Faceless Dolls
Teaching to the Spirit of the Child
Teacher Resource Guide
Teacher Resource Guide

Faceless Doll: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child Teacher Resource Guide is intended to support teachers and students to gain an understanding of the significance of the traditional and contemporary use of the faceless doll in the classroom.

It provides background information relevant to all teachers and students and provides suggested activities and resources for Grades 2. This guide is intended to support learning outcomes for children to develop a strong understanding about Anishinaabe culture, a connection to the land, and a strong sense of identity.

This Teacher Resource Guide is one unit with additional support material. While the unit is organized by grade 2 level, teachers will find activities in all of them than can be adapted to other grades as needed. The lessons contained in this unit are:

Lesson 1 Cradle Me (Zaagidwin/Love)
Lesson 2 Dolls around Turtle Island (Debwewin/Truth)
Lesson 3 Introduction of Silk Ribbon (Aakdewin/Bravery)
Lesson 4 Gifts from the Land (Gwekwaadziwin/Honesty)
Lesson 5 Seasonal Celebrations and Traditions (Mnaadendiwin/Respect)
Lesson 6 Spiritual Names (Dbadendiziwin/Humility)
Lesson 7 Celebrating our Community (Nbwaakaawin/Wisdom)
Approach to Curriculum

In the past, people grew up knowing who they were and where they came from. They learned their cultural teachings and history, and how to apply these things to daily life. Our children today need to know where they come from in order to understand who they are and where they are going. Our school curriculum needs to change to include that kind of learning. We need a curriculum that is made by our people, about our people, and for our people (Sagamok 2015, p.13).

The approach to the project, *Faceless Doll: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child* was developed in response to Sagamok Anishnawbek’s need to research and develop curriculum content that is relevant and meaningful to the community. The expectations and learning outcomes must originate from the community. Centred around local curriculum development milestones for Sagamok Anishnawbek, this unit correlates to the community’s learning outcome of connection to the land and strengthen self-identity, which comes from the Sagamok Anishnawbek Community Story. The community story documents a collective voice of community members through a community-wide consultation that used a Medicine Wheel framework to facilitate dialogue to see clearly where the community need to go and what the community need to do to get where the community want to go (Sagamok 2015). The Community Story tells a story of the community’s past, present and prioritize goals to support the realization of a positive future. The community shared their recollections and future dream on education.

Subsequent documented reports and ongoing work in local education guided the direction of this project’s process by conceptualizing this project that acknowledges numerous recommendations to keep momentum for Sagamok Anishnawbek and their educational journey. Every school is either a site of reproduction or a site of change. In other words, education can be liberating, or it can domesticate and maintain dominations. It can sustain colonization in neo-colonial ways or it can decolonize (Battiste, 2013, p. 175). The members of Sagamok Anishnawbek expressed decolonizing content in the school emphasising a need to change curriculum to include learning how Anishinaabe lived in the past.

Before colonization, Indigenous peoples including the Anishinaabe had their own systems of education. Although there were no formalized institutions, teaching methods used in communities were through language, storytelling and oral tradition, hands-on experience and being on the land. In the past, Anishinaabe Elders were teachers and respected for their knowledge. In continuing in the education of children, Elders are still a valuable human resource. The role for grandmothers was coaching young girls as they transitioned into young women to help them deal with the emotional, mental, and physical challenges they face. Grandfathers also had a role in teaching the young boys as they grow into young men so that they would fulfill their family and community roles (Sagamok, 2015, 56). Those who took responsibility to educate children and young people did so based on a healthy relationship. It was not just a job; it was a relationship (Sagamok, 2015, 71). For all learning within the classroom, it is encouraged to invite Elders to engage with the students to strengthen their relationship and for intergenerational learning to grow. As teachers are in the position of being responsible for educating children, they too, are partners in establishing healthy relations.

The role of today’s curriculum developers is reimaging education to create culturally relevant curriculum that embodies Indigenous worldviews, land-based pedagogies, Anishinaabe language and ways to develop each child physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Sagamok Anishnawbek envisions content and processes to have each child embrace their connection to the land and strengthen self-identity.

In looking back at Indigenous traditional education and types of learning methods, further inquiry led to the use and function of teaching tools for learning, specifically the faceless doll. The project *Faceless Doll:*
Teaching to the Spirit of the Child is presented in a unit that uses the faceless doll for modern-day classrooms to support connection to land and to strengthen self-identity and purpose. The approach to pedagogy by use of the traditional faceless doll, a teaching tool with purpose that existed prior to European contact, continues to be of cultural value and significance across Turtle Island. Possibly the most symbolic use of her as a teaching tool today, would be Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC) Faceless Doll project launched on June 21, 2013. The Faceless Doll project created an opportunity to educate people on the tragedy of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls (NWAC, pg. 3). Another example, Mildred Cleghorn, dollmaker, teacher, and tribal leader of the Fort Sill Chiricahua Apache (1976–95) began making dolls to represent the traditional female clothing of different tribes. Altogether she made some 40 such dolls, initially for the purpose of educating Euro-American women on the variations between Indian tribes (Gunther, 2023). The faceless doll remains a play toy for entertainment with a teaching purpose.

**Strengthening Self-Identity**

Children will take pride in their self-identity, both culturally and individually (Sagamok, 2015, p.14). The educational need for Sagamok Anishnawbek to implement relevant curriculum is supported in one research paper that students showed positive self-identity as Indigenous people, but this was not necessarily linked with successful educational outcomes. Positive self-identity as a student, however, is likely to be associated with school success (Purdie, et al., 2020, p.x) Two of the suggested ways to increase student self-identity were supportive teachers that have positive expectations and relevant curriculum. The extent to which schools and individual teachers recognize and incorporate the cultural identities of students into the school environment and curriculum is critical to the development of a positive cultural and learner identity among Indigenous people (Purdie et al., p.46).

**Faceless Doll: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child** is one approach to start implementing relevant curriculum to increase positive self-identity in students. The Seven Grandfather Teachings guide ways to create a safe environment and can support and contribute to student positive self-identity. The use of the faceless doll in the classroom can begin to address social realities that significantly inform student identity such as confronting complex issues such as the color of our skin. The ways in which Aboriginal identity is experienced because of skin colour is the source of many tensions in discussions of Aboriginal issues, not only between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, but between Aboriginal people as well (Aboriginal identity & the classroom, nd). The faceless doll has the purpose to teach to the child, regardless of their color of skin. She herself is made of natural materials, gifts from Mother Earth such as deer or moose hide. It is possible to dye the hide, and it is important to emphasis with children, she still identifies as being made from deer or moose hide no matter her color. This can be shared with the children, no matter the color of skin, we are Anishinaabe.

**Connecting to Land**

Teachers and educators should be leading and inspiring the minds of our future generation while keeping balance on other aspects of life like staying connected to our land (Sagamok, 2015, p.22). Land-based learning can foster a sense of connection to the community, its history and to their identity as Anishinaabe. According to First Nations With School Collective, in relation to land-based learning, was the importance of connecting basic skills (making spiels, spigots to tap trees) to the teachings (give thanks to your relative), values (stewardship) and meaning (all our relations) of the culture. It is in this rich learning environment that the most connection to identity, place and respect for the land occurs (Sagamok, p.13).

The faceless doll teaches how she originally came from harvesting the natural materials from the
Native American doll makers have a long tradition of using materials gathered from the natural world. Many of these materials are used for other activities, from food and clothing to houses. For example, people use birch bark for containers, canoes and housing. Corn is grown for food and the husks woven into mats and containers; palmetto leaves are woven into baskets and used as roofing. What dolls are made of tells us much about the natural resources available to the creators (Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, n.d.). The faceless doll has many teachable concepts to respect the land that appeal to the young and young at heart. In addition, a suggested recommendation for Sagamok Anishinabek is to support the identity of Anishinaabe children in the school while preparing them for family life, career opportunities and future community life. The faceless doll is a teaching tool that can fulfill the recommendation.

The project limitations are due to the nature of the gender-specific teaching tool meant for young girls. With that in mind, activities are incorporated to appeal to young boys to engage them in the learning experience. Another project limitation to the use of the faceless doll in the classroom, is how much imagination the teacher is willing to try.

References

Aboriginal identity & the classroom. indigenousfoundations. (n.d.). https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/aboriginal_identity__the_classroom/


Lesson 1

Faceless Dolls: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child

Cradle Me with Love

Time frame: 2 class periods

Overall Aim of the Lesson

Students will learn about the faceless doll (Anishinaabe) as a teaching tool to explore about Anishinaabe culture. Students will explore the history and use of baby carriers for women around the world. They will also evaluate whether certain tasks are easier to perform with a cradleboard (Tikinaagan).

Introductory

Cradleboards were used by Indigenous people to carry and secure babies. This allowed individuals to carry out responsibilities and for safe travel. Mini cradleboards were also made for young girls to play with and teach responsibilities on becoming a mother. As well, Anishinaabe children were nurtured by their mother and other extended family members, grandmothers, and other women such as aunt. Anishinaabe family units include extended relations.

The cradleboard symbolizes kinship and identity as described in “there is no end to relationship among the Indians”: Ojibwa families and kinship in historical perspective by Peers and Brown. It represents the role of the extended family in raising a child. Each adult had a role in making the cradleboard. The child's father made a board by smoothing and carving it and attached a footboard at one end and a bent handle-like bar on top. The mother made a bag for the baby with moss around it as a diaper. An outer bag decorated by women was made to lace up the front and secure the child to the board. The top handle protected the child in case the cradleboard fell over, as well items such as beads, bells and dreamcatchers were attached, ensuring the protection and well-being of the baby.

Preparation Ahead of Time

- Teacher can purchase a Faceless Doll (Anishinaabe) from online or a local artist, or use a photos in BLM.
- Reproduce Black Line Master (BLM) I am Kwezens
- Reproduce World Map
- Reproduce Venn diagram
- Various print out or online pictures of women around the world (Africa, Asia, Americas) using baby carriers

Materials

- Faceless doll
- BLM I am Kwezens
- Our Third Mother, A Chipewa Tale. (chapter’s pp 39 to 49) in Dolls & Toys of Native America: A Journey Through Childhood book by Don McQuiston and Debra McQuiston
- Venn Diagram available at Venn2.pdf (studenthandouts.com)
- World Map available at World-Map-Outline-Worksheet.pdf (naturalhistoryonthenet.com)
- Tikinaagan Kit (1 per student) available at http://www.edigenoustraditions.ca/indigenouslearningkits/tikinagan/
- Plastic beads
- Glue
- Markers
- Variety of stickers
Specific Curriculum Link

Ontario Curriculum Grade 2 Social Studies
Students will

A3.6 identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various community celebrations and events

B1.1 compare selected communities from around the world, including their own community, in terms of the lifestyles of people in those communities and some ways in which the people meet their needs

B1.3 demonstrate an understanding of the importance of sustainability in people’s interrelationship with their natural environment and of some of the consequences of sustainable and/or non-sustainable actions

B3.2 identify continents, significant bodies of water, the equator, poles, and hemispheres, using a globe, print, digital, or interactive maps, and/or a mapping program

Launch

Introduce Kwezens to the classroom and read I am Kwezens. Share Zaagidwin/Love Grandfather teaching to class with emphasis on student responsibilities of loving, sharing, helping, caring. Kwezens would like to know how can we show Love to our family, community, classmates, and the mother earth? Why is Love a good way to live your life everyday?

Today, Kwezens will show us the important use of baby carriers around the world, found in Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Europe, and Australia. Kwezens is carrying a mini cradleboard that was used by the Anishinaabe. Other Indigenous Nations also used baby carriers.

Explain to students that mini cradleboards were made for children to play with and to teach young girls about taking care of their own child and as part of an extended family they will be assisting with caring for children.

Next, students are to evaluate whether certain tasks are easier to perform with a cradleboard. Using dolls or toys, have students perform a daily classroom task such as drawing or painting with dolls or toys in their hand. Students are to discuss the difficulties, if any, and their experience in carrying their doll/toy while trying to perform their task.
Afterwards, relate Anishinaabe life (maple syrup camps, harvesting, making crafts) and discuss Why would Anishinaabe adults need to have their hands free?


**Talk Time**

In the story of *Our Third Mother: A Chippewa Tale*, why do you think the cradleboard is called our third mother? What were the names in the story? What do you think the names mean? Why do you think a tikinaagan had a hoop built in the design?

**Challenge**

In pairs, students complete Around the World worksheets using online maps to identify the continents and significant bodies of water. Task students with researching two baby carriers around the world and instruct students to complete the Venn diagram to compare. Think about how your selected communities meet their needs for baby carriers. What natural materials are used and why?

**Coming together**

As a class, share their selected communities and identify what continent the communities are located on. After coming together, students will be instructed to complete their own mini-tikinaagan.

**Extension**

Mother’s Day (*ningashi-giizhigad*) honors and celebrates mothers. Today, many Anishinaabe family units include extended relations. *DIY Navajo Cradleboard Craft for mother’s day* by Ms Linturtle is an activity students can prepare for Mother’s Day or to share as a gift for any special occasion. If time allows, students may make more than one cradleboard to gift to special women in their family. Available here, Ms Linturtle (2014, May 10). *DIY Navajo Cradleboard Craft for mother’s day*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tz8soRnaCe4

**To think on**

What impact do you think timber companies and the changing environment had on making the tikinaagan?

Today, we continue to see the tikinaagan being made and designed for cultural value. How is the tikinaagan of cultural value to the Anishinaabe?

**Additional information on topic for teachers:**


*Dakonaagan (cradleboards)*. Ojibwe.net. (2023, April 15). https://ojibwe.net/projects/tiginaagan-cradleboards/


Faceless Dolls: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child

Dolls around Turtle Island

Time frame: 2 class periods

Overall Aim of the Lesson

Students will investigate various Indigenous Nations on Turtle Island through the study of dolls and the natural materials used by dollmakers. Students will compare and contrast dolls throughout history, culture, and place.

Introductory

Indigenous people have always made dolls. Dolls represent the diverse cultures, histories and lifestyles of their nations. Dolls were made of natural materials, such as wood, leather, fur and corn husk, which decompose in temperate climates, meaning few examples have survived. Through time, the use of traditional dolls in North America and the methods of making them changed. Dolls were play toys for children, and for education, and many were designed to sell to tourists and doll collectors. Traditional dollmakers still exist today.

Indigenous women continue to create dolls and shared why they became traditional dollmakers. For example, Mildred Cleghorn, an Apache dollmaker, began making dolls to represent the traditional female clothing, initially for the purpose of educating Euro-American women on the variations between Indian tribes. Mildred made dolls because of the importance of passing down knowledge of tribal clothing. Her dolls are now kept within families to be passed down from generation to generation.

Cherokee Lorene Drywater remembers her first doll at five years old, she wanted a store-bought doll. While walking with her mother to the creek to wash clothes, Lorene threw a tantrum, her mother told her to pull up some plants and wash the roots off in the creek. Then, her mother showed her how to make them into a doll. Lorene continued making dolls since then, becoming knowledgeable with buffalo grass dolls.

Preparation Ahead of Time

- Reproduce copies of Native knowledge 360°-Smithsonian in your classroom: Native American dolls
- Review The Wishing Doll

Materials

- Native American dolls or images of various dolls.
- Native knowledge 360°-Smithsonian in your classroom: Native American dolls available at http://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/Smithsonian-in-Your-Classroom-Native-American-Dolls
- The Wishing Doll book by Tyrese Gould Jacinto
Debwewin/Truth
To be real and genuine. The student is unique and follows his or her own path. The student is developing his/her own strengths.

Anishinaabemowin
Enkamgaak: In and Around Sagamok
Anishinaabemowin vocabulary that we might use when describing geographical features in and around Sagamok. Available at http://app.learningbird.com/classes/bndvaryiovd7wvq1/lessons/qwczwiiwwlfb9e91?returnTo=%2Fclasses%2Fbndvaryiovd7wvq1

Specific Curriculum Link
Ontario Curriculum Social Studies
Students will:

A3.6 identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various community celebrations, traditions, teachings, ceremonies, and events

B.2.2 gather and organize information and data about some communities, location, climate and physical features, and the ways of life of people in these communities.

B3.7 describe selected communities around the world, including at least one contemporary First Nation, Métis, or Inuit community, with reference to their major physical features, wildlife, and some aspects of their culture

Launch
As a class, share the 7 Grandfather teaching of Debwewin/Truth. Discuss the meaning of strengths. What is the meaning of strength? What are tangible and intangible strengths?

Today, Kwezen will introduce us to various dollmakers from around turtle island. There are not many books on traditional dolls. Kwezen is excited to share the book The Wishing Doll by Tyrese Gould Jacinto.

Explain that it is a story about a girl who lived in the Cohanzick Lenape village now called New Jersey. Ask students to listen for ways the Lenape lived and their use of their environment.

Talk Time
Discuss ideas from the story (food, clothing, special activities). Mahala was gifted with a new, decorated doll. Why did Mahala learn to make dolls of her own?

Challenge
Follow and complete Step 2 to Step 6 in the Lesson plan found in Native knowledge 360°-Smithsonian in your classroom: Native American dolls (pg. 4-5).
Coming together

As a class, complete Step 7 (pg.5), make a master chart to record each group’s responses. With the class, look for similarities and differences in the group responses to the questions. Discuss aspects of the interrelationship between the natural environment of selected communities and the ways in which people live.

Additional information on topic for teachers:


To think on

What other types of tangible and intangible knowledge can be passed down from one generation to generation? Aside from dolls, what other types of craftsman do you know?

Extension

Invite students to make Corn Husk Dolls. There are variations of lesson plans to make corn husk dolls. Lesson plan and the Legend Of The No Face Doll, available here at http://snpolytechnic.com/sites/default/files/docs/resource/9_haudenosaunee_arts_dolls.pdf
Arrival of Silk Ribbon

Time frame: 2 class periods

Overall Aim of the Lesson

Students will learn history and how the use of silk ribbon decorated on garments was a significant change in material culture. Students will connect to contemporary ribbon skirts and shirts as it symbolizes Indigenous identity.

Introductory

The availability of ribbon through trade and diplomatic gifts was a significant change in material culture. The use of ribbon was used by women to create ribbon-bordered garments in the Great Lakes region in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A few interesting facts:

- Ribbon skirts are a way Indigenous people adopted western culture and made it our own.
- Women used silk and other non-traditional material (beads, silver, tin) to create decorative work along with traditional material found in traditional lands such as porcupine quills and elk hair.
- Ribbon-bordered clothes were worn by both men and women.
- Women made the clothing.
- The style of dress was the same among all the women. The quality and variety depended on the skills and time put into the dress by the designer.
- The style of the ribbon-bordered dress is unique to the Indigenous people.
- According to Milwaukee Public Museum, the first recorded (photo) instance of ribbonwork appliqué was on a Menominee wedding dress made in 1802.
- Ribbon was attached to items of importance, as the availability of ribbon increased usage expanded to trimming various items of clothing, outlining the edges of bags, and enhancing the vamps and collars of moccasins.
- Skills acquired in earlier indigenous decorative art forms using porcupine quills and birch bark were then applied to this new silk ribbonwork art form.
- For Indigenous peoples, the Ribbon Skirt represents reclaiming identity, and wearing that identity proudly.
- January 4 is National Ribbon Skirt Day for Indigenous women to celebrate their culture.

Materials

- My Ribbon Skirt Read Aloud by Shelly Nelson available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RPCY5V2Dk
- BLM Cause and Affect Worksheet
- Ribbon skirt pattern
- Variety of felt material and/or fabric
- Yarn
- Glue
- Variety of Ribbon
- Scissors
- Coloring crayons
**Aakdewin/Bravery**

To have courage and is willing to take risks. The student does what is right even if it is not popular with others. The student is willing to take risks by sharing creative ideas with others.

**Anishinaabemowin**

*Enmanjwang—Feelings*

Anishinaabemowin vocabulary for words and expressions that we might use when describing how we feel. Available at http://app.learningbird.com/classes/bndvaryiov7wvq1/lessons/53224dihx3riawk8?returnTo=%2Fclasses%

### Specific Curriculum Link

Ontario Curriculum Grade 2 Social Studies

Students will

A2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about past and present traditions and celebrations in their own families and the communities to which they belong

A2.6 communicate the results of their inquiries, using appropriate vocabulary

### Launch

Share Aakdwin/Bravery Grandfather teaching to class with emphasis on having courage, on doing what’s right even if it is not popular with others. Showing bravery in the classroom can mean sharing your ideas with others. Kwezens would like to know why some reasons, students do not share their ideas with others? How can we as a classroom of learners, change that so everyone feels brave to share?

Kwezens enjoys talking about the past and present Anishinaabe ways of life. Today, she is excited to share about history of the arrival of silk ribbon. What do you know about the ribbon skirt?

Explain the availability of ribbon through trade and diplomatic gifts was a significant change in material culture. Indigenous women used the ribbon to create ribbon-bordered garments in the Great Lake region in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Introduce and watch *My Ribbon Skirt* by Shelly Nelson. In this story, we learn about Asini and her beautiful skirts. Ribbons skirts represent not just a fashion statement, but a way of life. How does wearing ribbon skirts and shirts make someone proud of their Indigenous culture?

### Talk Time

Ask students to share something of personal value or of importance to them, such as a piece of clothing like a shirt given to them by someone special. Imagine someone telling you that you can’t wear the shirt and to give it up.

Share the story of Isabelle Kulak, who was shamed by a staff member at her school in Saskatchewan for wearing a ribbon skirt made by her aunt to a formal wear day to school in 2020. When Isabelle returned to school after the holidays on Jan. 4, 2021, many supporters such as women wearing ribbon skirts, along with chiefs from surrounding the First Nations, were there for her. That’s why Jan. 4, 2023, was chosen and celebrated as National Ribbon Skirt Day in Canada. In what ways did Isabella Kulak show bravery? What would you say to Isabella Kulak if you met her today?
**Challenge**

Have students complete the Cause and Affect worksheet highlighting significant events leading up to National Ribbon Skirt Day.

**Coming together**

Ribbon skirts represent many things to the designer and to the people wearing the skirt. What colors would you choose? What design would you want on your skirt?

Invite students to design a ribbon skirt for Kwezens (BLM)

Explain Indigenous doll makers dress their dolls in traditional clothing in miniature detail that reflect their culture including everyday items such as bags, pouches, jewelry, hunting tools, and cradleboards.

**Additional information on topic for teachers:**


**To think on**

Do you think as time goes on, we will see more or less ribbon skirts in communities, why or why not?

**Extension**

Lesson 4

Faceless Dolls: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child

Gifts of the Land

Time frame: 2 class periods

Overall Aim of the Lesson

Students will connect to the gifts of the land and engage in a land-based activity and identify natural materials in their environment to make a toy or game.

Introductory

Anishinaabe made toys and games with the variety of natural materials. Dolls were made out of the inner bark of slippery elm, grass, birchbark, and tufts of red pine needles. Cat-tail rushes were also made into dolls and ducks. Trade and colonization affected gaming and toys. Man-made materials eventually were used to make toys and games. Traditional dolls were no exception. Dollmakers now use sewing machines, cotton batting, cloth and yarn.

Indigenous people have been making traditional crafts for generations. This includes beadwork, mitts, dreamcatchers, birch bark canoes and moccasins. Elders and traditional knowledge keepers play an important role in learning and passing down knowledge such as respect for the land. This lesson invites a local artist to the classroom to share their traditional craft through a demonstration or workshop.

Preparation Ahead of Time

- Reproduce BLM Gifts from Traditional Lands to Playful Hands
- Reproduce Nature Hunt
- Prepare a classroom the 5 senses + heart chart
- Reproduce BLM Interview Questions
- Invite an local artist to visit classroom. Refer to local school policies and protocols for inviting guests, Elders and knowledge keepers.

Materials

- BLM Gifts from Traditional Lands to Playful Hands
- Trudy’s Rock Story read aloud video available at http://youtube.com/watch?v=dcf4sfI2SvA
- BLM Interview Questions
**Gwekwaadziwin/ Honesty**

To know, say, and do the right thing, even when it is difficult. The student is sincere and reliable and behaves well in the school and in the community. The student is truthful and does not lie about others.

**Anishinaabemowin**

Sagamok artists, Myna Toulouse and Theodore Toulouse share stories and advice from their experiences with gathering materials for birchbark boxes and quill-work. We will also review some Anishinaabemowin vocabulary that connects to the ideas that they share. Available at [http://app.learningbird.com/classes/eji0f7ot3xfdigrf/lessons/3p95ye5j9pobl071?returnTo=%2Fclasses%2Feji0f7ot3xfdigrf](http://app.learningbird.com/classes/eji0f7ot3xfdigrf/lessons/3p95ye5j9pobl071?returnTo=%2Fclasses%2Feji0f7ot3xfdigrf)

**Specific Curriculum Link**

Ontario Curriculum Grade 2 Social Studies

Students will

A3.1 identify and describe different types of families

A3.5 demonstrate an understanding of simple chronology by identifying and organizing chronologically some important events and/or people from multiple generations in their family and/or community

**Launch**

Share Gwekwaadziwin/ Honesty Grandfather teaching to class “with emphasis on student being truthful and does not lie about others.” Kwezens wants to know when and how is being truthful a good thing in the classroom and at home?

Kwezens enjoys being outside because she was made from material found outside. Invite students to explore for traditional Anishinaabe toys and dolls. One being the Smithsonian found at [http://www.si.edu/](http://www.si.edu/)

As a class, review BLM Gifts from Traditional Lands to Playful Hands and complete the worksheet. Connect previous learning on dollmakers on how they learned to make dolls and to carry on the tradition.

What are some ways in which your family passes down your cultural heritage? How might community events, celebrations, and ceremonies help you learn about your heritage?

Kwezens enjoys being with her grandmother and Kwezens learned about crafts, picking berries and cooking. She remembers how kind her grandmother was to her.

Introduce Trudy’s Rock Story by Trudy Spiller. When a young girl from the Gitxsan Nation argues with her brother, she remembers the teachings of her grandmother and goes in search of a stone to share her feelings with.

**Talk Time**

Trudy’s grandmother shared the same home with her. This type of family is extended family and was very important in many Indigenous families. What role did her grandmother play? How do you think they learned what they know?
**Challenge**

As a classroom, go for a walk and complete the Nature Hunt print out. After Nature Hunt, complete the a classroom 5 senses + heart chart. Invite students to share what they saw, what they felt, what they smelled, what they heard, what they tasted (suggest bring in berries) and what their heart felt outside. Ask and record any additional sharing.

**Coming together**

Introduce guest to the students. After the guest finishes their visit, ask if students can ask questions for an interview. Use BLM Interview Questions for students to record answers.

**Additional information on topic for teachers:**


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**To think on**

Why would sharing how we feel with our heart be an important part of the Grandfather Teaching of Truth?

**Extension**

Arts and Crafts lesson plan, Birchbark (Wiigwaas) Triangle and Ball Game lesson plan available at http://www.intersectingart.umn.edu/?lesson/65
Lesson 5

Seasonal Celebrations and Traditions

Time frame: 2 class periods

Overall Aim of the Lesson

Students will explore past and present traditions and celebrations within their family and community based on the seasons. Traditions we celebrate today have been passed down over the generations. The seasons will be taught through the Medicine Wheel.

Introductory

Anishinaabe lifestyle changed with seasons, living as part of the cyclical nature of life this meant activities were influenced by the seasons. Seasons meant changes in lifestyle, food, social activities, celebrations, and traditions. Anishinaabe would move from place to place based on season, such as picking berries, sugar bush, and hunting. Anishinaabe continue today with seasonal activities such as harvesting plants, ice fishing, sugar bush, canoe making, carving paddles, tanning hides, and making snowshoes. Anishinaabe provide small bits of food, tobacco and sweetgrass as gifts in exchange for what Mother Earth has provided.

Anishinaabe knew to observe and keep track of these changes for survival. The primary focus of this lesson is to encourage children to take note of the seasonal changes going on around them. Children should have an opportunity to examine the natural world closely and better understand how they are affected by the change in seasons.

Preparation Ahead of Time

- Reproduce BLM Seasonal Celebrations
- Prepare a backpack full of seasonal items (could be real items or pictures)

Specific Curriculum Link

Ontario Curriculum Grade 2 Social Studies

Students will

A3.3 identify themes explored in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures to demonstrate an understanding of the varied identities, perspectives, relationships, legacies, truths, and ways of knowing, being, and doing

Materials

- Seasonal Celebrations Worksheet
- Chart Paper
- Seasonal items
- Seasonal pictures
- Markers/Crayons
- Whiteboard
- Seasons in Ojibwe video available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUoVMqkgd0
- Byron through the seasons video available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzCJk3T02Ig
Mnaadendiwin/Respect
To honour and appreciate. The student appreciates and honours self, others, the animal world and the environment.

Anishinaabemowin
Giisook—Seasons
Anishinaabemowin vocabulary for words and expressions that we might use when talking about the changing of the seasons. Available at http://app.learningbird.com/classes/bndvayiovd7wvq1/lessons/0dwt6htowgmvryfa?returnTo=%2Fclasses%

Launch
Share Mnaadendiwin/Respect Grandfather teaching to class with emphasis on student responsibilities of honoring. Kwezens wants to know how can we show Respect to our family, community, classmates, and the mother earth? Why is Respect a good way to live your life everyday?

Display seasonal set of Kwezens. Discuss differences in photos. Teacher will hold up a backpack and a blank Medicine Wheel. This Medicine Wheel has four sections or quadrants. The Medicine Wheel is a symbol for Anishinaabe to represent and teach the four directions and the seasons (east/spring, south/summer and west/fall and north/winter). Respect is one of the 7 Grandfathers. We respect the seasons and the natural resources provides us to sustain life on Mother Earth. What resources do we have in our own lives? Teacher says: I will pull out an item/photo and I want you to tell me the season it belongs to. Biboong (Winter) Minookmik (Spring) Niibing (Summer) Dwaagik (Fall). Continue until items are all gone.

What traditions are practised in your community today? Explain how Anishinaabe lifestyle changed with seasons and how they were living as part of the cyclical nature of life. This meant activities were influenced by the seasons. The necessary skills and knowledge for survival have been passed down from one generation to generation, this includes the 7 Grandfather teachings. How might they have changed over time? How might new technology affect the ways in which we gather, process, and/or cook food or food items?

As a class, watch Byron Through The Seasons video that features a reading of A Dene-English story book by the children of La Loche and friends. Identify La Loche. SK on map to show location.

Talk Time
Traditions and celebrations are passed down from generation to generation. In Byron Through The Seasons, the book included the acknowledgement, “With the assistance of local advisors and Elders’ together we wrote the story, translated it and worked on the pictures.” Would the children of La Loche been able to write the book without Elders help? Why or why not? Who shares knowledge and life stories to your family and community?

Challenge
Each student will be given the worksheets with crayons and markers. Students will then be directed to complete and label the seasonal celebrations worksheet. Students can create their favorite seasonal activities.
**To think on**

Students reflect on responsibilities. What were the roles and responsibilities of Anishinaabe men, women, and children in maintaining a community? What would happen if someone forgot their seasonal responsibilities? i.e. women did not pick berries, men did not hunt.

**Extension**

At any moment during unit, invite students to complete My Thoughts worksheet, refer to Byron Through The Seasons and the balloon diagram in each picture representing the journey taken by Bryon as he listens to stories of Dene life. Students can draw a picture about their learning journey.

As an extension of this lesson, the class can participate in activities found in Lessons from the Medicine Wheel – Learning is a cycle. The lessons are intended for use of the Medicine Wheel to guide young people in their life towards greater Heart-Mind well-being.

Additional storybook to share is This is how I know by Brittany Luby read aloud video available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVqYqg9eOw4
Lesson 6

Faceless Dolls: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child

Spiritual Names

Time frame: 2 class periods

Overall Aim of the Lesson

Students will focus on the importance of naming to each person, their families, their community and the culture, social and spiritual foundations.

Introductory

First Nations people went through a name change as part of the assimilation process. Traditionally, First Nations people had neither a Christian name nor a surname - they had hereditary names, spirit names, family names, clan names, animal names and or nicknames to name but a few. In many cultures, the birth name was just for that stage of life, and additional names were given to mark milestones, acts of bravery or feats of strength (Joseph, 2014).

In today’s society, we meet First Nation individuals (who) proudly carry their ancestral or spiritual names along with their family name. For the Anishinaabe, spirit names are received from a person identified as someone who is able to gift a name, and the name itself serves as guide for one’s life purpose. Not all individuals have spirit names for many reasons. Naming as a cultural concept taught in classroom is considered a powerful introduction to culture. “Youth gain pride from their spirit names. Youth feel connected to something greater and take great pride when reminded by family and community members how they are fulfilling the promise of their traditional/spirit names.” (First Nations with Schools Collective. pg. 15). It is suggested by First Nations with Schools Collective that educators can:

• play in a role in conveying the importance of naming to the culture,
• be important ‘cultural knowledge brokers’ for learners wanting to connect to knowledge keepers about their name.
• be a source of pride in the cultural practice of naming by privileging their understanding of student’s names within the learning environment.

Preparation Ahead of Time

• Reproduce copies of BLM Light up the Sky

Materials

• BLM Light up the Sky
• Thunderboy Jr. book by Sherman Alexie or Thunder Boy Jr Read Aloud available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrSwiVXpkJk
• Legend of the Corn Husk Doll available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5ik45PU5mA
Specific Curriculum Link

Ontario Curriculum Grade 2 Social Studies

Students will

A3.6 identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various community celebrations and events

A3.7 identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various family celebrations and practices

A1.3 compare some of the past and present traditions and celebrations of various ethnocultural groups in their local community, and identify some of the main reasons for the change

Launch

Share Dbadendiziwin/Humility Grandfather teaching to class with emphasis on being happy when others are successful and sharing their skills. Teacher will relate an experience of being happy when others are successful, such as students finishing an assignment.

Teacher will start a discussion on spiritual names and that at one time First Nations peoples were unable to have naming ceremonies. Imagine your parents wanted to name you something but couldn’t.

Using image or Faceless Doll, what name would you give her and why?

Explain that today, First Nation individuals proudly carrying their ancestral or spiritual names along with their family name.

Introduce Thunderboy Jr. book by Sherman Alexie. Thunder Boy Jr. is named after his dad, but he wants a name that's all his own. Just because people call his dad Big Thunder doesn't mean he wants to be Little Thunder. He wants a name that celebrates something cool he's done.

As a class, watch Thunderboy Jr.

Talk Time

The final words of the book are, "My dad and I will light up the sky."

What could light up the sky mean?

Is having a spirit name an example of a traditional practice being reclaimed?
**Challenge**

As a class, make a list of ways students are doing good in the world. Students will complete the worksheet How do you "Light up the sky"? What are your skills that you are gifted with? If you could name yourself after something in nature that describes who you are and what you love, what would it be?

**Coming together**

Wrap up the lesson explaining how the Legend of the Corn Husk Doll can provide an example to understand humility. As a class, watch the retelling of the Legend of the Corn Husk Doll, of staying humble and mindful when it comes to our tasks and responsibility.

**Additional information on topic for teachers:**


**Extension**


**To think on**

How do traditions develop one’s identity? How does an individual and community benefit from this ceremony?
Lesson 7

Celebrating our Community

Time frame: 2 class periods

Overall Aim of the Lesson

Students use digital and media tools to create an online exhibit to display and communicate their work and to share their stories to engage others in celebrating their community.

Introductory

Digital technology is becoming a tool for Indigenous knowledge to be shared and preserved for future generations. Community-specific narratives reflect a distinct identity and a history through time (Cherubini, 2018, p.305). Access to online education on residential schools, treaties, cultural knowledge and history from an Aboriginal perspective are much needed resources. “We need to know where we came from in order to move forward (Wemigwans, 2018, p.142).

This unit supports two learning outcomes identified by the community; 1) connection to the land and 2) strengthening self-identity. Connecting is related to issues of identity and place, to spiritual relationships and community wellbeing (Wemigwans, p.150). Sharing the student’s work online, is indeed worth celebrating.

Preparation Ahead of Time

- Refer to local school board or band administration policies for use of community website or social media platforms.
- Reproduce BLM Celebrating Our Community.

Materials

- Digital camera
- BLM() Celebrating Our Community
- This is What I’ve Been Told book by Julianne Armstrong
Students will
A2.3 gather, evaluate, and use information, considering various perspectives, to construct knowledge and demonstrate learning
A2.5 demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships between the form, message, and context of a text, the audience, and the creator demonstrate an understanding of the forms, conventions, and techniques of digital and media texts, and apply this understanding when analyzing

Launch
Share Nbwaakaawin/Wisdom Grandfather teaching to class with emphasis on student valuing learning and knowledge. What knowledge have we learned so far in social studies class that interests you?
Teacher to bring a personal object that is both historical and important to your family. For example, an old photograph of family members. Share a story about the object or photograph. To help get your students thinking about how to share stories through artifacts with a digital exhibition, show examples of virtual museums or cultural centres with your students.
Teacher to decide to create an online exhibition for your entire school, First Nation community or small group, such as parents.

As a class, describe several themes that could create interesting exhibitions from this unit. Review learning Kwezens has shared from the unit and that traditions and knowledge are passed down through generation to generation. For Anishinaabe, they use stories, songs, dances, art, language, clothes, and dolls/toys to keep the culture alive.

Introduce the book, This Is What I’ve Been Told by Julianna Armstrong. Knowing our culture means knowing who we are. When we know who we are, we can walk in a good way. It’s been said when teachings are passed down from one generation to the next, good things can happen. Language is learned, knowledge is shared, and culture is practiced.

Talk Time
Giving knowledge means Anishinaabe sharing knowledge in a good way and a gift they give openly. How can we share knowledge and celebrate our community using digital and media tools? Record student ideas of artwork, worksheets, and images in relation to the themes.
Challenge

Students to complete the BLM Celebrating Our Community. What knowledge do you want to share with our school, parents and community? Students to use digital camera to take photos of their selected work (such as, tikinaagan, ribbon skirt design, Venn diagram) or perhaps the student would like to create a painting to reflect learning.

Coming Together

Students to share their work and start categorizing into themes to be included in the online exhibition. Once everything is uploaded to the media platform, decide on how to launch the exhibition. This could be a digital email announcement sent out to parents and the community or in the school newsletter.

Additional information on topic for teachers:

To think on

Who can we acknowledge for supporting us to showcase our exhibits? Would we have been able to complete our exhibit without their knowledge and teaching? Make a list of Elders, resource people, teachers to include in the online exhibit.

Extension

Keep the online Celebrating our Community exhibition going. Task students with interviewing a parent or Elder about the past or present life of your community. Add personal photos.
Colleen Toulouse is a writer, educator and proud grandmother. She resides in her home community, Sagamok Anishnawbek, Ontario. She values oral and written First Nations stories as a source of learning and understanding her culture. Her published work includes *The Wedding Gift* in *Zaagidiwin is a Many Splendoured Thing: Love, Laughter & Learning* Stories from Aboriginal Writers, and *My Bucket List* in Red Rising Magazine. Colleen recently participated in Strong Hands Stop Violence; 7th Annual Poetry Night hosted by Ontario Native Women Association. She continues to draw inspiration from her passion and educational background in education and journalism.
Faceless Dolls: Teaching to the Spirit of the Child

Appendix

Resources

Aboriginal identity & the classroom. indigenousfoundations. (n.d.). https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/aboriginal_identity__the_classroom/


I am Kwezens

My name is Kwezens which means ‘girl’. I am an Anishinaabe Faceless Doll. I am faceless because children used their imagination to pretend I am a friend they missed. My grandmother made me so that I can visit your classroom. My purpose is to teach you about Anishinaabe life, the 7 Grandfather teachings, and to make learning fun. Traditionally, I taught girls their first lessons in sewing and beadwork. I helped the girls to become responsible mothers and aunts to keep the community safe and caring.

Years ago, children played with dolls and toys made from natural materials. This included rocks, birchbark, bulrush, pine needles and willow twigs. Mother Earth provided plenty of things to play with. Children were always busy.

Today, dollmakers continue to make dolls. Many were taught to make dolls by their grandmothers. I enjoy being a part of the Anishinaabe family. I look forward to learning with you.
Cradle me with Love
Introduction of silk ribbon
Cause and Effect

Name: ___________________________

Check the best way to finish the sentence.

1. Silk ribbon first became available to Indigenous people
   □ through trade and diplomatic gifts.
   □ through an online store.

2. Indigenous women created ribbonwork on clothing because
   □ the ribbon came with instructions.
   □ they had sewing and creative skills.

3. Ribbon skirts are designed differently because
   □ the ribbon skirt has meaning to the designer.
   □ the designer had no idea what she was doing.

4. January 4 is National Ribbon Skirt Day because
   □ January 1 is New Year’s Day.
   □ Isabelle Kulak returned back to school and had many supporters that day.
My Ribbon Skirt

Name: ___________________________
Gifts from the Land
Anishinaabe Dolls

From traditional lands to playful hands

Traditional lands provided many gifts for the Anishinaabe to survive and flourish, even playful toys like dolls. Anishinaabe dolls were made from material from the environment in which the Anishinaabe lived.

Draw the animal or plant that provided material for dolls and toys.
Interview Questions

Name: ___________________________

1. What is your name?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

2. How and when did you learn to make your craft?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

4. What materials do you use to make your craft?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

5. What does the craft say about the place where you live?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

6. What materials do you use to make your craft?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

7. How are these used? By who?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

8. Has changed in your lifetime?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Seasonal Celebrations and Traditions
Seasonal Celebrations
Medicine Wheel

Name: ___________________________
Spiritual Names
Light up the Sky

Name: ___________________________

Write and draw one of your strengths on how you light up the sky.

My strength is _________________________________________.
Celebrating our Community
Celebrating our Community

Name: ___________________________

This is me.                              This is my family.

This is my community.                    This is my culture.
Celebrating our Community

My Exhibition Planning

My online exhibit is ____________________________________________.

I want to share and celebrate this because

________________________________
________________________________
________________________________
________________________________
________________________________

Fact 1

Fact 2

Fact 3

Draw your exhibit