



Making a difference...together

Education and Appreciation Garnered through Listening and Exploring - E.A.G.L.E. Forest

Educators Guide

Program at a Glance

On this interactive cultural program, we invite participants to explore the natural environment through a First Peoples lens. From the practice of time honoured cultural traditions to the effects of colonization, the First Peoples transition from caretaker to protector will amaze students. We begin by welcoming participants and then acknowledge the Indigenous territory. We will explore the forest trails and identify the clashing world views between First Peoples and European cultures. We will identify how the stewardship and sustainable practices of First Peoples can influence the reduction of our impact on the environment.



In this program, your students will...

- Appreciate First Peoples knowledge of sustainable practices.
- Discover the interconnectedness associated with First Peoples perspectives.
- Explore the differences between First Peoples and European world views in reference to natural resources.
- Understand how First Peoples pass down their knowledge through cultural gatherings and storytelling.

Curriculum Connections

Our place based school programs directly relate to the K-5 science & social studies curricula. Below you will find some big ideas and curricular competencies that will be addressed on your program.

Big ideas from BC Curriculum: Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives

Science:

All living things sense and respond to their environment. (Grade 4)

- How do the First Peoples view their role in the environment?
- Key questions about systems. (Grade 5)
- How can you observe the concept of interconnectedness within ecosystems in your local area?

Social Studies:

- How do First Peoples balance economic development with traditional uses of the land?

Content from BC Curriculum: Indigenous Knowledge and Perspectives

- Identify First Peoples perspectives and knowledge as sources of information. (Grade 4)
- First Peoples concepts of interconnectedness in the environment (Grade 5)
- How do First Peoples view and respect the natural environment?
- First Peoples knowledge of sustainable practices (Grade 5)
- What are the First Peoples values associated with harvesting, hunting and gathering?

Sharing of knowledge

- How do First Peoples ensure information is passed down to future generations?

Curricular Competencies from BC Curriculum:

- Experience and interpret the local environment
- Transfer and apply learning to new situations
- Compare observations with those of others
- Consider some environmental consequences of their actions
- Share observations and ideas orally
- Express and reflect on personal experiences of place

Suggested Pre-Trip Activities

- Share personal stories and experiences about negotiating (i.e.: increase in allowance)
- Explore pre-contact governance structures (i.e.: the role of women in leadership)
- Write a paragraph describing the difference between a gift and a resource.

Follow-up Activities

- Prepare a notice/news board in the classroom, featuring current Indigenous issues
- Plan and host a gathering for another class where the students have an opportunity to share what they have learned with other students.

Background Information on Indigenous Perspectives

Indigenous Peoples of this area have lived on these lands for countless generations and always with a sense of coexistence and interconnection. This relationship with the land, deeply rooted in harmony, respect and gratitude inspires the belief that all natural resources are considered to be gifts versus an entitlement.

Cultural protocols demonstrating a commitment to conservation were firmly established. From hunting and harvesting to fishing and gathering, these 'guidelines' always ensure respect and gratitude for all 'gifts' from the environment. The protocol of taking only what is needed is faithfully applied today, and is evident throughout the region. An example of this is the culturally modified cedar trees in Francis/King Regional Park.

When Indigenous Peoples look up from the forest floor or out from a mountain top, they are always reminded that we should never take for granted the many gifts around us.

The following are some examples of applied protocols:

- Saanichton Bay has been the site of ceremony and celebration for the Tsawout Nation for countless generations. Acknowledging the seasonal harvest from the Salish Sea's bounty is still an annual practice and includes the area surrounding Island View Beach Regional Park.
- Prior to the arrival of Europeans, hunting on Mount Work was an annual event, with the cultural protocol to wait until the ground was one colour. This was to ensure a wounded animal could be easily tracked and a life would not be wasted. Black Tailed Deer still abound in Mount Work Regional Park.
- The Great Blue Heron, known as SNEꞌE to the Scia'new Nation, were netted in marshy areas like Witty's Lagoon Regional Park. The greyish blue feathers were used to accent regalia and the leg bones could be fashioned into flutes and whistles. The cultural protocol is to use everything, leaving a minimum behind for scavengers.
- Some of the trees in Francis/King Regional Park are over 800 years old and to the Lək'wəŋən Peoples, cutting down a tree of this age is equivalent to removing a history keeper from the forest. Therefore, ceremonies were performed to acknowledge the life of the tree before it became a canoe or house-post.

- Following the trails left behind by bears, deer and elk, guided Indigenous Peoples of this territory to fresh water, medicine and trap lines. Leaving these pathways was deemed to be disrespectful to animals relying on the under-brush for homes and food.

When the 'Newcomers' arrived, the impacts on Indigenous ways of being and knowing were devastating.

- Forests of trees were cut down indiscriminately, without consideration for the habitats of animals or surrounding plants
- Diseases spread widely throughout the province decimating the populations
- Governance structures that had stood the test of time began to collapse
- Cultural practices, protocols and the speaking of Indigenous languages were outlawed.

Excerpt from Author, Diane Silvey's book - *The Kids Book of Indigenous Peoples in Canada*

Cultural Renewal

Despite repeated attempts to ban traditional practices and assimilate Aboriginal People, Aboriginal culture did not disappear. Rather, it was held in sacred trust by the elders, who are now helping to rekindle traditional concepts and practices.

Today, centuries-old traditions - dances, songs and feasts - are being passed along to the young, providing them with a sense of cultural pride, community and purpose in life.

Traditional Aboriginal culture was based on spirituality, which was meant to be a guiding force in a person's life. Attempts to destroy this force have failed. The cultural bonds of Aboriginal peoples have not and never will be broken.

Additional Resources

Teacher References

Joseph, Bob Joseph. 21 Things You May Not Know About The Indian Act- Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality. Indigenous Relations Press 2018

Joseph, Bob and Cynthia F. Indigenous Relations Insights, Tips & Suggestions to Make Reconciliation a Reality. Indigenous Relations Press 2019

Regan, Paulette Unsettling the Settler Within – Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada. UBC Press the University of British Columbia Vancouver

Clavir, Miriam. Preserving What is Valued – Museums, Conservation, and First Nations.
A UBC Museum of Anthropology Research Publication

Olson, Silvia with Morris, Rita and Sam, Ann No Time to Say Goodbye – Children’s Stories of Kuper Island Residential School. Sononis Press – Winlaw, British Columbia

Wiebe, Rudy and Johnson, Yvonne Stolen Life – The Journey of a Cree Woman - VINTAGE CANADA – A Division of Random House of Canada Limited

Frideres, James S. Native Peoples in Canada – Contemporary Conflict, Fourth Edition Prentice Hall Canada Inc., Scarborough, Ontario

Wall Kimmerer, Robin Braiding Sweetgrass – Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants - Milkweed Editions 2013

Gray Smith, Monique Speaking Our Truth – A Journey of Reconciliation - Orca Book Publishers

Gray Smith, Monique Tilly – A Story of Hope and Resilience Sononis Press – Winlaw, British Columbia

Wagamese, Richard Keeper ‘n Me - Anchor Canada – A Division of Random House Canada Limited

Wagamese, Richard Indian Horse - Douglas and McIntyre Ltd.

Tennant, Paul Aboriginal Peoples and Politics – The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849 – 1989
UBC Press / Vancouver

Sellers, Bev They Called Me Number One – Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School -
Talonbooks (Two awards: Burt Award for First Nations, Metis and Inuit Literature AND BC Book Prize –
Honour Book)

Student References

Silvey, Diane. The Kids Book of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. Kids Can Press 2005

- For an extensive list of student resources, we recommend visiting the website of the First Nations Education Steering Committee (www.fnesc.ca) and accessing their 2016 publication: Authentic First Peoples Resources for Use in K-9 Classrooms.