

Aboriginal Perspectives General Lesson for the Web site

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Overall Objective

The National Film Board has a rich tradition of producing films that capture our Canadian identity. This Web site builds on that tradition with a focus on Aboriginal Perspectives. Learn about First Nations, Inuit and Métis people through a thematically based exploration of the shared histories of Aboriginal people in Canada.

Grade Level

7-12

Content Areas

Native Studies
Social Studies
Media Awareness
English Language Arts

Films (and excerpts used)

- *The Caribou Hunters*, 1951, excerpt 1 (6 min 37 s – 8 min 20 s), Cinema and Representation theme
- *Kanata : Legacy of the Children of Aataentsic*, 1999, excerpt 1 (1 min 37 s – 3 min 6 s), History and Origins theme
- *You Are on Indian Land*, 1969, excerpt 1(38 s – 2 min 47 s), Sovereignty and Resistance theme
- *Riel Country*, 1996, excerpt 3 (35 min 40 s – 39 min 36 s), Sovereignty and Resistance theme
- *Circle of the Sun*, 1960, excerpt (13 min 36 s – 16 min 6 s), Indigenous Knowledge theme

NB: The excerpts and related films can be viewed online free of charge at
<www.nfb.ca/aboriginalperspectives>.

Materials Required

Access to a computer lab, Internet connection, web camera, data projector, flip chart paper or whiteboard, drawing paper and pencils.

Summary

Consider the diversity of Aboriginal cultures of Canada. Too many people have the misconception that Aboriginal communities are basically the same with differences based solely on geography. While it is true that all Native Peoples are tied closely to the land, there exists a diversity within Aboriginal communities that is as varied as the geography of Canada. Here is just a sample of the Aboriginal people in Canada: the Mi'kmaq of the East Coast; Haudenosaunee and Cree Nations of Ontario and Quebec; the Cree, Dakota, Saulteaux, Blackfoot and Métis Nations of the Prairies; the Haida, Tlingit, Tsims hian, Kwakiutl, Bella Coola and Bella Bella Nations of

the West Coast; the northern nations of the Dene and Inuit. The activities that follow are intended to help build an appreciation of this diversity.

Introduction Activity (10 minutes)

Hand out drawing paper to each student. Ask them to draw a picture of the first thing that comes to mind when they hear the word *Indian*. Allow 3-5 minutes for the activity, then ask students to share their images.

Are there any stereotypical responses? What myths and or misconceptions underlie the images the students drew? Challenge the class to look beyond the stereotypes and learn about the realities of Canada's Aboriginal peoples.

ACTIVITY 1: Our Kanata: Our Village (40 minutes)

Step 1: Display the map of Native peoples at the time of European contact (see the map in the About this site section).

- Use the map to make students aware of where the people who are shown in the film excerpts are from.
- View *The Caribou Hunters* in its entirety or the excerpt identified. Keep in mind both the location of where the film takes place and the time in which the film was produced (1974). How have things changed since then? Are there any stereotypes that match those discussed in the introductory activity?

Step 2: View excerpt 1 of the film *Kanata: Legacy of the Children of Aataentsic*. Identify on the map where in Canada the events occur. How are the people in this film different from the people in *The Caribou Hunters*? How are they similar?

Step 3: Visit the [Aboriginal Canada Portal](#) site for more information on the people depicted in the films. Allow time for students to share the information they find.

Step 4: Have students plot and label on a political map of Canada where the contemporary populations of Native people reside (see teacher's notes).

Step 5 (extension activity): The federal government sponsors a program to help students to connect via the Internet and to participate in Webcasts. Native communities depicted in the films can be contacted for a live video stream for two-way, real-time communication. See the References and Resources section below).

ACTIVITY 2: Canada's Indigenous People – A Circle of Friends (3 X 50 minutes)

Step 1: Copy and distribute copies of the research template found in the Appendix.

- Watch the film excerpts of *You Are on Indian Land*, *Riel Country* and *Circle of the Sun*. Have students take notes that will help in their research projects.
- Generate a list of possible research topics under the following categories:
 - First Nations of Canada (Huron, Mi'kmaq, Cree, Haida, Inuit, etc.)

- First Contact—European and Aboriginal Histories, (treaties, colonialism, missionaries, the fur trade, etc.)
- The Métis Experience (history, important figures, culture, etc.)
- Native Peoples, Contemporary Issues (land claims, self government, urbanization, treaty land entitlement, residential schools, disputes, etc.)

Step 2: Encourage students to explore the Aboriginal Perspectives Web site as a starting point for their research. After the information gathering phase of the activity, students will need to decide on the format for presenting their findings.

Step 3: Students can share with one another their research findings in the format they have selected (see Teacher's Notes). Some form of hard copy of the research may also be submitted as part of the evaluation (research outline, poster, essay, etc.).

Closure Activity (5-7 minutes)

Ask the students to look at the drawings they made during the introductory activity. Have them draw another image of what they think of when they hear the word *Indian*. Have the images changed? What contributed to their shift in perception?

Check for Understanding

Ask students to share their before and after drawings from the introductory activity. Leave the class with the question: What is the origin of the word *Indian*, and how did it come to be applied to Canada's Native Peoples?

Evaluation rubric

Rubric Generator: www.2learn.ca/construct/rubric/tlcrubric.html

References and Resources

[Aboriginal Canada Portal](#)

[Overview of Aboriginal History in Canada](#)

[Webcasts: Connecting Youth in Canada](#)

Appendix

Research/Project Plan: Student Guide

Student Name:

Date:

1. Project Topic

- What is my topic?
- What do I already know about this topic?
- What do I want to find out?

2. Research

- I will check the following for information:

Elders card catalogue	library periodical index
parents, relatives, neighbours databases	fellow students
school library encyclopedia	Internet
other libraries	atlases/maps
art galleries magazines/journals	newspapers
museums films, videos, audiotapes	science centre
companies/businesses	Public Archives picture files
Tribal/Band Councils	government offices

- When my research involves traditional resources, I may need to consider all or some of the following points:

- Do I know when certain activities should not be recorded in written or visual form?
- Do I know how to show respect for Elders and the knowledge they give?
- Am I able to gain understanding through listening, observing and participating?
- Do I explore what I hear, see, and do for underlying meaning?
- Do I take time to consider and internalize what I learn, recognizing that individual perspective is an important part of any conclusion I may reach?
- Did I complete my bibliography?

Bibliographical notes should include community as well as print resources:

Print: author, title, publisher, copyright date, and pages used

Community Resources: name, Personal Communication, date

Source - Where did I find this information?

3. Plan for Presentation

- How will I make my presentation? Please check box

maps		demonstration	
drawings		radio/TV talk show	
mural		interview	
poster		written report	
diorama		speech	
chart or graph		poems	
cartoons		journal	
models		song	
transparency		booklet	
photographs		letter	
video		tape recording	
slide presentation			

- What arrangements/equipment will I need for my presentation? (television, VCR, overhead projector, tape recorder, art supplies, assistant, tobacco for Elders)
- After I have finished my preparations, but before I make my presentation, I should ask:
 - Is my material comprehensive and accurate?
 - Did I use a variety of sources?
 - Did I complete my bibliography?
 - Is my material well organized?
 - Will my presentation be interesting?
 - Is my material neat, attractive, informative and clear? (written presentation)
 - Have I practised my presentation? Is it appropriate in length? Am I well prepared? (oral presentation)

4. Time to Reflect: How do I feel about my project?

- What part of the report did I most enjoy?
- What was the most interesting thing I learned about the topic?
- What part did I find most difficult?
- What would I do differently next time?

Teacher's Notes:**Our Kanata: Our Village**

- Feel free to use your own version of a Canadian map. The intent of the activity is to help students to identify where in Canada each of our Aboriginal peoples currently or previously resided.

Canada's Indigenous Peoples: A Circle of Friends

- Invite students to use the oral tradition to share their research findings; this is in keeping with how knowledge was traditionally transmitted by Native cultures, from one generation to the next.