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## IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

Grade 11

(TRADITIONAL AND WESTERN)

#### **MAIN IDEA**

This lesson focuses on the importance of both traditional and western education of First Nation students. The class will take part in an initial discussion on the topic. Students will classify and organize information about traditional learning in First Nations culture. Students will create a life map focusing on past, present and future education in both traditional and western education. The life map is a reflection, as well as, a goal setting activity to show students the importance of education. Education in this lesson is considering the passing on of knowledge, skills, and beliefs from one person or source to another person. The lesson concludes with students being asked to reflect through paragraph writing on topics discussed throughout the lesson.

## ONTARIO SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

**NATIVE STUDIES** 

- Students will...
  - Describe how an Aboriginal worldview defines and promotes close relationships to the land, family, community, and culture.
  - Describe how Aboriginal men and women maintain their traditions, customs and practices despite the external forces exerted by modern society.
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the different perspectives of Aboriginal and Canadian youth on their historical and cultural roots.
  - Describe how health and education issues relevant to the quality of life of Aboriginal people on and off reserve are a mutual responsibility of Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society.
  - Identify customs, ceremonies, and spiritual beliefs that connect Aboriginal people to nature and to one another.

MATERIALS	RESOURCES & SOURCES
Handouts 1-4 (includes Rubric)	Virtual Museum: Community Memories <a href="http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-">http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-</a>
Computer/Projector Paper, markers & supplies	cms/histoires_de_chez_nous- community_memories/pm_v2.php?id=record_detail&fl=0≶=English&ex =00000353&rd=86627
or computer to create: My Life Map	Google images: My Life Map <a href="https://www.google.ca/search?q=my+life+map&amp;hl=en&amp;client=firefox-a&amp;hs=Gmb&amp;tbo=u&amp;rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&amp;tbm=isch&amp;source=univ&amp;sa=X&amp;ei=JBIIUfKCBcrayAGD04GwDA&amp;ved=0CDEQsAQ&amp;biw=1280&amp;bih=666">https://www.google.ca/search?q=my+life+map&amp;hl=en&amp;client=firefox-a&amp;hs=Gmb&amp;tbo=u&amp;rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&amp;tbm=isch&amp;source=univ&amp;sa=X&amp;ei=JBIIUfKCBcrayAGD04GwDA&amp;ved=0CDEQsAQ&amp;biw=1280&amp;bih=666</a>



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#### **ACTIVITIES**

- 1. Introduce the theme of the lesson: The Importance of Traditional and Western Education. Have students answer the following questions on their own or in a small group. Discuss their answers as a class discussion.
  - What is indigenous knowledge and teaching? (*Teaching based interests, skills, needs, and spiritual beliefs; a strong connection is made to the elements of the earth and the animals that inhabit the region*)
  - Why is indigenous knowledge important to teach from one generation to the next? (Passes on cultural traditions, teaches specific skills, knowledge, and beliefs)
  - What impact did Colonialism have on traditional teachings? (Removal of children from families so the physical ability to teach children was taken away, children were taught by the churches, education included literacy, numeracy, chores, and religious studies)
  - Is there room in society for both ways of teaching? Traditional and Western (Yes, but how can it be done?)
- Distribute Handout #1 Aboriginal Education before Residential Schools. Have students
  read through the handout, which includes examples of traditional teaching before
  colonization.
- 3. Distribute **Handout #2 Aboriginal Education before Residential Schools: Chart.** Have students reread the information from Handout #1. As they read through the information they must classify and organize information onto the chart. An example is provided on the chart to guide students. Encourage students to read the information, think about what category of education it fits into, and paraphrase the information into brief informative points.
- 4. Once complete, review the content of the chart and form a discussion around these ideas.

### Ask students:

- Do they experience some of these traditional ways of teaching with family members or elders in the community? If so, would they like to share their experiences with the class?
- If they are not exposed to this traditional teaching, do they wonder why not?
- What do they value greater: school or learning from the family or community?
   Should both be valued the same?



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- 5. Introduce students to **Handout** #3 **Assignment: My Life Map**. This assignment will give students the opportunity to reflect on their past learning, focus on their present learning, and plan goals for their future learning. Learning's will include knowledge, skills, and beliefs through both traditional and western education. The assignment will consist of a planning stage, as well as, a final production of their own life map. Refer to the **Handout** #3 for assignment details. Examples can be shown from Google images: My Life Map (URL listed in Resource & Sources).
- 6. Refer to **Rubric** to evaluate **Assignment**: **My Life Map**.
- 7. Once the **My Life Maps** are complete. Have students reflect on content from the assignment readings, as well as, from their own life experiences. Have students respond to each of the following questions in a separate paragraph on lined paper:
  - Reflecting on the My Life Map you created on your past, present, and future in education – How have First Nations people (family, community members, friends and Elders) taught you to maintain traditions, customs and practices despite the external forces exerted by modern society?
  - Explain why it is important to the quality of your life to learn from both traditional teachings and western education?

### **ASSESSMENT**

**Summative Assessment:** My Life Map Rubric



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**HANDOUT #1** 

### ABORIGINAL EDUCATION BEFORE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Resistance and Renewal Celia Haig-Brown, page 37

First Nation childhood and education were an inseparable part of the on going process of life and living.

The methods used to teach skills for everyday living and to instill values and principles were participation and example.

Within communities, every member taught skills, with Elders playing a very important role. Education for the child began at the time he or she was born.

The child was prepared for his role in life whether it is hunter, fisherman, wife, or mother. This meant that each child grew up knowing his place in the system.

Integral to the traditional education system was the participation of the family and community as educators. (JACK, 1985:9)

Education was the responsibility of all and it was a continuous process. Parents, grandparents and other relatives naturally played a major role, but other members of the tribe, particularly the elders helped to shape the young people. (Mary Ashworth, 1979: 6)

Kaaren Olsen, Native Women and the Fur Trade, Canadian Woman Studies, Volume 10, Numbers 2 & 3:

Because the Native woman is the home-maker, and in charge of the children if they are too young to go with their father as he checks and tends the traps, she is also to a great extent in charge of their education.

As she goes about her work, she teaches them their role in Production (a role that does not exist in town or back in their villages).

She teaches them a respect for the animals as she skins and prepares the hides. She shows them what part of the animal the hunter has to return to the earth when it is killed. She shows them where to leave the carcasses and what to do with the bones.

The children are taught the rituals and ceremonies of thanking and showing respect to the land and animals.



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For example, when she is skinning a beaver, the mother will show the children where one of the toenails is missing from the animal's foot. She'll explain how the beaver uses this nail to groom itself, to distribute the oils it uses to waterproof its fur, and how the trapper will cut this nail off and return it to the water where the beaver was caught. In this way, the trapper pays his respect to the beaver that gave its life to him and at the same time thanks its spirit.

The children are also taught the taboos; actions that may anger or offend the spirits of the earth and the animals, and thus make the hunt unsuccessful until such time that the spirits are appeared.

For example, the bones of the animals cannot ever be thrown into the fire. The knee bones of the muskrat, beaver, rabbit and other animals cannot be eaten. When the children are old enough to go with their father, they will know enough to put these teachings into practice.

The traditional teachings and values are thus passed onto the next generations.

In a way of life where sometimes man and animals go hungry, where there are times of plenty, the children have to be taught to respect the land and animals.

The children have to learn to take and use what is needed, to kill well and to make every effort to ensure that the gifts from the land and animals are not wasted.

Traditional education allowed children to begin the process of observing from the time they are in their takinaakan and learn by participating as soon as they are able; traditional life was ruled by the principle of production from each according to his ability and distribution to each according to his need.

# The History of Education in Nishnawbe Aski Nation Dr. Donald J. Auger and Dr. Emily Faries, 2005

Education of the Ojibwe and Cree cultures did not exist as a separate part, it was in essence just part of their culture.

Education in their cultures included: cultural beliefs, economy, kinship and other ties, community and social relations, and spiritual beliefs.

The Ojibwe and Cree lived in groups/extended families and shared everything. Food, tools and equipment, chores, tasks and activities were all shared as was necessary to their survival. Group rights were more important than individual rights.

Traditional education occurred whether children were playing, helping or doing chores. Children learned not only from their parents, but also from their grandparents and the elders in the community.

Source: http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/histoires\_de\_chez\_nous-community\_memories/pm\_v2.php?id=record\_detail&fl=0&lg=English&ex=00000353&rd=86627



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**HANDOUT #2** 

Name:		
name.		

### ABORIGINAL EDUCATION BEFORE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS - CHART

Classify and organize information into the following charts from the reading provided on **Handout** #1 – Aboriginal Education before Residential Schools.

Traditional Education	Examples
Knowledge	-Life began with learning
Skills	
Relationships	
Beliefs	

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**HANDOUT #3** 

Name:		

### **MY LIFE MAP**

Education is the most important aspect of growth in life. Education can be acquired by anyone at anytime as long as something is being learned.

This assignment will highlight your past, present, and future education achievements classified into Traditional and Western learning (categorize your map into two sections using symbols. For example: two roads, two sides of the brain, two boots). Traditional education will include knowledge and skills passed on to you by parents, friends, and elders in the community. Western education will include knowledge and skills taught to you by teachers and students at school or any form of learning in modern society, for example books and computer programs.

Remember, both sources of education are equally valuable to you for a successful future!

### Task:

1. Fill in the following chart. This is the planning stage of the assignment.

Area of	Traditional Education	Western Education
Learning	(Family, community, and culture)	(School, books, and the internet)
Was and a dec	Past	Past
Knowledge	Past	Pust
	Present	Present
	Future	Future



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### MY LIFE MAP continued...

Name:	

Area of	<b>Traditional Education</b>	Western Education
Learning	(Family, community, and culture)	(School, books, and the internet)
Skills	Past	Past
	Present	Present
	Future	Future
Beliefs	Past	Past
	Present	Present
	Future	Future



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Name:	
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Area of	Traditional Education	Western Education
Learning	(Family, community, and culture)	(School, books, and the internet)
Relationships	Past	Past
	Present	Present
	Future	Future

- 2. Once you have filled in the chart, share it with your teacher to ensure nothing is missing.
- 3. Prepare the final product. You must create **My Life Map** that illustrates and communicates the information from your chart. Some ideas of how you may do this would be: a mind map, a timeline, a road or trail symbolizing each stage in your life. This assignment requires you to decide on a creative way to illustrate and inform others about the education in your life: past, present, and future. Examples can be found on Google images: My Life Map. Just remember, your map focuses on education or learning, not on all aspects of life, such as "lost my first tooth".



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### **MY LIFE MAP**

Categories	<b>Level 1</b> (50-59%)	<b>Level 2</b> (60-69%)	<b>Level 3</b> (70-79%)	Level 4 (80-100%)
Knowledge/Understanding:  Makes personal connections to knowledge acquired through traditional and western education experiences.	Shows limited knowledge and understanding of the topic.	Shows some knowledge and understanding of the topic.	Shows considerable knowledge and understanding of the topic.	Shows thorough knowledge and understanding of the topic.
Thinking & Inquiry:  Commits to the planning process and asks questions to clarify ideas. Provides effective examples of education connected to personal life.	Progress and completion of the assignment shows limited thinking and inquiry skills.	Progress and completion of the assignment shows some thinking and inquiry skills.	Progress and completion of the assignment shows considerable thinking and inquiry skills.	Progress and completion of the assignment shows thorough thinking and inquiry skills.
Communication:  Planning chart and Life Map are effectively pursued and completed.	Oral and written communication of information is presented with limited clarity and interest.	Oral and written communication of information is presented with some clarity and interest.	Oral and written communication of information is presented with considerable clarity and interest.	Oral and written communication of information is presented with thorough clarity and interest.
Application:  Content and information is applied to a final media product.	Applying knowledge and understanding is met with limited ability.	Applying knowledge and understanding is met with some ability.	Applying knowledge and understanding is met with considerable ability.	Applying knowledge and understanding is met with through ability.

Note: A student whose achievement is below Level 1 (50%) has not met the expectations for this assignment or activity.