



LESSON PLAN 4: The Land: Mother Nature, Industry and Housing

TRADITIONAL TERRITORY STATEMENT: We would like to acknowledge that Dawson College is located on the traditional territory of the Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) people. Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples.

This series of lesson plans aims to familiarize students with First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities in Canada. Each lesson explores a different facet of contemporary Indigeneity, and includes resources by Indigenous voices. Students are invited to confront and unpack stereotypes and develop a clearer understanding of what it means to be Indigenous and an Indigenous ally in this country. The lessons in this series recognize and honour the histories, traumas and strengths of today's Indigenous communities, presenting them in accessible, engaging ways. They are meant to be an inspiring starting point that encourages educators and students to ask more questions and explore different hands-on learning activities that can put the lessons' information into practice. The possibilities are endless.

While exploring the topics in these lesson plans, some students may be triggered. Indigenous students along with other classmates who have experienced genocide and oppression may require support. Please ensure that there are proper measures in place to take care of their feelings.

★ The goals of these lessons are for students to:

- Grasp and develop their knowledge of the topics presented
- Understand the multi-generational impacts of colonialism
- Question and reframe cultural biases
- Discover how Indigenous people are reclaiming their power and identity
- Understand contemporary issues and policies that impact both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in Canada

LESSON PLAN 4: The Land: Mother Nature, Industry and Housing

“A deep and genuine relationship with the Earth has long been a central tenet of First Nations worldviews and philosophy. Long before the mainstream construct of “Mother Earth” became popular, the First Nations, Inuit, and later Metis people truly connected with the Earth as their Mother. The natural world is considered home, and the rightful stance to take upon her is a respectful, interconnected one of stewardship and gratitude.”

June Kaminski, Learning with the Natural World, 2013

***Read more about this person at the end of this lesson plan**

Indigenous people work in harmony with the land, seeking to co-exist rather than change or use. All that is natural are their brothers and sisters, and as such, are to be protected as kindred spirits. But most importantly, in making decisions that impact on the environment, Indigenous people use the essential rule of projecting over 7 generations. This means having to foresee impacts beyond the immediate.



Via nativecircle.com

In order to understand Indigenous people in Canada, it is essential that we comprehend their unique relationship to the land and the environment. Traditionally, it is quite different from that of western society, and certainly from today's mining, logging, and hydro companies. Is it possible to honour the land while using it for industry development? This is a complicated debate, and today's Indigenous communities are exploring its pros and cons.

Currently, one of the biggest issues across Indigenous communities is housing. There aren't nearly enough homes for everyone, and they aren't being built very well. In many Inuit communities, for example, it is common to have 20 people living together in a two-bedroom home.

LESSON PLAN 4 GOALS:

To understand the importance of the environment from an Indigenous perspective and the impacts of colonial industry and corporations.

Why is the land so important to Indigenous people?

READ: *Learning with the Natural World:*

<https://firstnationspedagogy.com/earth.html>

WATCH: *Stewards of the Land* (from WIOT3 TV series) episode 3:

<http://aptn.ca/workingitouttogether/full-episodes/season-3/> (22 minutes)

WATCH: *Seven Generations:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHg3enCCyCM> (2:35 minutes)

• What is the relationship between Indigenous people and the water?

READ: *Movement and Ceremony:*

<http://workingitouttogether.com/content/movement-and-ceremony/>

READ: Article 2: *Life in the City of Dirty Water:*

<http://workingitouttogether.com/content/life-in-the-city-of-dirty-water/>

• **Why is housing an issue in Indigenous communities?**

READ: *On-Reserve Housing:*

http://www.umanitoba.ca/architecture/cp/app/sections/issues/other/housing/on_reserve.html

READ: *Inuit Housing Shortage a Public Health Emergency:*

http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_housing_shortage_is_a_public_health_emergency_senate_committee_s/

• **Environmental Activism: How are Indigenous communities fighting to protect the land and water?**

WATCH: *Christi Belcourt's 'Canada, I can cite for you 150':*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6U9JV5-bA8>

WATCH: *Ellen Gabriel's 'System Change':*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4B2SHdBaIQ>

WATCH: *Francois Paulette Talks Climate Change:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxHGDUHUvXs>

WATCH: *Tiny House Warriors:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lgusPqMILI>

WATCH: *Stand Up / Stand N Rock:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Onyk7guvHK8>

Suggested class activities:

1. Identifying current perceptions and biases around Indigenous issues:

-Teacher poses a question/statement (ex. "Isn't it time for Indigenous people to get over what

happened to them?").

-Pair up students or put them into small discussion groups.

-After discussing, invite each group to report back to class with key thoughts.

-Invite students to write their take-aways and further questions.

2. Skype discussion with Indigenous students from another school (ideally Adult Education Centre in Kahnawake or John Abbott College). This should be a peer-to-peer discussion and learning opportunity for both groups of students.

3. Debate the protection of Mother Earth vs. industry development: Is there a way to do both? Charting real decisions, like the Kinder Morgan pipeline, allows students to problem-solve in a real, tangible way.

Suggested homework assignments:

1. Research and report on the status of a current environmental issue in Indigenous communities.

2. Write a response to the question: “Why don’t more Canadians know or care about the water/housing issues in Indigenous communities?”

3. Write a response to the question: “How should water/housing issues be solved in Indigenous communities?”

Additional literature and videos:

Onaman Collective (Christi Belcourt & Isaac Murdoch):

<http://onamancollective.com/>

Colonialism Lives On In Canada’s Indigenous Land Claim Process:

http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/lynn-gehl/indigenous-land-claims-process_b_16368974.html

Until Canada Gives Indigenous People Their Land Back, There Can Never Be Reconciliation:

<http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/views-expressed/2017/01/until-canada-gives-indigenous-people-their-land-back-there-ca>

Treaties with Indigenous Peoples in Canada:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-treaties/>

Treaties, reconciliation, and Indigenous history in Canada:

<http://www.cbc.ca/2017/canadathestoryofus/treaties-reconciliation-and-indigenous-history-in-canada-1.4080537>

The Inconvenient Indian (non-fiction by Thomas King):

<https://tgam.ca/2C0rbWC>

Aboriginal Rights Are Not Human Rights (non-fiction by Peter Keith Kulchisky):

<http://arpbooks.org/books/detail/aboriginal-rights-are-not-human-rights>

First Peoples in Canada (non-fiction by Alan D McMillan and Eldon Yellowhorn):

<http://www.douglas-mcintyre.com/book/first-peoples-in-canada>

Who is June Kaminski?

June has maternal blood ties to the [Ketegaunseebee Anishnabai, Garden River First Nation](#) in Northern Ontario. June is currently a PhD Candidate in the [Faculty of Curriculum and Pedagogy](#) at the University of British Columbia (UBC), with a focus on critical pedagogy, e-learning and nursing informatics. She is currently the Curriculum Coordinator for a hybrid BSN Advanced Entry program which integrates Aboriginal content and processes throughout the curriculum. She also teaches a course for the UBC Institute for Aboriginal Health and UBC Aboriginal Health and Community Administration program about information management, digital literacy, and community planning for information technology theory for community managers and health professionals.



