


on the
Path
of the
Elders



☼ Teacher's Guide ☼
Grade 4

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CHAPTER 1

Education – Canoeing Game

Part 1: Understanding

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will experience and discuss the advantages of working together rather than as individuals to accomplish a task.

MATERIALS:

- 1) Student Resource Sheet C-1, C-2

ACTIVITY:

Provide individual students with a copy of Student Resource Sheet C-1, listing approximately 10 – 15 objects to locate in their immediate environment. The objects to be located could be available either indoors or outdoors. Include on the list some objects that are not in plentiful supply, e.g. the Teacher’s Math Answer Key book, the feather of an indigenous bird, etc. Provide students with a period of time that is too brief to be successful in locating all the listed items. When students return from their “quest”, have them complete SRS C-1, indicating whether they were successful in finding an object, and if not, why they feel they were unsuccessful (e.g., there is only one of a particular object available; the object is rare, etc.).

Go over the results as a class. Engage students in a problem-solving session discussing how the results could have been more positive for all involved. Encourage students to recognise the advantages of working together rather than as individuals to accomplish a task. Have students repeat the activity, this time in teams rather than individually. Have them record their successes on SRS C-2, including their reflections on how they benefited from the group’s involvement.

Part 2: Reflection

In preparation for, or as a follow-up to the Canoeing Game, have students consider how working together might have assisted the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people when the Federal Commissioners travelled from community to community, acquiring separate signatures in 14 communities for Treaty No. 9. Remind students that there are traditional benefits that come from respecting the advice of elders. Ask them to consider how being brought together for the treaty-signing and listening to the elders might have altered the choices made separately in the 14 communities. Discuss as a class, and record the students’ responses on chart paper for future reference after other Path of the Elders games are played.



CHAPTER 2

Economy – Resources Game

Part 1: Understanding

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will consider the impact of development upon the environment.

MATERIALS:

- 1) Student Resource Sheet R-1

ACTIVITY:

Provide individual students with a copy of Student Resource Sheet R-1. Have students note that the page is divided into categories: “Before 1905” and “After 1905”. To properly understand how long ago “1905” was, ask students who wish to do so to share the age of a grandparent, a great-grandparent, or an elderly family friend. Inform students that “1905”, the year that Treaty No. 9 was signed by the federal commissioners and the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people, occurred somewhat before their relative or friend was even born.

Discuss as a class the differences between what students observe in inhabited areas, and what they observe in natural uninhabited areas. Guide students to discuss aspects of human habitation, including the effects of building density, infrastructure (roads, electricity, services, etc.), pollution, waste management, effects upon the natural resources in the area, etc. Encourage individual students to share their experiences and their observations of both inhabited and uninhabited areas. Record their observations in brief point-form on chart paper for future reference.

Tell students that much of what they observe in uninhabited areas would have been the natural environment of the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people before 1905, and that the majority of what they observe in inhabited areas was brought to the territory following the signing of the treaty in 1905. On SRS R-1, based upon their class discussions, have students list what they consider to be the most important aspects of life and the environment “Before 1905”, and subsequently “After 1905”.

You may wish to record their observations in brief point-form on chart paper for future reference.

Part 2: Reflection

In preparation for, or as a follow-up to the Resources Game, have students consider how they would feel if a special park or wildlife sanctuary that they have visited was suddenly taken over and fundamentally changed/encroached upon for human gain. What losses would be felt, and by whom? What, if any, would be the gains to such a change? What would be the effect upon the natural environment, both its resources and its creatures? Have students reflect upon these and other considerations. Discuss as a class, and record the students’ responses on chart paper for future reference after other Path of the Elders games are played.



CHAPTER 3

Security ~ Hunting Game

Part 1: Understanding

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will consider the issue of resource management and the cultural importance of sharing, reciprocity and keeping promises.

MATERIALS:

- 1) Student Resource Sheet H-1

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to recall an incident where they didn't have enough of an item, and sharing was involved in the eventual outcome. Guide them to consider items such as a forgotten piece of sports equipment at a game, food quantity when extra people showed up unexpectedly, vital pieces of a toy or building set, clothing to match the weather, etc. Provide individual students with a copy of Student Resource Sheet H-1, and ask them to write their story about not having enough of an item, and how sharing helped them resolve the issue.

When students have completed the task, ask individual students to read or tell their stories. As a class, have students discuss the outcomes of the stories: did the person who shared with them do so willingly? Did the person who shared with them expect anything in return? If so, what was expected? If reciprocity was involved, did the student keep his or her word and repay according to the agreement?

As a follow-up to the class discussion, let the students know that sharing and reciprocity were important cultural values to the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people. They were in control of their traditional territory before Treaty No. 9 was signed in 1905, and all the natural resources were managed for the benefit of all the people. Challenge students to consider which natural resources would be important ones to share in order for families and communities to thrive. When students identify food sources as one vital resource, share with them that hunting, (including moose and geese), trapping, fishing and berry-picking all factored into the subsistence diet of the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people in the early 1900's.

Ask students to re-state in their own words why sharing and reciprocity would be important cultural values, and why keeping promises would be critical in such an environment. Ask them to review their stories as written on SRS H-1. Was there a promise involved? What would be the result if the promise were not kept? Guide students to realise that to the Anishinaabe and the Mushkegowuk, a broken promise with respect to sharing of food resources could mean the difference between life and death.

Part 2: Reflection

In preparation for, or as a follow-up to the Hunting Game, have students discuss their feelings about sharing and reciprocity. How important is it to share with others? When might sharing be important for life or death these days? (i.e., gasoline in subzero temperatures, first aid experience/supplies, a cell phone in an emergency, etc.) Create a list with students that represents their feelings about sharing, and when it might prove invaluable to others.

Have students reflect upon the results of not keeping a promise associated with these types of sharing. Ask students to consider the importance that was placed upon keeping a promise by the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people. Would they have assumed that the federal commissioners held the same values? What would be the results of treaty negotiations and promises if the commissioners did not?



CHAPTER 4 Health ~ Healing Game

Part 1: Understanding

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will develop an understanding of the significance of medicinal plants to the First People, and will compare their historical use to the use of medicinal plants today.

MATERIALS:

- 1) Student Resource Sheet S-1
- 2) Herbs

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to brainstorm what “medicine” means to them. Discuss as a class how medicine is used/applied, and for what purposes. Note their responses on the board. Ask the class if anyone is aware of medicine that comes from plants rather than from a pharmacy. List their responses for future reference.

Prior to discussing herbal medicine with the class, you may wish to refer to a website listing Canadian herbal plants, such as:

www.bcherbgrowers.com/herbs/index.php/listings?page=3&catid=1

for simple explanations of the uses of various herbs, or

www.florahealth.com/flora/home/Canada/HealthInformation/Encyclopedias/_Main.htm?vCountryName=

for a more in-depth encyclopedia of herbal plants and remedies.

Ask students for their opinions on using plants as medicine: is it safe to do so? Is it beneficial? Can plants work as effectively as prescription drugs to heal us? Have they ever been treated or healed by using a medicinal plant? Ask students to share their experiences with the class. If possible, bring in an herb or a medicinal plant to show the class during this discussion. Many are readily available (particularly herbs), as listed on the above-mentioned websites.

Inform students that the First Nations people, including the Anishinaabe and the Mushkegowuk, traditionally were highly experienced in the use of medicinal plants. The knowledge of how to use the medicinal plants is considered sacred, and is passed along to specific individuals who are deemed the keepers of the knowledge for the next generation. In most communities, the knowledge has never been written down. Today, many First Nations are considering alternative ways of keeping the wisdom of the elders and the traditional medicinal knowledge alive. To involve students in learning more about traditional medicine in an interactive fashion, have them visit

www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Healingplants/welcome.php

This website of the Coalition of Canadian Healthcare Museums and Archives features a wealth of student-centred information with a strong inclusion of First Nations perspectives. Students can play interactive games that teach them about the medicinal plants; they can learn about remedies provided to colonisers by First Nations healers; they can read biographies of practitioners of traditional medicine, both past and present. Depending upon the abilities of the students, they can also get involved in an ethical discussion about the ownership and harvesting of medicinal plants.

When students have enjoyed learning about medicinal plants on the website, have them complete SRS S-1.

Encourage them to represent their knowledge in as many different ways as they can, including writing, drawing and sharing.



Part 2: Reflection

Ask students to share the information they have collected and recorded on SRS S-1.

Ask students their personal opinions on the use of medicinal plants:

Would they like to see more used in their homes and community?

Would they like to share their new knowledge with their families?

Encourage students to grow a medicinal plant (such as a common herb) at home, and bring it to share with the class.

Ask students to consider what the effect upon the Anishinaabe and the Mushkegowuk would have been when their traditional territory for harvesting medicinal plants was encroached upon in the late 1800's and into the 1900's.

What might such encroachment have meant for the plants?

How would the people have maintained their traditional knowledge?

How would this affect the people today?



CHAPTER 5

Culture ~ Trapping Game

Part 1: Understanding

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will explore the concept of cultural values, and will represent one of their own.

MATERIALS:

- 1) Student Resource Sheet SRS T-1
- 2) An object or artefact of personal cultural value

ACTIVITY:

Ask students to consider the meaning of the word “culture”. Through discussion, encourage the class to come to the understanding that “culture” refers to *the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another*. Have students discuss the ways in which they observe the dominant culture in their society. In general, what is the dress code? What are the daily activities of younger/older people? What special celebrations are observed in families and in the community? In what ways do people communicate greetings, requests, displeasure, etc.? Note student comments on the board for further discussion and comparison.

As a follow-up to the discussion of the dominant culture, invite students to share their knowledge of other cultures present in the community. If possible, have students who represent these cultures share their cultural information with the class. Have students respond to the same questions as in the previous discussion. Note the similarities and the differences between cultures on the board under the question headings.

Ask students to bring an object or an artefact of personal cultural value to class. Stress to students that this object should not be of great personal value, as those must remain safely at home. Suggest that students bring an article of traditional dress, a food item typical to their culture, a common household item, a book, etc. Have individual students share their personal article with the class, including its relevance to their culture.

Before playing the Trapping Game, inform students that they will be learning about some of the traditional cultural values of the Anishinaabe and the Mushkegowuk people. As a follow-up to the game, challenge students to discuss as many aspects of traditional culture as possible based upon information they gained through playing the game.

Part 2: Reflection

Have students complete Student Resource Sheet SRS T-1, comparing some aspects of their own culture with aspects of the traditional culture of the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people. If students are Anishinaabe or Mushkegowuk, encourage them to compare their culture today with the culture of their ancestors.

Ask students to consider how it would feel if they were to lose the understanding of the ways of their own culture, as shared through all the previous generations. Inform them that this is the challenge of many First Nations today as they strive to maintain their cultural identities in the face of colonisation.



CHAPTER 6

Self-Government – Negotiating Game

Part 1: Understanding

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will develop an understanding of the meaning and significance of a “treaty”, and the differing importance of oral and written agreements to dissimilar cultures.

MATERIALS:

- 1) Student Resource Sheet TS-1
- 2) On The Path of the Elders: treaty map

ACTIVITY:

Ask students what a “promise” means to them. Expand the discussion to include not only the literal meaning, but also the intent behind a promise, the ethics involved, when it is important to make a solemn promise rather than just mentioning an intention, etc. Note student comments on the board.

Ask students to share examples in their own lives where someone made a promise to them. Let students know that they should only share promises that are not too personal to be mentioned to others. What was the situation that required a promise to be made? What was the promise? Was the promise kept? If so, how did that make the student feel? If not, what was their reaction?

Ask students to share examples in their own lives where they made a promise to someone else. Once again, inform students that they should only share promises that are not too personal to be mentioned to others. What was the situation that required them to make a promise? What was the promise? Did they keep the promise? If so, how did that make them feel? If not, what caused them to break their word?

NB: Remind students that adults should never ask children to promise to do, or not to do, something that makes the child feel personally uncomfortable. Inform students that they must tell a trusted adult if they feel uneasy about a promise they have been asked to make or keep.

As a follow-up to the class discussion, inform students that when a freely-negotiated promise is made between two or more sovereign (non-affiliated) nations, the promise is called a “treaty”. The Canadian government came to the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people in 1905 asking them to sign a treaty. The treaty included promises made by both sides, involving land, resources and social conditions. The Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk unknowingly were asked to sign over the rights to their traditional territory in exchange for money, education for their children, and a reserve of land. They were promised that they could continue to hunt and fish at will. The government made promises that it subsequently did not keep. The “treaty” to this day is not recognised as valid by the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people because the government did not explain the terms of the treaty in a way that could be understood by the chiefs and the elders, and the government did not keep its word.

As a class, have students go to the On The Path of the Elders treaty map:

www.pathoftheelders.com/treaty-map

Ask students to hold their mouse over each of the numbers, one at a time, while you or a student reads the information about the treaty process in that community. Ask students to consider in what ways the communities were misinformed about the intent and the content of what they were asked to sign. Have students share their perspectives with the class.



Inform the class that you will be entering into a “treaty” with the students as a group for a period of one week. Brainstorm ideas with the class as to what would be acceptable negotiation points for a treaty. Students may choose to negotiate homework conditions, timing of activities in the classroom, seating arrangements, etc. Note their ideas on the board and as a class decide upon the negotiation points that will be included in the treaty discussions. Provide individual students with copies of Student Resource Sheet SRS TS -1. Have them copy the negotiation points of the “treaty”.

Addressing each point separately, challenge students to bring forward their perspectives. As is required in negotiations, remind them to create an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect. Permit students to debate the points, while guiding them in the principles of good negotiation. Note each agreed-upon point on the board, and have students copy each onto SRS TS-1. When the negotiations are complete, have each student sign the “treaty” (at the bottom of SRS TS-1) to indicate their agreement with the terms.

After the “treaty” has been put into effect, renege on one of the agreed-upon points. When students ask why you are not living up to the agreement, inform them that they must have misunderstood: you did not intend for a particular point to be implemented in that way. As a follow-up to the predictable outrage and confusion, ask students to consider how the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people must have felt in the years following the signing of Treaty No. 9 in 1905. How would the government’s changing of position have affected the people? What would be the results of the encroachment on their traditional territory, for which they were unprepared? What would the students consider to be an appropriate response to conditions of a treaty being not well-explained or altered?

Remind students of the stories of promises that they originally shared with the class.

Were these promises made orally, or were they written down?

Did the way in which the promise was made affect its validity?

When students have responded, inform them that for the Anishinaabe and the Mushkegowuk people, their oral word was considered to be as good as a written contract, as theirs was an oral culture. Ask students to consider what impact this cultural difference could have made upon the treaty “negotiations” in 1905.

Part 2: Reflection

Ask students to imagine a world in which there was no such thing as a promise. How would that affect them? Why do we make and keep promises? Why do sovereign nations make and keep promises in the form of treaties? What is the benefit of keeping our word?

Invite students to reflect upon taking part in a negotiation process. What skills did they find they needed the most? What did they learn from the process?

Ask the class to consider what the experience would be like if they were to negotiate with someone who did not speak their language. Based upon what they know of the experience of the Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk people during the Treaty No. 9 negotiations, ask them to consider what the process would have been like given that the First Nations treaty-signers did not speak English. How would this have affected their ability to understand the treaty terms? Overall, what do they see as being the experience of the local people during the treaty negotiation process?



Student Resource Sheet C-1 (SRS C-1)

Name: _____

I am going out by myself to find a list of objects. Here are the objects I have been sent to find:

These are the objects I was able to find:

These are the objects I was not able to find:

Here are some reasons I was not able to find these objects:



Student Resource Sheet C-2 (SRS C-2)

Name: _____

We are going out as a group to find a list of objects. Here are the objects we have been sent to find:

These are the objects we were able to find:

These are the objects we were not able to find:

Here are some reasons why it was, or why it was not, better to work together as a group to complete the task:



Student Resource Sheet R-1 (SRS R-1)

Name: _____

Here are some of the ways I imagine the territory of the Anishinaabe and the Mushkegowuk people looked in the years before 1905, prior to the signing of Treaty No. 9:

Here are some of the ways I imagine the territory of the Anishinaabe and the Mushkegowuk people looked in the years after 1905, following the signing of Treaty No. 9:

Here are what I believe to be the most important results of the settlement process on the land and on the people:



Student Resource Sheet H-1 (SRS H-1)

Name: _____

Here is my personal story about not having enough of an item, and the ways in which sharing helped everything to work out in the end. In my story, I will try to answer the following questions:

- * Did the person who shared with me do so willingly?
- * Did the person who shared with me expect anything in return? If so, what was expected?
- * If paying back was involved, did I keep my word and repay according to the agreement?



Student Resource Sheet S-1 (SRS S-1)

Name: _____

Here is some information about my favourite medicinal plant, including why it is my favourite:

Here is a drawing of my favourite medicinal plant:

Here is some information about another medicinal plant, or about a healer, that I find really interesting and would like to share:

The James Bay Treaty

Treaty No 9.

TREATY BETWEEN _____ AND THE GRADE _____ CLASS

We are negotiating the following points:

Here are the accepted terms of the treaty, including any changes in the negotiated points:

Both _____, the teacher, and _____,
a member in good standing of the Grade _____ class, agree to the terms and conditions of
this treaty.

Dated this _____ day of _____, in the year _____



Student Resource Sheet T-1 (SRS T-1)

Name: _____

Here are some aspects of my culture that I feel represent who I am today:

Here is some information based upon what I have learned about traditional Anishinaabe and Mushkegowuk culture:

Some of the ways in which the two cultures are both similar and different include: