights activist during the 1960s and early 1970s; and for her singing career across North America and Europe with her band. She has recorded 12 albums throughout her music career. She also appeared on the TV show, Sesame Street, from 1976 to 1980.

She designs computer graphic art and is also an artist-in-residence in Santa Fe (New Mexico) at the Institute for American Indian Arts. She helped develop a Canadian Juno award category for Music of Aboriginal Canada.

She obtained a Ph.D., plus other degrees in education and philosophy, at the University of Massachusetts.

Buffy Saint-Marie:

<http://www.creative-native.com/biograp.htm>

VII. Politicians

ELIJAH HARPER - POLITICIAN

Elijah Harper was born in 1949 on a reserve called Red Sucker Lake, in northern Manitoba. He was the Band's Chief from 1978-1981.

Harper became the first Treaty Indian to be elected as a provincial politician when he served as a Member of Parliament in the Manitoba legislature from 1981 to 1992. His provincial government positions include Minister for Native Affairs and Minister of Northern Affairs. While there, he became famous for holding an Eagle feather while taking a stand against the proposed Meech Lake Accord from the federal government because it did not guarantee rights to Aboriginal people. Because he opposed it the Manitoba legislature could not ratify the accord. As a result of this the accord was eventually rejected and did not become law.

In 1993, he was elected to the House of Commons in Ottawa, where he was also a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Aboriginal Affairs. He is also known for bringing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples together from across Canada to find a spiritual basis for healing and understanding. This gathering was called the Sacred Assembly '95. The first gathering of its kind, it took place in Hull, Quebec, in December 1995. From it both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples found new ground to work together. A second Sacred Assembly took place at the Sagkeeng First Nation in August 1997, just northeast of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Elijah Harper was appointed Commissioner of the Indian Claims Commission on January 21, 1999.

Elijah Harper:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elijah_Harper

DAN GOODLEAF - POLITICIAN

Dan Goodleaf is a member of the Mohawk community of Kahnawake, located near Montréal. Goodleaf graduated from Loyola College in 1971 with a degree in political science. For a short time he followed the traditional employment of the Kahnawake Mohawks as an ironworker in the United States but soon returned to secure a position as Coordinator of DIAND's Native Youth Program in 1973.

He also held the position of Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet on Social Development in the Office of the Privy Council and served as Regional Director General with DIAND'S office in Saskatchewan. He was appointed the Director of the Native Citizens' Directorate of the Secretary of State in 1977.

In 1992, Dan Goodleaf became the first Aboriginal person to attain the position of Deputy Minister of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). He held this position from 1991 until 1995, when he was appointed as Canada's Ambassador working from the Canadian Embassy in San José for the Central American countries of Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras. He is the first Aboriginal person to serve in this capacity as well. In 1993, Mr. Goodleaf oversaw the negotiations on the proposed new territory of Nunavut, worked to help settle land claims and treaties.

Dan Goodleaf:

http://www.naaf.ca/html/d_goodleaf_e.html

CHARLIE WATT - SENATOR

Charlie Watt was a chief negotiator for the Inuit in the 1970s. He worked to prevent flooding of traditional lands and the forced relocation of the villages of his people. As a negotiator, he helped to get the best possible deal for his people in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, a new treaty signed in 1975.

Watt was a key person involved in the drafting of Canada's constitution, especially section 35, which recognizes the rights of Aboriginal people in Canada. He founded Air Inuit, the first Aboriginal- owned airline in Canada, and helped set up fisheries and many other Aboriginal businesses.

In 1984, Charlie Watt was appointed to the Senate. In recognition of his many achievements for Aboriginal people in Quebec, he was made an officer of the Order of Quebec in 1994. Senator Watt received a National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 1994 for improving the lives of Inuit in Northern Quebec.

Charlie Watt:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charlie_Watt

A Proud Legacy and a Proud Future!

The above representatives of Aboriginal people who have risen through the ranks to achieve at the highest levels of society and culture provide a ready example to all Aboriginal students that they have a proud heritage, one filled with brilliant and talented people.

It is an undeniable truth that through the sharing of themselves, their inventions and culture with the world, we have been blessed to enjoy all that they were graced to receive. Their intense spirituality and reverence for life and land, long millennia before the modern “Green Movement” arose, their art forms and their stories and medicines, all these have greatly influenced many people and to them we owe a great gift of thanks and respect!

If we can help and encourage the Aboriginal student to come forward and share his/her heritage with the rest of us, everyone will benefit from the exchange of cultures. The students will gain confidence, patience, understanding and we will develop greater appreciation and understanding.

There are many more examples of Aboriginal people who have achieved much in all arenas of life. Having the students research some of them will provide inspiration to all. It is not inconceivable to think that by following this path, we might just plant the seeds for other great Aboriginal leaders and artists who will also change and enrich the world

National Aboriginal Day June 21

On June 21st, all Canadians are invited to participate in National Aboriginal Day. This special day was first proclaimed on June 13, 1996, by Governor General Roméo LeBlanc. It followed consultations with various aboriginal groups and had taken a number of years to become a reality. In 1982, the National Indian Brotherhood (now the Assembly of First Nations) first called for the creation of June 21 as National Aboriginal Solidarity Day. Eight years later, the Quebec legislature recognized it as a day to celebrate aboriginal culture. In 1995, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended the designation of a National First Peoples Day. The Sacred Assembly, a national conference of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people chaired by Elijah Harper, called for a national holiday to celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal peoples. Finally it was proclaimed and provides all with an opportunity to learn more about Aboriginal peoples and to show our respect for their traditions, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions. On this day First Nations, Métis and Inuit people gather to celebrate and share with dance, song and performances. It is an occasion for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people to express their deep pride in their identity, heritage and accomplishments.

[Http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Aboriginal_Syllabics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_Aboriginal_Syllabics)

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2006

Part 7: New Understandings: The School and Classroom

Creating an Aboriginal Presence in Your School

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Creating an Aboriginal Presence in Your School

From different studies, Bell (2004) pointed to the following findings.

- Hold high expectations while recognizing needs and providing a variety of supports.
- Students need to be made aware of the importance of acquiring skills in the areas of literacy, mathematics, science and technology for the future. The programs offered and instruction provided helps to develop those skills.
- Monitor student progress through a variety of measurement tools and use the results to create improvement plans.
- For teachers and school leaders to be effective in working with Aboriginal students they must possess the expertise and personal qualities supported by research.
- The importance of Aboriginal language and culture needs to be recognized by offering specific programs, integrating Aboriginal perspectives into the curriculum and holding special events and celebrations.
- All staff members need to learn about local Aboriginal cultures and traditions.
- Invite local elders and community people to share their knowledge with the class.
- Reach out to the community to make families feel welcome and foster strong partnerships.

Creating a Welcoming Learning Environment

“An educational environment that honours the culture, language and world view of the Aboriginal student is critical.” (Toulouse, P.R. 2008)

First Nations education is regarded as a lifelong learning experience. School practices play a key role in encouraging parental involvement. (Cabot, 2005)

From Cabot's study the following were noted.

- A welcoming environment is important for both students and parents.
- There needs to be a climate of mutual respect.
- Parents need to share a common cause and reason for being involved key activities. (Kavanagh, 2002)
- Effective 2 way communication is critical.
- Providing support for parents with home learning activities is important.
- Involve the parents/guardians as partners in the decision making process.
- Link school and community agencies for the support of students and families.

Sample Activities

These activities would benefit all students.

- Parent handbook: Many schools currently have handbooks in place. Now is the opportunity to review its contents to ensure that it is inclusionary of all student groups.

- Homework Support: Parents want to be a support for their children; however, they do not always know how. Is there a way of providing support for parents to help them to assist their children with homework?
- Literacy and Numeracy Evenings: As educators we are close to the literacy and numeracy expectations for our students but parents need to be kept up-to-date as well. Offer workshops for parents to develop understandings around the literacy and numeracy areas.
- Community Notes: Solidify the link between school and community by posting school notices such as fun fairs in the community halls and other public areas.
- School and/or Classroom Newsletter: Communication from the students to parents usually ensures that information does arrive home. The older elementary students and high school students can create a newsletter that passes on school news to the parents.
- Orientation Days: Plan for new parents and students. An orientation day to get to know the teachers and to become familiar with the layout of the school and the activities that it has to offer can help everyone adjust to a new situation.
- Socials: The opportunity for parents to come together and share their common interest in their child's education can generate positive results for the students.
- Clubs: Homework clubs frequently provide the assistance that the students need in order to meet with success.
- Parent Organizations: Fun events can provide an initial opportunity for parents to become involved in the school. They can also lead to greater involvement as members of the School Council and other groups that give to school life.
- Cultural Days: Days when the school community focuses on a specific culture and learns about it benefits not only the students but also members of the community.

Parent/Guardian involvement and influence are key factors in the success of all students (Gallagher-Hayashi, 2004).

First Contact

The first person that a visitor meets when they come to a school is frequently the secretary. It is important that this experience be a positive first impression. A friendly welcoming face puts the new or returning parent at ease. The parent may even prefer that the secretary complete the paper work. The presence of Aboriginal art, calendars etc. adds to the environment. Other offers of hospitality might include:

- An offering of coffee, tea, water or juice is more than a courtesy it is an expression of friendship.
- Plan for the presence of other siblings and provide activities for them to do while mom and/or dad is busy. Parents can then give their attention to the task at hand.
- Older students could take the new parent and/or student on a tour of the school. This not only cultivates leadership responsibility in the student but also shows the new parent that the school cares.

- The School Corridors and Library
- An acknowledgement of the Aboriginal territory on which the school is located and a welcoming in an Aboriginal language is always appreciated.
- The addition of pieces of Aboriginal art will add colour and interest to the school environment and will also be welcoming.
- Student art work and crafts that demonstrate that they are learning about Aboriginal cultures reflects the inclusive nature of the school.
- Another idea to post lists of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal role models.
- The library may want to review existing Aboriginal books and resource materials for accuracy and ensure that there are current materials by Aboriginal authors in their collections.
- Practices such as the use of the talking stick can be incorporated into classroom strategies.
- Bulletin boards can reflect community events including those at the local Friendship Centre.

Classroom Practice

- The incorporation of Aboriginal resources into classroom teaching will create greater awareness on the part of the non- Aboriginal student.
- Create partnerships with local Aboriginal communities such as the Friendship Centres.
- Invite into the classroom various Aboriginal resource people to share their knowledge and experiences.
- The research of Swanson suggests the following for the classroom.
- Celebrate individual achievements and cultural backgrounds.
- Engage the student at different levels physical, emotional-mental, intellectual and spiritual.
- Use a variety of teaching methods visual organizers, kinetic and reflective opportunities.
- Encourage group talk and humour

Hilberg and Tharp have indicated that Aboriginal students lean toward:

- Learning from whole to part
- The use of visual organizers and hands-on manipulatives
- A reflective mode of learning, the time to complete the task and answer questions
- A preference for group and pair work

Supporting Teachers and Students

A central resource centre or individual school libraries may wish to conduct the following in order to provide materials for both teachers and students.

- Conduct an inventory of existing resources.
- Review the materials that the school currently has in place to ensure that they are appropriate for teacher and student use and are free of bias.

- Work with Aboriginal organizations and collect and purchase curriculum materials for the school resource centre.
- Organize the materials into grade specific categories.

Welcoming and Thanking Elders and/or Senators

Within all cultures there are those who are recognized and affirmed by their community for their wisdom. They are highly respected and their advice is sought not only on traditional but also contemporary issues.

Interviewing Elders: Guidelines from the National Aboriginal Health Organization

<http://www.naho.ca/english/documents/InterviewingElders--FINAL.pdf>

Why Involve Elders and/or Senators First Nation Elders and Métis Senators are integral to the maintenance and preservation of Aboriginal culture and traditions. They have earned the respect of their communities because their actions and words have conveyed consistency, balance, harmony and wisdom. The Elder or Senator is not necessarily an older person but rather one who has acquired significant wisdom and understanding of First Nation/Métis history, teachings etc. There are specific ways to share their valued knowledge and as educators we need to respect these ways.

Elder Protocol

The protocol used when approaching an Elder can vary from community to community. The Elder frequently has a helper who can provide guidance in this area. Prior to an Elder sharing his/her knowledge and/or skills the teacher and students should complete the cycle of giving and receiving by making an offering. This offering is a sign of respect and appreciation for the knowledge shared. The offering such as tobacco should be offered before the interview or presentation. It may take the form of cigarettes, pouch tobacco or tobacco ties. This offering establishes a relationship between the giver and Elder. In addition, if your school or board normally offers honorarium and/or expense reimbursement it would be appropriate to offer these.

If you would like to have an Elder open and close an event be sure to communicate the nature of the meeting or event. The opening gives thanks to the Creator and serves to bless the event.

Senator Protocol

An invitation to a Métis Senator can be made through the local Métis council or the Métis Nation of Ontario and they will provide guidance for the visit. Senators are elected for life, known for their great story telling ability and enjoy sharing their knowledge and skills. An offering of tobacco isn't necessary but an honorarium is appreciated.

Inuit Protocol

Inuit Elders are usually willing to share their knowledge and answer questions; however, they frequently are more comfortable speaking in Inuktitut. Therefore, an assistant may need to help with the translation. Tobacco is not used ceremonially in Inuit culture; however, a gift may be given in appreciation to the Elder for the wisdom shared.

For Your Information

Whether you are inviting a First Nation Elder, Métis Senator or Inuit Elder to your event consider the following:

- Always be respectful, ask permission and seek clarification if there is something that you do not understand.
- Always follow the direction given.
- For traditional spiritual ceremonies First Nation Elders and Métis
- Elders prefer that recording and photographs not be taken.
- Inuit Elders usually allow photographs during the lighting of the qulliq, the seal oil lamp.
- Consent must be received from the Elder for photographs, audio and/or video recordings.
- Do not touch sacred objects used by Elders unless the Elder gives you permission.

Part 8: Providing Support at the School Level

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A. INCREASING UNDERSTANDING

Purpose: To increase understanding about the current state of First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education

Materials: Research articles on the current state of education for First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples: The State of Inuit Learning in Canada, The State of First Nations Learning and The State of Métis Nation Learning (These Canadian Council on Learning articles are available on:

Format: Whole and small group

Process: Whole Group

1. Set the purpose of the session.

Small Group

1. Divide the group into small teams of 3. Each member of the group receives a number from 1 to 3.
2. The members gather according to their number.
3. Distribute a different article to each of the groups. Tell them that they will be reporting back to their team and recounting the important ideas from the article.
4. Each group reads the research article. Encourage them to read it aloud and either discuss it as they go along or at the conclusion. They create a list of the key points of their article.
5. They return to their original groups and each member shares the contents of the article and the main points of their discussion.

Whole Group

6. As a group and using the lists created by each of the article groups discuss the similarities and action that they feel is necessary in order to improve the situation; specifically focus on what the regular classroom teacher can do.

Assessment: Teachers record what they learned that they didn't know before and share with one another and the whole group. Make a list of the key points. This list can be distributed to the whole group electronically.

B. MEASURING SUCCESS IN FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND METIS LEARNING

Purpose: To gain a better understanding of the Aboriginal view of learning to better meet the needs of our Aboriginal students

Materials: Measuring Success in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning, by Dr. Paul Cappon, published in the May 2008 issue of Policy Options (PDF, 200 KB)

Format: Whole group and small group, personal reflection

Process:

1. Present the article Measuring Success in First Nation, Inuit and Métis Learning. The article may be read as a group or individually or presented lecture style to the whole group.
2. In small groups discuss the key questions below. Each group will assign a reporter to provide feedback to the group.
3. Share the group's findings.

Key Questions

1. Discuss the Aboriginal view of learning and compare it to our schools and society's view.
2. Review the First Nation, Métis and Inuit view of learning as illustrated in the holistic, lifelong learning model.
3. Review Table 1, Toward a National Framework for Measuring Aboriginal Learning. Discuss to what extent we are meeting the needs of Aboriginal students. What do we need to put in place in order to meet the needs of all students?

Assessment

Reflection Question: What can I do in my classroom tomorrow to make a difference in the school life of Aboriginal students?

MEASURING SUCCESS IN FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS LEARNING

Paul Cappon

The Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) has developed the world's first composite learning index to track Canada's progress in lifelong learning. However, data gaps hamper measurement of success among Aboriginal learners. CCL and its Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre, in partnership with Aboriginal people and organizations, have taken an important first step to rectify that. First Nations, Inuit and Métis holistic lifelong learning models illustrate the place of learning in the Aboriginal world view, its sources, how people learn and the connection between learning and community wellbeing. Most important, they help identify what learning success means for Aboriginal communities and provide a framework of indicators to track progress.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis face persistent barriers that hinder their opportunities for learning, barriers that far exceed those facing non-Aboriginal Canadians. In 2001, for example, more than 4 out of 10 Aboriginal children under the age of 15 lived in low-income families, according to Statistics Canada. Nearly one-quarter of on-reserve First Nations people lived in substandard housing, compared with 2.5 percent of the general Canadian population. Aboriginal people experience much higher rates of unemployment and incarceration than non-Aboriginal people. Poor economic and living conditions mean poorer health. Health Canada reports that diabetes rates among Aboriginal people are three to 5 times those of Canadians in general. Suicide rates for First Nations youth are 5 to 7 times higher than the national average, and 11 times higher for Inuit youth.

It is a mistake, however, to address these barriers without taking into account the legacy of Aboriginal historical experience. Aboriginal communities have long experienced the denial of their distinctiveness. Historical policies removed children from their families and communities for schooling (often accompanied by physical and sexual abuse), severed the links between individuals and their spiritual and cultural roots, eroded their languages, undermined their traditional leadership and denied their political rights and their right to self-determination.

Piecemeal responses to specific barriers to learning or other development challenges that ignore this distinct communal historical experience will fall short of their goals. Aboriginal experience and Aboriginal culture demand holistic responses. The challenges are many, but community regeneration is under way. A holistic approach to lifelong learning, specific to the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal communities, is one element of that regeneration.

Demographic realities make the focus on Aboriginal learning all the more pressing at the same time as they underline the enormous opportunities that await successful Aboriginal learners. In 2006, almost half (48 percent) of the Aboriginal population was under the age of 24. Compare that with a median age of 40 for non-Aboriginal people. Ten years from now, the proportion of Aboriginal children in the school system will be higher than ever (as high as 33 percent in Saskatchewan). As those children enter the labour market they will also make up a larger proportion of the working-age population. As many

as 300,000 Aboriginal children could enter the labour force over the next 15 years. With a predicted shortfall of one million workers across Canada by the year 2020, Aboriginal people and the country at large have a huge stake in the success of Aboriginal learning.

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Despite their diversity, Aboriginal people share a common vision of learning as much more than an individual pursuit. Learning is what nurtures relationships between the individual, the family, the community and Creation. It is the process of transmitting values and identity. It is the guarantor of cultural continuity. Its value to the individual cannot be separated from its contribution to collective well-being. In today's terms, Aboriginal learning strengthens a community's social capital.

Among the key attributes of an Aboriginal view of learning:

- It is holistic engaging and developing all aspects of the individual (emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual) and of the community. It stresses the interconnectedness of all life under the Creator.
- It is lifelong beginning before birth, it continues through old age and involves the intergenerational transmission of knowledge.
- It is experiential connected to lived experience, reinforced by traditional ceremonies, meditation and storytelling, and through observation and imitation.
- It is rooted in Aboriginal languages and cultures language is the essential vehicle for a culture's unique world view and values, its way of making sense of things and the key to its continuity.
- It is spiritually oriented spiritual experience and development is fundamental (manifested in ceremonies, vision quests, dreams), the avenue to knowledge without which learning is problematic.
- It is a communal activity a process in which parents, family, elders and community all have a role and responsibility.
- It integrates Aboriginal and Western knowledge an adaptive process that draws on the best from both traditional and contemporary knowledge.
- In sum, this view of learning is all encompassing and demands recognition as an integrated whole. Much damage has been inflicted on it by powerful forces from outside the Aboriginal world. Successful Aboriginal learning entails the recognition and restoration of this vision.

Existing research into and measurement approaches for Aboriginal learning may well be based on accepted and valid practices, yet they often fail to take into account the Aboriginal view of learning. How?

- They tend to emphasize learning deficits of Aboriginal people, while ignoring positive outcomes.
- They often overlook the special economic, health and social barriers to learning experienced by Aboriginal communities.
- They focus on high school or postsecondary education, rather than on the full spectrum of lifelong learning.
- They stress years of schooling and performance on standardized assessments but ignore holistic learning that engages the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional dimensions.
- They ignore the importance of experiential learning and traditional activities outside the classroom.
- The result is that conventional reporting on learning success of Aboriginal people provides only a partial picture and therefore does not support effective policy development.

The experience of two pioneering Aboriginal-led research initiatives is germane here. The First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) School Measures and Data Collection Project in British Columbia and the Assembly of First Nations' Regional Longitudinal Health Survey demonstrate the importance and viability of culturally relevant data collection and analysis.

The FNSA is a non-partisan organization committed to promoting First Nations control of education and to improving and supporting development of quality, culturally appropriate education for First Nations students. The FNSA sees the role of First Nations schools as providing “culturally sensitive environments that reflect and respect the needs of their students and the communities they serve.” The FNSA's School Measures and Data Collection Project, initiated in 2004 - 2005, conducts surveys of First Nations schools, students and parents in British Columbia.

The project draws on the results of an extensive consultation process among First Nations communities in British Columbia that sought to define standards for First Nations schools. The surveys recognize that First Nations schools are responding to a long history of difficult social, economic and cultural issues, that a range of data and indicators are needed to interpret effectiveness, and that an emphasis on positive change, rather than judgments about “good” and “bad” schools, is essential and contributes to a “safe environment for data collection.” Three years of research and data collection reflecting First Nations values have produced information that highlights areas of strength, areas requiring greater support and resources, and best practices. The result is more effective programming.

The AFN's Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) addresses the lack of reliable information on the health and well-being of First Nations. A national holistic health survey, under First Nations control, it collects and reports data concerning on-reserve communities. The RHS draws on both Western and

traditional understandings of well-being. It recognizes the need of First Nations to control their own information, and is designed to measure changes in their well-being over time, rather than simply make comparisons with the well-being of mainstream society. Phase 1, completed in 2003, involved 22,602 surveys in 238 First Nations communities. Subsequent survey results will be released every four years.

The premise of the RHS is that First Nations health and well-being is “the total health of the total person within the total environment.” The RHS employs a “cultural framework” which, like the Aboriginal holistic learning models discussed later, illustrates a First Nations cultural paradigm. It portrays well-being as dependent on cultural vitality, Western and traditional knowledge, healthy relationships and active communities. In short, it embodies a specifically Aboriginal perspective on the broader determinants of health.

The cultural framework drives the content of the RHS. It influences the themes covered, the questions asked and information produced. The assumption underlying the RHS is that indicators of wellness for First Nations communities are not useful unless they also address issues related to education, culture, language, world view and spirituality. The RHS produces consistent data for First Nations communities across the country facilitating authentic, community-based action to improve well-being.

These Canadian efforts to develop appropriate measures for Aboriginal learning and health are taking place against a backdrop of global activity with the same rationale. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is also pursuing research to improve learning outcomes for indigenous peoples. The UNPFII has identified data barriers to measuring indigenous peoples' health, human rights, economic and social development, environment, education and culture. The UNPFII stresses the importance of the participation of indigenous peoples in the selection of culturally appropriate indicators.

Finally, the New Zealand government and the country's indigenous Maori are developing a statistical framework to measure several dimensions of Maori wellbeing. The framework reflects such Maori aspirations as sustainability of the Maori world, social capability, skills development, economic self-sufficiency, environmental sustainability, empowerment and enablement. Built into the initiative is a commitment to statistical capacity building. This will ensure ongoing Maori control and responsibility for the statistical framework and data.

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These parallel activities confirm the importance of recognizing distinct indigenous visions of learning and measuring progress that reflect Aboriginal peoples' view of lifelong learning. They can only augur well for the sharing of best practices internationally, while helping to give this issue the profile it deserves on government agendas.

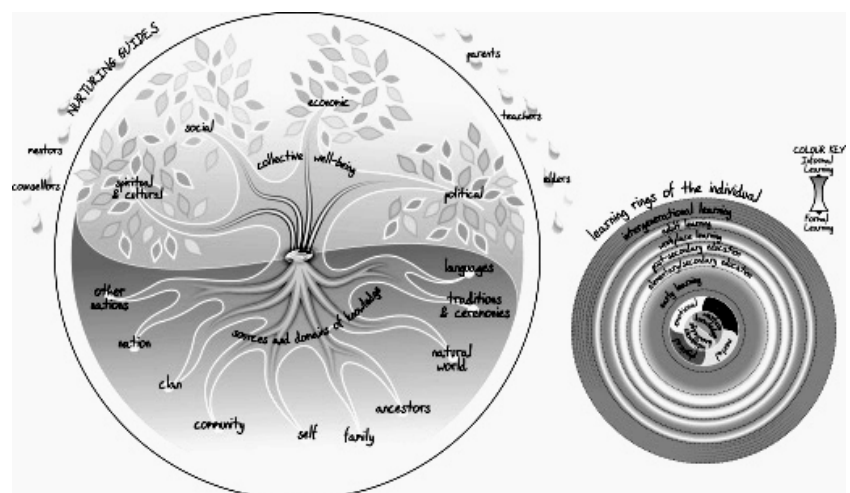
In early 2007, CCL responded to the need for a new approach by launching “Redefining How Success Is Measured in Aboriginal Learning.” This initiative was undertaken in partnership with CCL's Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre and First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities and organizations across Canada.

The primary goal was to develop appropriate tools to measure learning progress. CCL organized a series of national workshops that brought together Aboriginal learning professionals, researchers and government representatives from over 50 organizations to help develop an approach to measurement consistent with the Aboriginal view of learning.

The workshops developed three “holistic lifelong learning models” reflecting the First Nations, Inuit and Métis perspectives on learning (see, for example, figure 1. The models graphically portray the relationships between learning purposes, processes and outcomes. They also recognize the role all members of the community play in this common enterprise. They demonstrate the cyclical, regenerative nature of holistic lifelong learning and its cause-and-effect relationship to community well-being.

The models are intended to be living documents, serving as a template for communities, researchers, governments and others who are exploring their use as tools for assessment, curriculum development and teacher training. They also offer an important focal point for discussions about community planning and development. Field testing to date suggests that the models have the potential to contribute to renewed cultural connections and intergenerational bonds.

First Nations have chosen a living tree to illustrate the cyclical process of learning through an individual's lifespan. The tree links the sources of knowledge and cultural continuity with successful individual learning and community well-being.



The model has four main components:

- The sources and domains of knowledge (the roots): Representing from whom First Nations people learn and what they learn about, the roots emphasize the importance of relationships with the land, family, community, ancestors, nation and one's language, traditions and ceremonies. This highlights the potential damage that cultural discontinuity (from family breakdown or loss of language, for example) can have on a learner and his or her community. Indigenous and Western learning coexist as sources and are integrated in the trunk of the tree, where individual development and lifelong learning are situated.
- The individual's lifelong learning cycle (the rings): A cross-section of the tree trunk reveals Western and indigenous knowledge as complementary, informing the individual's spiritual, physical, emotional and mental growth. This integrative process takes place from birth through childhood, youth and adulthood. The rings give equal importance to formal and to informal and experiential learning. The outer ring portrays intergenerational learning. Its seven segments reflect the responsibility of each new generation for the survival of the seventh generation.
- The individual's personal development (the branches): Each branch represents a different dimension of personal development. Personal harmony comes when an individual learns to balance the spiritual, physical, mental (includes critical thinking and analytical skills, the practice of visioning or dreaming and First Nations language ability) and emotional (such as self-esteem, awareness of personal gifts) aspects of their being.
- The community's well-being (the leaves): On each branch, clusters of leaves represent aspects of four dimensions of community well-being: spiritual/cultural, social, political and economic. The more vibrant a leaf's colour, the better developed that aspect of the dimension. The fact that leaves grow, fall, decay and grow again reflects the cyclical, regenerative learning process that influences community well-being. A community's well-being nourishes its roots and, in turn, the individual's learning cycle.

The circularity of the model is fundamental, underlining the all-encompassing, non-linear interconnectedness of the relationships that govern individual learning and community well-being. The Inuit and Métis holistic learning models employ different graphics, an Inuit blanket toss and another living tree for Métis but the underlying circularity, the sources of learning and the interconnectedness of relationships are remarkably similar. (The Inuit and Métis models can be viewed at www.ccl-cca.ca.)

There is no holistic framework for measuring progress in Aboriginal learning across Canada. The new lifelong learning models provide the basis for this national framework. The learning models shift the emphasis from a piecemeal, external assessment that focuses on learning deficits relative to non-Aboriginal standards, to a holistic approach that recognizes and builds on success in local terms. They underline the critical connection between community regeneration and well-being and individual learning.

The models identify the relationships that contribute to Aboriginal learning – a crucial first step in isolating the indicators needed to measure progress. Table 1 lists a set of illustrative indicators that show how the models can be used to develop a national framework for measuring learning. The indicators are organized across various dimensions of lifelong learning and are representative, rather than comprehensive. They include both input indicators that occur within the learning system and output indicators that measure achievement of various learning outcomes.

The learning models also help to identify the critical data and information gaps in Aboriginal learning. CCL will continue to work with its partners to develop an Aboriginal Learning Information and Data Strategy (ALIDS) that will determine the information needed to achieve comprehensive, accurate and timely assessment of lifelong learning for Aboriginal peoples at community, regional and national levels. The ultimate goal is the development of an Aboriginal Composite Learning Index, to measure progress over time and identify the lifelong learning opportunities that contribute to the well-being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

Recent experience also demonstrates the value of the holistic learning models beyond their use as a tool for measurement.

In January 2008, CCL and its Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre partnered with the Assembly of First Nations to host a series of dialogues in three First Nations communities: Onion Lake Cree Nation, Saskatchewan; Nipissing First Nation, Ontario; and the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon.

The purpose of the dialogues was to assess the value of the First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model as a tool for community planning and development. Each dialogue involved the partners within the community principals, teachers, parents, students, social workers, recreation program leaders and political leaders who influence learning outcomes for First Nations across all ages.

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Leaders in each community were deeply involved in the planning and development of the dialogues. Participants were divided into five groups to discuss learning specific to different stages along the continuum of lifelong learning: children, youth, young adults, adults and elders. Each group was asked to undertake an asset mapping exercise, where they used the learning model to address two specific questions:

1. What are the learning opportunities that exist in my community, home, school and workplace, and on the land?

2. What are the learning opportunities that are needed in my community, home, school and workplace, and on the land?

TABLE 1. TOWARD A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING ABORIGINAL LEARNING

		Place where learning occurs (sources of learning)				
		Home	School/ institution	Community	Land	Workplace
Early learning	Formal Learning					n.a
	Informal learning	Extent to which parents read to children	Access to First Nations-specific ECE program	Access to organized activities (reading programs, play group)	Interaction with family who help understand traditional practices	n.a.
Elementary/ secondary education	Formal learning		High school graduation rate		Exposure to school field trips to sacred sites	
	Informal Learning	Use of First Nations language at home	Participation in sports and recreation programs at school	Participation in First Nations ceremonies and festivals	Practice of First Nations traditional skills (hunting, trapping)	Availability of internship programs
Post-secondary education	Formal learning	Participation in distance learning courses leading to a certification	University completion rate	Availability of community-based post-secondary programs		Availability of apprenticeship programs
	Informal learning	Exposure to First Nations culture and traditions at home	Access to Aboriginal student centres and/or support programs	Access to a community library	Use of celestial bodies (interpreting seasons, navigation, weather)	Availability of non-formal workplace training
Adult learning	Formal learning		First Nations adults returning to school to complete high school diploma			Participation in formal workplace training
	Informal learning	Reading non-work-related material at home		Community involvement and volunteering	Knowledge of traditional medicines and herbs	Self-directed learning through the Internet
Intergenerational learning	Formal learning		Proportion of teachers in school who are First Nations			
	Informal learning	Intergenerational transmission of First Nations culture at home	Involvement of elders at schools	Exposure and interaction with elders who help understand language and culture	Extent of use of traditional practices	Use of First Nations language in the workplace

Each group identified a series of common priorities across the five life stages. Participants then developed goals, expected outcomes and a plan forward for each priority. The result is the beginning of a “community plan” that identifies what is needed to help create a successful learning community and improve overall well-being.

In the case of the Onion Lake Cree Nation, 50 kilometres north of Lloydminster on the Saskatchewan-Alberta border, approximately 100 community members took part in the community dialogues. Onion Lake is a relatively large community of more than 4,000 members that has managed education on the reserve since 1981. It operates a primary school (including a Cree immersion program), an elementary school and a high school. The Onion Lake Board of Education is responsible for setting the direction of education.

Using the First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model, dialogue participants were able to visualize how learning occurs in their community, its interaction with language, culture and history, and the role each of them plays in successful learning. Community members identified nine shared priorities:

1. Becoming a healthy community spiritually, socially, intellectually and physically.
2. Increasing parental involvement in learning through teaching of traditional values and virtues in the home, at school, and in the community.
3. Increasing the understanding and awareness of kinship and genealogy.
4. Improving the fluency of Cree language among learners of all ages.
5. Improving the engagement of elders within all learning environments across the community.
6. Creating a learning space (resource centre or library) to facilitate the transfer of cultural and indigenous knowledge.
7. Learning to work together by building relationships across all agencies, organizations and families within the community.
8. Increasing opportunities for the community to understand, develop respect for, experience and learn from the land.
9. Developing entrepreneurship and employment opportunities within Onion Lake and with neighbouring communities.
10. The priorities demonstrate an approach to lifelong learning that moves well beyond the bounds of what is conventionally regarded as “education.” The holistic learning model encouraged and allowed community participants to draw linkages to broader determinants of learning success and opened up new avenues for community involvement.

These priorities, along with short medium- and long-term goals and outcomes, were presented to the Onion Lake Board of Education in the form of a community plan. However, the nine priorities make it clear that responsibility for learning reaches far beyond the education system to involve all members of the community, including families, elders, health care providers and many others. A joint report on the three community dialogues will be available at www.ccl-cca.ca or www.afn.ca in May 2008.

Paul Capon is president and CEO of the Canadian Council on Learning in Ottawa. For a copy of the CCL report *Redefining Success in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning* visit CCL's Web site at www.cclcca.ca. The site also offers interactive versions of the three learning models.

The holistic lifelong learning models are proving to be powerful resources that enable Aboriginal communities to visualize successful learning, and set out actions to achieve that vision. Perhaps as important is their continued use as a means of engagement, to foster and focus dialogue about learning and its contribution to the community, the region and the country. Online, interactive learning tools accessible from CCL's website at www.ccl-cca.ca provide a wider audience with information on how to use the models as a gateway to access data and indicators. Through use, they will also help identify important data gaps.

We are convinced that the learning models reframe what has too often been regarded as an intractable policy challenge and transform it into an exciting field of opportunity with multiple benefits for the success of Aboriginal learners, for the regeneration and well-being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, for regional and national economies and for the health and social cohesion of Aboriginal and Canadian society.

C. IMPROVING LITERACY LEVELS AMONG ABORIGINAL CANADIANS

Purpose: What can educators learn from research conducted on improving literacy levels among Aboriginal Canadians? How can this translate into practice in the school?

Materials: Improving literacy levels among Aboriginal Canadians an article from the Canadian Council on Learning

Format: Large, small group and individual

Process:

1. Facilitator introduces the article. (pg. 1 & 2)
2. In small groups members discuss Figure 1 and Figure 2 and share with the whole group. (pg. 2 & 3)
3. Facilitator introduces the role of education and then divides the group into 7 parts. Each group reads, discusses and then shares their approach which shows promise of addressing the challenges. (pg. 5-8)
4. As a whole group reflect on the advantages that these approaches have for all students.

Assessment: Individually, the members are given time to list: new information that they collected and what they still would like to know more about.

Improving Literacy Levels among Aboriginal Canadians; September 4, 2008

Data suggesting that large numbers of working-age Canadians have inadequate literacy skills have prompted calls for improving literacy practices among children, youth and adults. For Aboriginal people, the need for improvement is especially urgent.

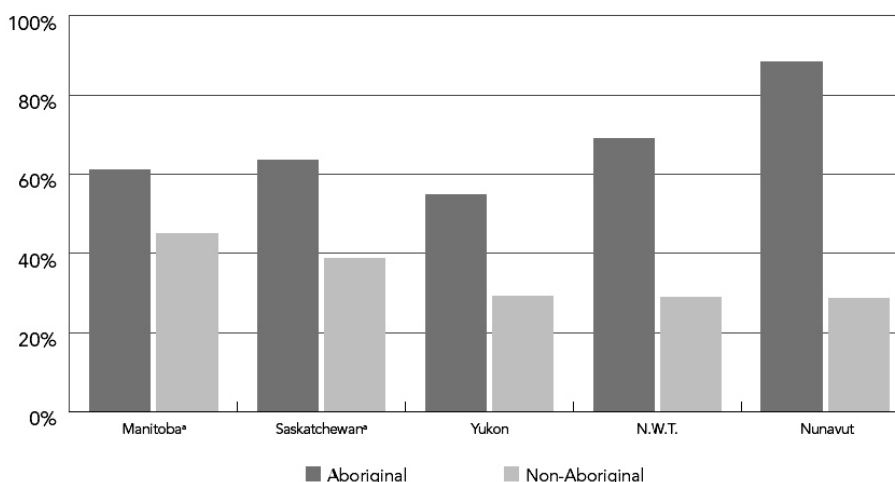
The literacy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal adults in Canada

In 2003, Canadians participated in the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS). Results from IALSS were scored on a five-level scale with Level 3 considered to be the level required “for coping with the increasing skill demands of the emerging knowledge and information economy.” [1]

Competence at or above Level 3 is associated with a number of positive outcomes, including better health, economic success, civic participation and opportunities for lifelong Learning. Among Canadians aged 16 to 65, 42% failed to meet this standard; among Aboriginal peoples, this number was even higher. In urban Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the proportion of Aboriginal adults whose literacy skills fall below Level 3 is at least 16 percentage points higher than for their non-Aboriginal counterparts (see [Figure 1].*

Figure 1:

Proportion of Canadians aged 16 and over whose prose literacy skills are below Level 3



* Only urban Aboriginal people were sampled in Manitoba and Saskatchewan

Source: Statistics Canada, IALSS 2003

It should be noted, however, that the IALSS is conducted only in English and French and was not available in any Aboriginal language. This is especially critical for Inuit living in Nunavut, for example, where 65% of Inuit adults over the age of 15 primarily speak Inuktitut at home.

2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey's data on Aboriginal learning

Data on adult literacy skills among Aboriginal populations are scarce; however, the 2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey collected data from large enough samples of Aboriginal people living in urban areas

In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as Aboriginal people living in selected communities in the territories, to answer key questions about the literacy proficiency of these populations.

The price of low literacy

2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey's data on Aboriginal learning Data on adult literacy skills among Aboriginal populations are scarce; however, the 2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey collected data from large enough samples of Aboriginal people living in urban areas in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as Aboriginal people living in selected communities in the

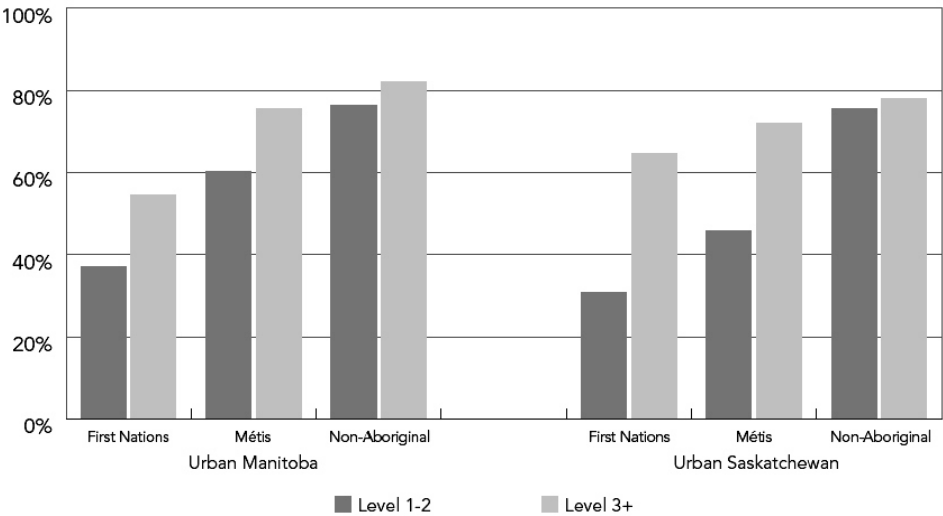
territories, to answer key questions about the literacy proficiency of these populations.

For all Canadians, weak literacy skills are associated with poorer labour-force outcomes. For example, while 77% of working-age Canadians with literacy skills at or above Level 3 are employed, only

66% of those with literacy skills below Level 3 are employed. For Aboriginal adults, the employment gap between those with strong and those with weaker literacy skills is even greater. For example, among First Nations in urban Saskatchewan, 65% of those at or above Level 3
Are employed versus only 31% for those below Level 3 (see Figure 2).

The role of education

Figure 2:
Proportion of Aboriginal people aged 16 to 65 who are employed,
by prose proficiency

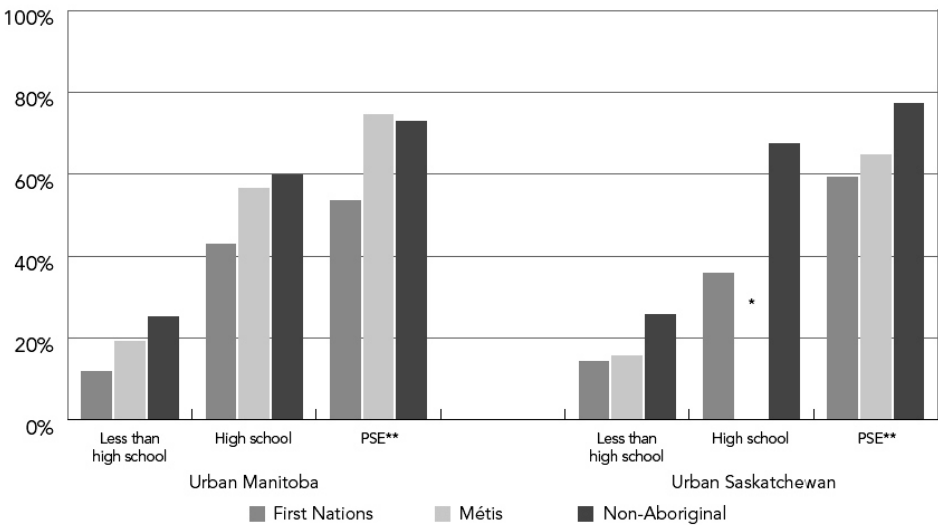


Source: Statistics Canada, IALSS 2003, (from Literacy profile of off-reserve First Nations and Métis people living in urban Manitoba and Saskatchewan)

Education contributes to stronger literacy skills among both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples: among both groups, those with higher levels of education generally have stronger literacy skills. As Figure 3 illustrates, education reduces the literacy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations and, in the case of Métis living in urban Manitoba, eliminates the gap entirely. Negative educational experiences and poor educational outcomes contribute to the literacy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. For example, in 2006 while 15% of the non-Aboriginal adults (aged 25 to 64) in Canada had not completed high school, more than one in three (34)% Aboriginal adults do not have a high-school diploma or degree. [2] There are a number of reasons for poor educational outcomes among Aboriginal populations in Canada. Among the barriers to success articulated by Aboriginal students and educators are discrimination and institutional insensitivity toward Aboriginal cultures[3] and lack of awareness of Aboriginal approaches to

learning.[4] Other factors have been identified as barriers to learning for all struggling students, regardless of ancestry. These include a lack of school readiness, [5] absenteeism and mobility. [6]

Figure 3:
Proportion of First Nations, Métis, and non-Aboriginal adults in urban Manitoba and Saskatchewan with scores at or above Level 3 on the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS)



* Data unavailable due to unreliably small sample size
Source: Statistics Canada, IALSS 2003, (from Literacy profile of off-reserve First Nations and Métis people living in urban Manitoba and Saskatchewan)

Lessons in Learning: Fostering stronger literacy skills among Aboriginal populations

Addressing the educational challenges faced by many Aboriginal students is a critical component of improving literacy skills among Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Several different approaches show promise of addressing the challenges.

- 1. Aboriginal parents' engagement in schools works to dispel harmful stereotypes, breeds confidence in parents and brings children closer to their teachers all of which have a positive impact on learning[7]

One of the outcomes of the historical use of education as an assimilationist tool is the reluctance of contemporary Aboriginal parents to become involved in their children's schooling. There is strong evidence that students are more successful in school when their parents are involved in their education. [8]

Parents are most likely to become involved in their children's education when schools actively encourage their involvement.[9] Schools can encourage parental involvement by offering meaningful

roles in school governance:[10] this is true for all parents, but this approach can be particularly effective among Aboriginal parents.[11] Schools can enhance parental involvement by keeping parents informed.[12] Once children leave elementary school, it often becomes difficult for parents to determine which teachers or school staff can provide information about their children's academic progress. Schools can alleviate this problem by assigning an advisor to each student. The advisor serves as a contact person for both students and parents, and can provide general school information as well as details about particular students to their parents.

2. Creating a school climate in which Aboriginal students feel welcomed and valued can help overcome feelings of alienation toward schooling.

Although the existence of racism toward Aboriginal students is often ignored or denied, [13] recent research presents strong evidence of the widespread existence of such discrimination. For example, in a study of discrimination among Canadian teachers, 50 student teachers were asked to assess the records of 24 students and recommend their placement in remedial, conventional or advanced programs. Student teachers systematically devalued the performance of students whom they were led to believe were of Aboriginal ancestry in comparison to their non-Aboriginal counterparts with identical student records.[14]The first step in eliminating the effects of racism in Aboriginal education is to acknowledge that it does exist and that specific efforts will be required to address it.[15] In order to address racism in education, schools must have anti-racist policies and strategies to resolve problems when they arise.[16] Such strategies include cultural and anti-racist education of staff and students. Other strategies include efforts to include Aboriginal content and approaches to learning within mainstream curricula.

3. Developing an understanding of Aboriginal approaches to learning increases Aboriginal students' chances of success.[17] A number of studies have demonstrated that, in different cultures, different aspects of learning are emphasized and valued.[18],[19] For example, researchers have observed that many Aboriginal students prefer co-operative rather competitive learning,[20] and that many learn through imitation, observation, and trial and error rather than direct instruction.[21] Given that learning-style factors can contribute to the alienation of Aboriginal students within classrooms, attending to these factors should contribute to more successful outcomes among Aboriginal students.[22]

In some jurisdictions across Canada, efforts are already underway to ensure that schools are more culturally inclusive of Aboriginal students and Aboriginal approaches to learning. For example, Manitoba's Aboriginal Education Action Plan (2004) stresses family involvement in Aboriginal student success and proposes a framework for family involvement. The plan also highlights the need for more Aboriginal teachers and teacher education programs as well as Cultural Competency and Diversity Education. These initiatives are considered a vital component for success in Aboriginal education.[23] Saskatchewan Learning's Policy Framework for Partnerships between Education System and

First Nations Authorities and Communities (2003) demonstrates a commitment to sharing the management of the education system with the Aboriginal community and setting up learning programs where Aboriginal history and culture are reflected in all subject areas.[24] Saskatchewan seeks to abide by a number of policy principles which affirm the shared management of its education system with Aboriginal people and acknowledge that Aboriginal cultural differences need to be reflected in the curriculum, programs and teaching methods in schools attended by Aboriginal students.[25]

4. Identifying students who are inadequately prepared to learn upon entry to school allows for their literacy needs to be met immediately. The majority of teachers know how to identify speech and language challenges, low vocabulary, poor phonetic and phonemic awareness and other obstacles to the development of literacy in the young. If these obstacles are addressed when children first start school, the pain and difficulty of remediation later will be reduced.[26] Systematic instruction in literacy has proven successful in improving the literacy levels of students whose initial performance was poor.[27],[28]

5. Diminishing the impact of student absenteeism and mobility also contributes to Aboriginal student success.

Absenteeism and student mobility are significant obstacles to school success for students.[29] Aboriginal students are among those who are more often absent and more likely to change schools.[30] Greater attention to parental engagement should help to address the problem of absenteeism by building support among parents. An earlier Lessons in Learning “Students on the move: Ways to address the impact of mobility among Aboriginal students” contains a number of suggestions for addressing the needs of students who change schools; developing strategies for successful enrolment, transition and induction, transferring student information, and building flexibility to meet learning needs.

Conclusion

As education systems across Canada struggle to meet the needs of Aboriginal students, many Aboriginal groups have expressed their desire to create their own measures of progress and success in learning and education, rather than being held to standards to which they do not necessarily ascribe. “One size does not fit all; there are many kinds of learners, many kinds of learning, and many ways of demonstrating our accomplishments. Without better research and data, we won't know where we are, where we want to go, and if we're getting there.”[31]

In collaboration with the Canadian Council on Learning, members of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities have developed three lifelong learning models to be used as frameworks for measuring the lifelong learning progress of Aboriginal peoples.[32] Ongoing work will focus on identifying appropriate indicators with which to apply these models.

Low literacy is one of many challenges facing Aboriginal communities across Canada. Addressing the underlying causes of low literacy can contribute to overcoming many of these challenges: “When we use traditional methods of teaching and learning by and for Aboriginal people, literacy nurtures a positive identity, and connects us to the land, to our families, to our communities, to our languages and to our ancestors.” [33]

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D. INTEGRATING ABORIGINAL TEACHING AND VALUES INTO THE CLASSROOM

Purpose: To gain a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the academic success of Aboriginal students.

Materials: The article is available at the following Ministry website:
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/ins_pier/research/Toulouse.pdf

Format: Whole Group and Small Group (Group members include the staff members and principal/vice-principal.)

Process:

1. The facilitator recaps the Ministry information and data surrounding Aboriginal student achievement and introduces Dr. Toulouse's article.
2. Individually, the group reads the article for the purpose of finding out what factors contribute to the success of Aboriginal students.
3. The members brainstorm what they found out from the article.
4. Also brainstorm how the school and its classrooms currently address the factors.
5. Then they are to come to the next meeting with any other actions being taken in the school as well as ideas for improvements.
6. At the next meeting the members brainstorm in groups actions that can be taken at the school and classroom levels in order to increase the integration of Aboriginal teaching and values and how they could occur.

Key Questions

1. What strategies currently work for Aboriginal students?
2. What strategies and actions are currently being taken to increase the Aboriginal students' self-esteem?
3. What new strategies and actions can be taken to support Aboriginal student success?
4. How can these ideas become part of the school action plan?

Assessment

1. Has this group experience resulted in at least one planned action for the school or the individual classroom?

Research Monograph #11

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Toulouse.pdf>

Title: Integrating Aboriginal teaching and Values into the Classroom

Author: **DR. PAMELA ROSE TOULOUSE** *is an assistant professor in the School of Education at Laurentian University (Sudbury, Ontario). Dr. Toulouse teaches Methods (curriculum and pedagogy) and is a key resource person on Aboriginal education. She is an Anishinabek woman from the community of Sagamok First Nation and has been teaching for 14 years.*

Her Research Tells Us:

A number of factors contribute to the academic success of Aboriginal students.

These include the following:

- educators who have high expectations and truly care for Aboriginal students
- classroom environments that honour Aboriginal students' culture, language, world view and knowledge
- teaching practices that reflect Aboriginal learning styles (e.g., differentiated instruction and evaluation)
- schools that have strong partnerships with the Aboriginal community

How can schools support Aboriginal student success?

Research Tells Us

A number of factors contribute to the academic success of Aboriginal students.

These include the following:

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- schools that have strong partnerships with the Aboriginal community

Integrating Aboriginal Teaching and Values into the Classroom

By Dr. Pamela Rose Toulouse
Laurentian University

A new body of research is beginning to demonstrate that Aboriginal students' self-esteem is a key factor in their school success.

1 An educational environment that honours the culture, language and world view of the Aboriginal student is critical. Schools need to meaningfully represent and include Aboriginal people's contributions, innovations and inventions.

2 Aboriginal students require a learning environment that honours who they are and where they have come from. These strategies nurture the self-esteem the positive interconnection between the physical, emotional-mental, intellectual and spiritual realms of Aboriginal students.

3 Valuing the Aboriginal Learner: Seven Living Principles

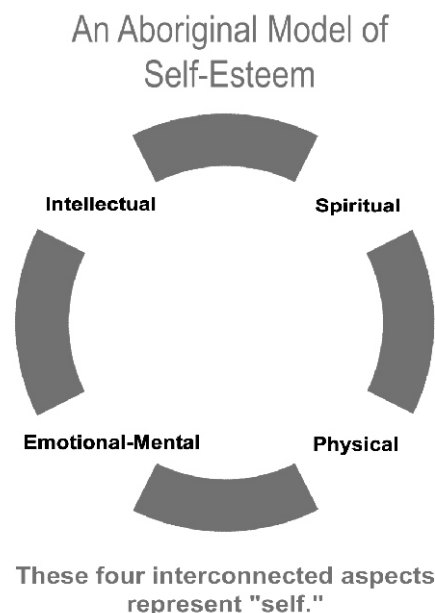
This monograph explores the relationship between Aboriginal students' self-esteem and educational attainment. The key questions that guide this discussion are:

1. What strategies currently work for Aboriginal students, and why are they so important for creating meaningful change?
2. What are the day-to-day implications for educators endeavouring to ensure Aboriginal student needs are met?

The discovery and pursuit of potential answers will occur through examining pre-existing research. The inquiry below proceeds in light of a cultural framework generated by the "living teachings" of the Ojibwe people (see Table 1).

1. Respect

This principle is central to the success of the Aboriginal student; it is crucial that Aboriginal students feel they have a place in our schools and that teachers have high expectations of their potential. This can be achieved by ensuring that our own belief in the Aboriginal student is one of utmost respect. Educators can promote a positive learning experience for Aboriginal students



by ensuring that their culture is represented in the classroom. It is also key that these students know that their teachers care about them and have the highest regard for their learning. Respect (in Ojibwe terms) means knowing that we are sacred and that we have a place in this world. This is how we need to foster and support our Aboriginal students.

4 The implications for practice, and what this means for the classroom, can be found in the following applications:

- Aboriginal cultures are celebrated throughout the school program.
- The library has a broad range of Aboriginal books and resources.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples throughout the curriculum and acknowledge the uniqueness of Aboriginal cultures.
- The Aboriginal territory, on which the school is located, is acknowledged at the door (a welcoming in an Aboriginal language).

These strategies show respect for Aboriginal people and ensure that Aboriginal students feel they are part of the school.

Table 1
Ojibwe Good Life Teachings and Implications for Education

Teaching	Implications for Education
Respect	Having high expectations for the Aboriginal student and honouring their culture, language and world view in our schools
Love	Demonstrating our belief (as educators) that all Aboriginal students can and will succeed through our own commitment to their learning-teaching styles
Bravery	Committing to change our school curriculum through including the contributions, innovations and inventions of Aboriginal people
Wisdom	Sharing effective practices in Aboriginal education through ongoing professional development and research that focuses on imbuing equity
Humility	Acknowledging that we need to learn more about the diversity of Aboriginal people and accessing key First Nation resources to enhance that state
Honesty	Accepting that we have much to learn from one another and reviewing the factors involved to encourage change in the education system (increased parental-guardian involvement, teacher education)
Truth	Developing measurable outcomes for Aboriginal student success and using them as key indicators of how inclusive our curriculum and pedagogy really are

Note: The seven good life teachings are values/principles that are central to the Anishinabek.

2. Love

This principle requires a commitment to supporting Aboriginal students' learning styles. Hilberg and Tharp⁶ have identified that Aboriginal students lean towards:

- holistic education (learning from whole to part)
- use of a variety of visual organizers and hands-on manipulatives
- reflective mode of learning (time to complete tasks and answer questions)
- preference for collaborative tasks (group and pair work)

For Aboriginal students, these preferences for learning need to be incorporated in their day-to-day activities. This is how Aboriginal student success can be achieved.

3. Bravery

This principle supports the Aboriginal student by providing opportunities to highlight and celebrate their Nations. The Shki-Mawtch-Taw-Win- En-Mook (Path to New Beginnings) Curriculum Project in northern Ontario is an example of this value in action. This curriculum consists of a series of First Nation units (with resources) that meet the Ministry of Education expectations a beautiful collection of lessons and activities (Kindergarten to Grade 12) that honours the contributions of Aboriginal people. The units all begin with Aboriginal expectations and are guided by local Elders.

7 The implications for classroom practice include the following:

- draw on key Aboriginal curriculum resources and utilize them in the school
- create partnerships and establish relationships with Aboriginal communities
- highlight Aboriginal peoples by ensuring that their innovations are included
- bring in various Aboriginal resource people to share their knowledge

These approaches are bravery (in Ojibwe terms) in action.

4. Wisdom

The teaching of wisdom reminds us that we are lifelong learners. It also reminds us of the value of sharing and engaging in dialogue with “what we know.” This principle reflects that spirit of wisdom and the need for disseminating “what

Appreciating the Learning Styles of Aboriginal Students



The success of these strategies depends upon an inclusive classroom.

works” for Aboriginal students. This can be achieved through ongoing research and various professional development opportunities. For example, Swanson⁴ provides many key strategies that support Aboriginal student success. In particular, her research in a northern Aboriginal community suggests the following four applications for the classroom:

- celebrate individual achievements and cultural backgrounds
- engage the student at a physical, emotional-mental, intellectual and spiritual level
- use a variety of teaching methods with a particular emphasis on holism, visual organizers, kinesthetic opportunities and reflection
- create an environment where humour and “group talk” are accepted

5. Humility

The Ojibwe teaching of humility reminds us to reach out to others for assistance. This is a key tenet in our goal of ensuring that the Aboriginal learner has success. As educators, we need to go beyond ourselves and ask the “Aboriginal experts” key questions. It is crucial that we also go to Aboriginal organizations and communities for direction. This can be achieved by following these suggested strategies:

- work with Aboriginal organizations to collect or purchase curriculum resources
- conduct an inventory of Aboriginal curriculum resources
- organize these curriculum resources into grade-specific categories
- disseminate this information to all school boards in various formats
- The key is always to include Aboriginal peoples in any processes regarding Aboriginal children so that their education supports and builds capacity for their Nations.⁸

Strategies for Aboriginal Student Success

Wisdom Is Sharing

Celebrate Students: achievements, culture, learning styles

Class Environment: holistic, group talk, humour

Teacher Research: critical ethnography, publish, professional development

6. Honesty

The 2004 report from the Office of the Auditor General of Canada⁹ presents an alarming picture of Aboriginal education:

- There is a 28 year educational gap between First Nations and Canadians (para. 2).
- Educational achievement of Aboriginal students (and the gap between them and their

Canadian counterparts) has not changed significantly in the past 10 years (para. 10).

- The school-aged Aboriginal population is growing and is estimated at 40 per cent (compared with 25 per cent for Canadians). A strategy to close the educational gap needs to happen now (para. 3233).

While this report reflects the situation of students living on-reserve, it is also highly suggestive of the off-reserve population. This is clearly a crisis. The success of the Aboriginal learner depends on real change.

Honesty (in Ojibwe terms) means to “be and get real.” It means to proceed in a manner where responsibility and accountability go hand in hand. This is the point that we as educators have come to, in regards to Aboriginal education. The learners from these diverse communities deserve and have the right to respect. How do we proceed? Who needs to be included? Where does this change take place? Aboriginal parents and guardians need to be valued. Teacher education programs need to do more to prioritize Aboriginal inclusion.¹⁰ These are definite areas for continued exploration, research and growth.

7. Truth

Truth (in Ojibwe terms) means examining the reality and lived experiences of a situation. It is the process of coming to terms with “how things really are” and developing a plan for change. The success of the Aboriginal learner needs to be measured, and this requires clear outcomes. The success of the Aboriginal learner is clearly an indicator of how committed educators and their respective systems are to equity. We need to ask Aboriginal students and their communities, “How are we performing?” We need to keep a close eye on the educational directions (graduation, retention, career paths) of Aboriginal students to measure school success.¹¹

Path to New Beginnings Curriculum Project

Produced by Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, the Rainbow District School Board and the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation.

Available at:

www.thenewpath.ca or
www.curriculum.org/secretariat/may24.html

Looking for resources?

- Go to www.edu.gov.on.ca.
- Select Literacy and Numeracy from the Popular Topics menu.

Call: 416-325-2929; 1-800-387-5514
Email: LNS@ontario.ca

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She is an Anishinabek woman from the community of Sagamok First Nation and has been teaching for

1. Kanu, Y. (2002). In their own voices: First Nations students identify some cultural mediators of their learning in the formal school system. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 48, 98–119.
2. Bell, D. (2004). Sharing our success: Ten case studies in Aboriginal schooling. Retrieved December 6, 2006, from <http://www.sae.ca/pdfs/021.pdf>.
3. Antone, E. (2003). Culturally framing Aboriginal literacy and learning. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 27, 7–15.
4. Swanson, S. (2003). Motivating learners in northern communities. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 27, 16–25.
5. Gamlin, P. (2003). Transformation and Aboriginal literacy. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 27, 2–6.
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8. Doige, L. A. (1999). Beyond cultural differences and similarities: Student teachers encounter Aboriginal children's literature. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 24, 383–395.
9. Office of the Auditor General of Canada. November 2004 Report, Chapter 5. (2004). Indian and Northern Affairs Canada – Education program and post-secondary student support. Retrieved December 1, 2006, from <http://www.oagbvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/20041105oe.html#ch5hd3b>
10. Goulet, G. (2001). Two teachers of Aboriginal students: Effective practice in sociohistorical realities. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 25, 68–82.
11. Kirkness, V. (1998). Our peoples' education: Cut the shackles; cut the crap; cut the mustard. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 22, 10–15.
12. van der Way, D. (2001). Exploring multiple serendipitous experiences in a first nations setting as the impetus for meaningful literacy development. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 25, 51–69.

Appendix A

Resources for Teachers and Students

The following resources have been reviewed and/or tested by teachers in the classroom. At the time of compilation all of the given web sites were active. We hope that you will find them valuable in your classroom.

A. Professional Resources

1. Akwesasne (ed.). Basic Call to Consciousness. The Book Publishing Co. (<http://nativeauthors.com>)
2. Basil Johnston (1990). Ojibway Heritage. Bison Books. ISBN 10: 0803275722.
3. Baxter, Denise. Aboriginal Presence in Our Schools: A Guide for Staff. Lakehead Public Schools
4. Benton-Benai, Edward. (1988). The Mishomis Book: the Voice of the Ojibway. Traditional Teachings. Indian Country Communications. ISBN: 1-893487-00-8.
5. Bigelow, Bill & Bob Peterson (ed.) (1998). Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years - Resources for Teaching About the Impact of the Arrival of Columbus in the Americas. Rethinking Schools Ltd; 2nd. Edition. ISBN 10: 094296120X
6. Bopp, Judie, Michael Bopp. Lee Brown, Phil Lane. (1984). The Sacred Tree: Special Edition. Lotus Press. ISBN-10: 0941524582
7. Brown, Joseph Epes (2007). The Spiritual Legacy of the American Indian. World Wisdom; Cmv edition. ISBN-10: 1933316365
8. Canadian Teachers' Federation (2007). Many Voices, Many Journeys: An Anthology of
9. Stories by Aboriginal Teachers. ISBN: 088989-362-4
10. Daduto, Michael J. & Joseph Bruchac (2003). Keepers of the Earth: Native Stories and Environmental Activities for Children. Topeka Bindery. ISBN -10: 0613128125
11. Friend, Daniel (2008). Do All Indians Live in Tipis?: Questions & Answers from the National Museum of the American Indian. Smithsonian Institute
12. Graveline, Frye Jean (1998). Circle Works: Transforming Eurocentric Consciousness. Fernwood Publishing Co., Ltd.,
13. Johnston, Basil (2001). The Manitou: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway. Minnesota Historical Society Press. ISBN-10: 0873514114
14. Keoke, Emory Dean & Kay Marie Porterfield (2003). American Indian Contributions to the World: 15,000 Years of Inventions and Innovations. Checkmark Books, 2003. ISBN 10: 0816053677
15. Kulchyski, Peter, Don McCaskill & David Newhouse (ed.) (1999). In the Words of Elders: Aboriginal Cultures in Transition. University of Toronto Press, 1999. ISBN 10: 0802079539.
16. McCue, Harvey & Associates for Indian and Northern Affairs. The Learning Circle: Classroom

Activities on First Nations in Canada. (Ages 4-7) (Ages 8-11) (Ages 12- 14) (Ages 14-16)
www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/lr/ks/cr/pubs/lc8-11-eng.pdf

17. Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). Ontario First Nation, Metis, and Inuit Policy Framework. Aboriginal Education Office. Ministry of Education.
18. Ontario Ministry of Education (2007). Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students. Aboriginal Education Office. Ministry of Education
19. Ontario Ministry of Education. (2002). Native Languages: A Support Document for the Teaching of Language Patterns (Ojibwe and Cree). Ontario Ministry of Education
20. Peacock, Thomas & Marlene Wisuri (2002). The Good Path: Ojibwe Learning and Activity Book for Kids. Afton Historical Society Press. ISBN-10: 1890434531
21. Reed, Kevin (ed.) (1998). Aboriginal Peoples Building for the Future. Oxford University Press Canada. ISBN 10: 019541280X
22. Rice, Brian. Jill E. Oakes, Roderick R. Riewe (2005). Seeing the World with Aboriginal Eyes. Winnipeg: Aboriginal Issues Press. ISBN-10: 0968613861
23. Seale, Doris & Beverley Slapin. (2006). A Broken Flute: The Native Experience in Books for Children. Scarecrow Press, 2006, 0-7591-0779-3.
24. Tehanetorens (2000). Roots of the Iroquois. Book Publishing Company (TN). ISBN-10: 1570670978
25. The Alberta Teachers' Federation. (2008). Education is Our Buffalo: A Teacher's Resource for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education in Alberta by The Alberta Teachers' Association.
www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Quick%20Links/Publications/Other%20Publications/PD-80-7%202008.pdf
26. Thumbadoo, Romola Vasantha. (2005). Learning from a Kindergarten Dropout: A Reflection on Elder William Commanda's Work While at Kiche Anishnabe Kumi, Kanata, Ontario:
27. Circle of All Nations Toronto District School Board. (2006).
28. Aboriginal Voices in the Curriculum: A Guide to Teaching Aboriginal Studies in K-8 Classrooms. Toronto District School Board
29. Toulouse, Dr. Pamela Rose. (2008). Research Monograph #11: Integrating Aboriginal Teaching and Values into the Classroom. The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat.
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Toulouse.pdf

B. Websites

Web Address Descriptor

1. <http://www.inac.gc.ca> Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. (It has a variety of resources Available for children and teachers, many of which are free.)
2. www.collections.ca/read-up-on-it Read up on it: Aboriginal Stories.
3. www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca Aboriginal Canada Portal.
4. www.ammsa.com Aboriginal Multi-Media Society.

5. www.aptn.ca/ Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network
6. www.edu.yorku.ca/caas Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies. (an organization dedicated to assisting all teachers in teaching about Aboriginal Peoples)
7. www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal Schoolnet. (a website with many links for teachers and students to learn more about Aboriginal Peoples)
8. www.cpac.ca CPAC. (to order a DVD series called "Our Home on Native Land: Exploring
9. Canada's First Nations Reserves")
10. www.oyate.org Oyate. (an organization that examines stereotypes in books for children and recommends appropriate books)
11. 10.www.goodminds.com Goodminds. (a First Nations book distributor in Ontario)
12. 11.www.ktei.net Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute
13. 12.www.aboriginalexperiences.com Aboriginal Experiences
14. 13.www.occc.ca Ojibway-Cree Cultural Centre.
15. 14.www.woodland-centre.on.ca Woodland Indian Cultural Centre
16. 15.www.ronathahonni.com North American Indian Travelling College
17. 16.www.theocf.ca Ojibwe Cultural Foundation
18. 17.http://turtleisland.org Circletrail Turtle Island Native Network
19. 18.www.canab.com Canadian Aboriginal Festival
20. 19.www.naaf.ca/ National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation
21. 20.www.inuitart.org Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. Inuit Art Foundation
22. www.pauktuutit.ca Inuit Women's Association.
23. 22.www.metisnation.ca Métis National Council.
24. 23.www.afn.ca Assembly of First Nations.
25. 24.www.abo-peoples.org Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.
26. 25.www.fnccec.com/index2.html First Nations Confederacy of Cultural Education Centres.
27. 26.www.nwac-hq.org Native Women's Association of Canada.
28. 27.www.nafc-aboriginal.com National Association of Friendship Centres.
29. 28.www.ofifc.org Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres.
30. 29.www.odawa.on.ca Odawa Native Friendship Centre.
31. 30.www.aiai.on.ca Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians
32. 31.www.anishinabek.ca Union of Ontario Indians.
33. 32.www.metisnation.org Métis Nation of Ontario
34. 33.www.ontarioinuit.ca Tungasuvvingat Inuit.
35. 34.www.wampumchronicles.com Mohawk Territory on the Internet.
36. 35.www.nativereflections.com Native Reflections. (a classroom resource catalogue)
37. 36.www.MontgomeryConsulting@sympatico.ca Bill Montgomery: Haida Presenter.

C. Children's Books

1. Ancona, George. (1993). Powwow. Harcourt Paperbacks (April 2 1993) ISBN-10: 0152632697
2. Auger, Dale. (2007). Mwakwa Talks to the Loon: A Cree Story for Children. Heritage House. ISBN -10: 1894974328
3. Ayre, Robert. (1961). Sketco the Raven. Macmillan of Canada. ISBN-10: 0770500013
4. Bouchard, David. (2006). Nokum is My Teacher. Red Deer Press. ISBN-10: 08899536785. Bouchard, David. (2002). The Song Within My Heart. Raincoast Books ISBN -10: 1551925591
6. Bouchard, David. The Elders Are Watching. Raincoast Books. ISBN -10: 1551921103
7. Bruchac, Joseph. (2002). A Boy Called Slow. Philomel Books ISBN -10: 0399226923
8. Bruchac, Joseph. The First Strawberries: A Cherokee Story. ISBN -10: 1442003618 (Amazon)
9. Bruchac, Joseph & Jonathan London. (2002). Thirteen Moons on Turtle's Back. Puffin USA; Reprint edition ISBN -10: 0698115848
10. Bruchac, James and Joseph Bruchac. (2000). Native American Games and Stories. James Bruchac and Joseph Bruchac. Fulcrum Publishing. ISBN -10: 1555919790
11. Bruchac, Joseph. (2004). Many Nations: An Alphabet of Native America. Scholastic Paperback. ISBN -10: 043963590X
12. Caduto, Michael J. & Joseph Bruchac. (1997). The Native Stories from Keepers of the Earth. Fulcrum Pub; Reissue edition. ISBN -10: 1555910270
13. Campbell, Nicola I. (2005). Shi-Shi-Etko. House of Anansi/Groundwood Books. ISBN-10: 0888996594
14. Ciment, James. (2002). Scholastic Encyclopedia of the North American Indian. Scholastic US. ISBN-10: 0590227904

15. Crook, Connie Brummel. (1999). *Maple Moon*. Fitzhenry and Whiteside. ISBN-10: 0773760989
16. DeAngelis, Therese. (2005). *The Ojibwa: Wild Rice Gatherers*. Blue Earth Books. ISBN-10: 0736815376
17. De Coteau Orie, Sandra. (2002). *Did You Hear Wind Sing Your Name? An Oneida Song of Spring*. Bloomsbury US ISBN-10: 0802774857
18. Englar, Mary. (2005). *The Iroquois: The Six Nations Confederacy*. Social Studies Collections; 1st. ed. ISBN-10: 0736813535
19. Ense, Ken. *Dream Catcher*. Kenjgewin Teg. Ed. Institute., P.o. Box 328, 30 Lakeview Dr., M'Chigeeng, ON P0P 1G0 www.thenewpath.ca/Shared%20Documents/Shki%20Product%20Catalogue.pdf
20. Ense, Ken. *The Creation of Turtle Island*. Kenjgewin Teg. Ed. Institute., P.o. Box 328, 30 Lakeview Dr., M'Chigeeng, ON P0P 1G0 www.thenewpath.ca/Shared%20Documents/Shki%20Product%20Catalogue.pdf
21. Erdrich, Louise. (2002). *The Birchbark House*. Hyperion Pub. ISBN -10: 0786814543
22. Esbensen, Barbara Juster. (1991). *The Star Maiden*. Tandem Library ISBN-10: 0785761586
23. Fitzpatrick, Marie-Louise. (1998). *The Long March*. Ten Speed Pr; Illustrate edition. ISBN-10: 1885223714
24. Gaines, Richard M. (2000). *Iroquois*. Checkerboard Books. ISBN -10: 1577653734
25. Harper, Maddie. (1998). *Mush-hole: Memories of a Residential School*. Sister Vision Press. ISBN -10: 0920813984
26. IPELLIE, ALOOTOOK (2007). *The Inuit Thought Of It: Amazing Arctic Inventions*. Annick Press. ISBN -10: 1554510872
27. Johnston, Basil H. (1990). *Tales the Elders Told: Ojibway Legends*. Royal Ontario Museum. ISBN -10: 0888542615

28. Kalman, Bobbie. (2003). Celebrating the Powwow. Crabtree Publishing Company. ISBN -10: 0865057400
29. Kusugak, Michael Arvaarluk. (1993). Northern Lights: The Soccer Trails. Annick Press. ISBN -10: 1550373382
30. Lewis, Paul Owen. (2003). Storm Boy. Tricycle Press. ISBN -10: 1582460574
31. Lovie, Larry. (2005). As Long as the Rivers Flow. Larry Loyie. House of Anansi/Groundwood Books. ISBN -10: 0888996969
32. Lunge-Larsen, Lise. (2004). The Legend of the Lady Slipper. Sandpiper. ISBN -10: 0618432310
33. Martin, Kafe. (1998). The Rough-Face Girl. Puffin USA. ISBN-10: 0698116267
34. McDermott, Gerald. (2001). Raven: A Trickster Tale From the Pacific Northwest. Sandpiper. ISBN-10: 0152024492
35. McLellan, Joe & Matrine. (2005). Nanabosho Grants a Wish. Pemmican Pub. Inc. ISBN 0-921827-66-0.
36. Mishibinijima, James. Ojibwe Clans. Kenjgewin Teg. Ed. Institute., P.o. Box 328, 30 Lakeview Dr., M'Chigeeng, ON P0P 1G0_
www.thenewpath.ca/Shared%20Documents/Shki%20Product%20Catalogue.pdf
37. Mishibinijima, James. Shkimma and Sam. Kenjgewin Teg. Ed. Institute., P.o. Box 328, 30 Lakeview Dr., M'Chigeeng, ON P0P 1G0_
www.thenewpath.ca/Shared%20Documents/Shki%20Product%20Catalogue.pdf
38. Mishibinijima, James. The Loon's Necklace and Misho. Kenjgewin Teg. Ed. Institute., P.o. Box 328, 30 Lakeview Dr., M'Chigeeng, ON P0P 1G0_
www.thenewpath.ca/Shared%20Documents/Shki%20Product%20Catalogue.pdf
39. Pendziwol, Jean E. (2005). The Red Sash. Jean E. Pendziwol. House of Anansi/Groundwood Books. ISBN -10: 088899589X

- 40.Plain, Ferguson. (1990). Eagle Feather: An Honour. Pemmican Pub. ISBN -10: 0921827121
- 41.Rendon, Marcie R. & Don Lessem. (1996). Powwow Summer: A Family Celebrates the Circle of Life. Carolrhoda Books. ISBN -10: 0876149867
- 42.Shemie, Bonnie. (1993). Houses of Snow, Skin and Bones. Tundra Books. ISBN -10: 0887763057
- 43.Shemie, Bonnie. (1993). Houses of Hide and Earth. Tundra Books. ISBN -10: 0887763073
- 44.Shemie, Bonnie. (1993). Houses of Bark. Tundra Books. ISBN -10: 0887763065
- 45.Shenandoah, Joanne & Douglas M. George. (1997). Skywoman: Legends of the Iroquois. Clear Light Books. ISBN -10: 0940666995
- 46.Silvey, Diane. (2005). The Kids Book of Aboriginal People in Canada. Kids Can Press, Ltd. ISBN -10: 1550749986
- 47.Solomon, Chad & Christopher Meyer. (2007). Adventures of Rabbit and Bear Paws: The Sugar Bush. Little Spirit Bear Productions. ISBN -10: 0973990503
- 48.Solomon, Chad & Christopher Meyer. (2008). Adventures of Rabbit and Bear Paws: The Voyageurs. Little Spirit Bear Productions. ISBN -10: 0973990627
- 49.Stepto, John.(1984). The Story of Jumping Mouse. Middle Grade. ISBN -10: 0688019021
- 50.Swamp, Chief Jake. (2003). Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message. Fitzhenry & Whiteside. ISBN -10: 1880000547
- 51.Szulhan, Rebecca. (2008). Elijah Harper: Remarkable Canadians. Saunders Book Company. ISBN: 9781553883098
- 52.Taylor, C.J. (1993). The Secret of the White Buffalo. Tundra Books ISBN-10: 0887763219
- 53.Todd, Anne M. (2005). The Ojibwa: People of the Great Lakes. Social Studies Collections. ISBN -10: 073681356X

54. Toye, William & Elizabeth Cleaver. (1998). *The Loon's Necklace*. Oxford University Press. ISBN -10: 0195406753

55. Van Laan, Nancy. (2002). *Shingebiss: An Ojibwe Legend*. Sandpiper. ISBN -10: 0618216162

56. Waboose, Jan Bourdeau. (2000). *Skysisters*: Kids Can Press, Ltd. ISBN -10: 1550746995

57. Waterton, Betty & Ann Blades. (2003). *A Salmon For Simon*. Topeka Bindery. ISBN -10: 0613885929

58. Wittstock, Laura Waterman. (2004). *Ininatig's Gift of Sugar: Traditional Native Sugarmaking*. LERNER PUBLISHING GROUP. ISBN -10: 0822596423

E. French Language Books

1. Ligier, Francoise. (2008). *Jacques Cartier à Hochelaga deuxième voyage au Canada. 400 coups (Les)*. ISBN-10: 2895401845

2. Novalinga, Emily. (2005). *L'echo du nord*. Soleil de minuit. ISBN-10: 2922691438

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Appendix B Glossary

Aboriginal Governance (Also known as self-government)

Aboriginal governance refers to governments designed, established and administered by Aboriginal peoples under the Canadian Constitution through a process of negotiation with the federal government and, where applicable, the provincial government. The right to Aboriginal self-government is outlined in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 as an Aboriginal and treaty-protected right.

Aboriginal Peoples

These are the descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people - Indians, Métis people and Inuit. These are three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

Aboriginal Rights

These are the rights held by some Aboriginal peoples as a result of their ancestors use and occupancy of traditional territories before contact with Europeans or before British sovereignty in Canada.

Aboriginal rights vary from group to group, depending on what customs, practices and traditions were integral to the distinctive culture of the group.

Assimilation

It occurs when a minority or outside group is completely absorbed into a dominant group.

Band

Band is defined by the Indian Act, in part, as “a body of Indians...for whose use and benefit in common, lands...have been set apart”. Each band has its own governing band council, usually consisting of a chief and several councillors. The members of the band usually share common values, traditions, and practices rooted in their language and ancestral heritage. Today, many bands prefer to be known as First Nations.

Band Council or First Nation Council

It is the band's governing body. Community members choose the chief and councillors by election or through traditional custom. The band council's powers vary with each band.

Chief

The Chief is the leader of a First Nation community or council who is elected by members of the First Nation, by the councillors according to the Indian Act, or through custom elections.

Elder

An Elder is a man or woman whose wisdom about spirituality, culture and life is recognized and affirmed by the community. The Aboriginal community will normally seek the advice of Elders on traditional and contemporary issues.

Enfranchised Indian

Historically, a person who has lost the right to status and band membership, and who has, as a citizen of Canada, the right to vote, attend university and join the military.

First Nation

This is a term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word "Indian," which many people found offensive. Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term "First Nations peoples" refers to the Indian people in Canada, both Status and Non-Status. Many Indian people have also adopted the term "First Nation" to replace the word "band" in the name of their community.

First Nation Education Authority

A First Nation Education Authority is comparable to a board of education. Most First Nations have an Education Authority, which is responsible for administering education for the community. Responsibilities include: the hiring of teachers and principals, determining curriculum, negotiation of tuition agreements etc.

Indian

The term "Indian" collectively describes all the Indigenous people in Canada who are not

Inuit or Métis. Indian peoples are one of three peoples recognized as Aboriginal in the Constitution Act, 1982. It specifies that Aboriginal people in Canada consist of the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples.

Indian Act

The Indian Act is Canadian federal legislation first passed in 1876, and amended several times since. It sets out certain federal government obligations and regulates the management of Indian reserve lands, Indian moneys and other resources. Among its many provisions, the Indian Act currently requires the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to manage certain moneys belonging to First Nations and Indian lands and to approve or disallow First Nations bylaws.

Indian Status

Indian status is a person's legal status as an Indian, as defined by the Indian Act.

Indigenous

It means "native to the area." In this sense, Aboriginal people are indigenous to North America.

Inuit

These are an Aboriginal people in northern Canada, who live above the tree line in the Northwest Territories, and in Northern Quebec and Labrador. The word means "people" in the Inuit language - Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.

Land Claim

It is a formal submission to the federal and/or provincial government from an Aboriginal community that states that the Crown has not lived up to its obligations with respect to Aboriginal or treaty rights involving land. The federal government recognizes two broad classes of claims: comprehensive and specific.

Métis Community

A group of Métis peoples who live in the same geographical area. A community may include more than one settlement, town or village in an area.

Métis Harvesting

It means taking, catching or gathering for reasonable personal use and not commercial purposes in Ontario of renewable resources by Métis Nation of Ontario citizens. In 2004 an agreement was made between the Métis Nation of Ontario and Ministry of Natural Resources which recognized the Métis Nation of Ontario's Harvest card system. Those who hold a certificate and Métis citizenship can exercise their harvesting rights within their traditional territory.

Métis People

Métis people are those of mixed First Nation and European ancestry. The Métis history and culture draws on diverse ancestral origins such as Scottish, Irish, French, Ojibwe and Cree.

Nation

A group of Aboriginal people who have a shared sense of national identity and are the largest population in a territory or collection of territories.

Non-status Indian

People who consider themselves to be Indians or members of a First Nation, but the Government of Canada doesn't recognize them as Indians under the Indian Act. Non-status Indians aren't entitled to the same rights and benefits available to Status Indians.

Many people in Canada lost their Indian status through discriminatory practices in the past. For example:

- In 1857, the concept of "enfranchisement" allowed Indians to give up their status. If a man did this, members of his family would also lose their status.
- Starting in 1869, women who married non-Indians lost their status and their children weren't entitled to be registered as Indians.
- In 1876, "enfranchisement" became mandatory for Indians who became doctors, lawyers, Christian ministers or earned a university degree.
- Starting in 1951, children whose mother and grandmother on the father's side of the family weren't registered as Indians before their marriages could be registered as Indians, but lost their status when they turned 21. This was known as the "double mother" clause.
- Bill C-31, An Act to amend the Indian Act, was passed in 1985 to remove discrimination and restore status to people who had lost their Indian status.

Currently, a provision known as the "second generation cut-off rule" terminates status after two generations of intermarriage between Indians and non-Indians. For example, a child with one Indian and one non-Indian parent can be registered, but if that child later marries a non-Indian person, his or her children can't be registered.

Nunavut

Canada's newest territory, created on April 1, 1999 when the Northwest Territories was divided in two. Nunavut means "our land" in Inuktitut. Inuit, whose ancestors inhabited these lands for thousands of years, make up 80 percent of the population of Nunavut. The new territory has its own public government.

Oral History

It is evidence taken from the spoken words of people who have knowledge of past events and traditions. This oral history is often recorded on tape and then put in writing. It is used in history books and to document land claims.

Oral Tradition

An oral tradition is traditional and cultural information passed down by word of mouth or through songs, chants, music and storytelling from one generation to another without written records.

Ratification

It is the process by which the parties formally approve an agreement. Normally this involves a vote by the Aboriginal community, approval by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs for Ontario and approval by the federal Minister of Indian Affairs for Canada.

Reserve

A reserve is a tract of land, the legal title to which is held by the federal government, set apart for the use and benefit of an Indian band. Some bands have more than one reserve.

Treaty

A treaty is an agreement made between the Crown and First Nations with the intention of creating mutually binding obligations, which would be solemnly respected.

Treaty Rights

Treaty Rights are the specific rights of the Aboriginal peoples embodied in the treaties they entered into with a Crown government, initially Britain and after confederation, Canada. They often address matters such as the creation of reserves and the rights of Aboriginal communities to hunt, fish and trap on Crown lands. Treaty rights are protected by section 35 (1) of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Tribal Council

A Tribal Council is a body that typically represents a group of First Nations to facilitate the administration and delivery of local services to their members.

Information in this glossary is adapted from the following:

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Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H4

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Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs

(<http://www.aboriginalaffairs.gov.on.ca/english/faq/glossary.asp>) Publications and Public Enquiries. E-Mail: InfoPubs@inac.gc.ca

