



Making a difference...together

Education and Appreciation Garnered through Listening and Exploring – E.A.G.L.E. Beach

Educators Guide

Program at a Glance

On this interactive program, we invite participants to explore the cultural significance of seashore plants and creatures, through a First Peoples lens. The cultural uses, lessons and values linked with seasonal harvest, hunting, fishing and gathering by First Peoples will amaze students. We begin with a traditional welcome and territory acknowledgement, then share the history and importance of the site to the First Peoples. We will explore rocky and sandy beaches and look for specific seashore plants and creatures, detailing how they are harvested and during which season. Through engaging activities and the oral tradition of storytelling, students will develop an understanding of how First Peoples use available resources in a respectful and sustainable way.



In this program, your students will...

- Observe seasonal changes on the beach.
- Discover the unique value that all living things have.
- Explore the beach and see how it provides many resources to First Peoples.
- Develop an understanding of why First Peoples feel it necessary to apply cultural ceremonies and protocols to hunting, fishing and, gathering.
- Learn and appreciate 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 curricula. Below you will find some big ideas, curricular competencies and content that will be addressed on your program.

Big ideas:

- Living things have life cycles adapted to their environment (Gr 2)
- Through listening and speaking, we connect with others and share our world (Gr 2)
- Local actions have global consequences, and global actions have local consequences (Gr 2)
- Living things are diverse, can be grouped, and interact in their ecosystems (Gr 3)
- Learning about Indigenous Peoples nurtures multicultural awareness and respect for diversity (Gr 3)
- Indigenous knowledge is passed down through oral history, traditions, and collective memory (Gr 3)

Curricular Competencies:

- Recognize First Peoples stories (including oral and written narratives), songs, and art ways to share knowledge (Gr 2)
- Ask questions about familiar objects and events (Gr 2)
- Demonstrate curiosity and a sense of wonder about the world (Gr 2)
- Compare observations with those of others (Gr 2)
- Consider some environmental consequences of their actions (Gr 2)
- How can you share your observations and ideas about living things in your local environment to help someone else learn about place? (Gr 2)
- Observe objects and events in familiar contexts (Gr 2 and 3)
- Show awareness of how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to family and community (Gr 2 and 3)
- Exchange ideas and perspectives to build shared understanding (Gr 2 and 3)
- Experience and interpret the local environment (Gr 2 and 3)
- Express and reflect on personal or shared experiences of place (Gr 2 and 3)
- Transfer and apply learning to new situations (Gr 2 and 3)
- Questioning and predicting (Gr 3)
- Demonstrate curiosity about the natural world (Gr 3)
- Show awareness of how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to land (Gr 3)
- Explore and appreciate aspects of First Peoples oral traditions (Gr 3)
- Identify First Peoples perspectives and knowledge as sources of information (Gr 3)
- Make observations about living and non-living things in the local environment (Gr 3)
- Explain why people, events, or places are significant to various individuals and groups (Gr 3)
- Consider ethical responsibilities when deciding how to conduct an experiment (Gr 3)
- Identify some simple environmental implications of theirs and others' actions (Gr 3)

Content:

- First Peoples use of their knowledge of life cycles (Gr 2)

- Relationships between people and the environment in different communities (Gr 2)
- The knowledge of local First Peoples of ecosystems (Gr 3)
- Biodiversity in the local environment (Gr 3)
- Energy is needed for life (Gr 3)
- Relationship between humans and their environment (Gr 3)
- The importance of maintaining Cultural Safety.
 - Cultural safety: A culturally safe environment is physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually safe. There is recognition of, and respect for, the cultural identities of others, without challenge or denial of an individual's identity, who they are, or what they need. Culturally unsafe environments diminish, demean, or disempower the cultural identity and well-being of an individual.
 - *College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia - Feb. 25, 2022*

Suggested Pre-Trip Activities

- Share personal stories and experiences about visiting the beach (i.e.: beachcombing)
- Explore traditional stories of the beach from an Indigenous perspective.
- Research local First Nations' histories and gain a deeper understanding of the overlap and interconnectedness in the area.
- Talk about cultural safety and importance of demonstrating respect.
- Draw a picture of your favourite beach creature and describe why you like it.

Follow-up Activities

- Write a paragraph and/or draw a picture that reflects your favourite part of the program.
- Encourage respectful beach exploration on future outings.
- 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, evidenced by the culturally modified cedar trees in several Regional Parks.

When Indigenous Peoples look out from the shore to the sea they are always reminded that we should never take for granted the many gifts around us.

The following are 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 SNEÆE 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 Ləkʷəŋən 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, Indigenous Peoples of these territories were guided 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.

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.

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

Additional Resources

Teacher References

Turner, Nancy. Royal BC Museum Handbook, Plant Technology Of First Peoples in British Columbia. Royal BC Museum 2017

Turner, Nancy J. and Hebda, Richard J. Saanich Ethnobotany, Culturally Important Plants of the WSÁNEĆ People. Royal BC Museum 2012

Stewart, Hilary. Indian Fishing, Early Methods On The Northwest Coast. Douglas & McIntyre 2013

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

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**.