

Six Miles Deep – Study Guide

About the Film

Six Miles Deep is a film about a land claim, how that claim has affected relationships in a community, and the peaceful actions taken by the Haudenosaunee to keep negotiations over that land claim intact. ***Six Miles Deep*** takes place on the Six Nations territory identified through the Haldimand Deed and marked as territory 40 and 40B.

The Haudenosaunee or Iroquois people of Guswenta – River of Life area have been keepers and protectors of that land for thousands of years. They have lived harmoniously under Haudenosaunee governance and constitutions, since long before their first contact with Europeans, and kept this space sacred for their children. Even through population decline, the enactment of policies such as the Indian Act and attempts to overrun lease agreements, the Haudenosaunee clan mothers and hereditary chiefs have worked hard to keep this land for future generations.

This film takes a look at the lives and perspectives of several clan mothers who stood up for what they believed in. It shows the work done and sacrifices made to keep a connection with the land for future generations.

Main themes:

- The role of women
- Traditional clan governance vs. chief and council governance
- The role of the Canadian government with respect to land claims and policies
- Historical and contemporary understandings of relationships between Aboriginal people and the Canadian government
- Law and human rights issues
- Roles and relationships between intercultural communities

About This Guide

This guide is intended to support educators at high school and university levels. It will stimulate discussion around:

- History of Canada – on local, national and global levels
- Geography – human patterns of movement, relationships with the land, geographic resources and influences
- Western Civilization – patterns of colonialism, development of policies such as the Indian Act
- Native Studies – Aboriginal expressions, self-government and leadership roles, relationship to the land and sustainability of culture, language and ways of life
- Law and social justice
- The role of women throughout history and today

- Womens' rights and responsibilities to their families, communities and selves.
- Self-government and Indigenous human rights

Using this Study Guide

This guide provides basic information, which will guide you in using *Six Miles Deep* as a teaching tool. It includes strategies to help promote learning before, during and after viewing the film. The learning activities will lead to greater understanding and informed opinions about the rights of Aboriginal people, as well as potentially strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. This film shows some of the contributions made by Aboriginal People that have made Canada a strong, democratic country.

Study Guide Goals

- Reflect on learning and evaluate personal ideas related to this topic;
- Ask critical questions that lead to deeper levels of understanding;
- Consider different perspectives;
- Raise awareness about policies affecting Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians;
- Raise awareness of contributions made by the Six Nations;
- Identify and analyze qualities that lead to a social equality.

Context: Important Facts and Figures

Haudenosaunee Governance

The Haudenosaunee council fire is located at Kahnawa:ke Mohawk Nation and is ruled by the Kaianere'ko:wa or Great Law of Peace. It is under this constitution that the Mohawk Nation recognized its sovereignty. The symbol of the longhouse is used to show where each nation lies and what responsibilities they hold under this peaceful union. There are three levels of governance which include:

Village Council Fire – A series of council fires and forums that allow people to express their opinions and give input on a variety of topics. Village chiefs would then deliberate issues and decide how to act upon them.

Councils of chiefs were appointed by clan mothers representing the nine clan families. The clan mothers could also remove a chief.

Mohawk Nation Council Fire – This holds nine chiefs, who sit together to discuss topics brought forward by the nine clan families. The clans deliberate and work together to find consensus.

Grand Council Fire – This is the central government of the Iroquois Confederacy, in which fifty chiefs represent the six (initially five) nations. They deliberate upon issues until reaching consensus.

<kahnawakelonghouse.com/index.php?mid=1>

Chief and Council

The Chief and Council structure was put into place, after a long process, in reaction to the 1927 Indian Act, which forbid Aboriginal people to have political organizations. The current structure includes a chief and council members. The members and chief are voted in and hold their term until new elections take place. Many nations had other forms of governance in place prior to contact. These kept relations between and among Nations in good order; their goal was to maintain harmony.

<afn.ca/article.asp?id=59>

<ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/mr/nr/m-a2004/2-02498-eng.asp>

Clan Mothers

The clan mothers of the Six Nations belong to nine basic clan systems. The clan systems are somewhat complex, so to understand them fully, it is best to learn from the proper holders of knowledge in an area directly. The nine basic clans are named the Turtle, Bear, Snipe, Eel, Heron, Beaver, Hawk, Wolf and Deer clans.

Many teachings and responsibilities belong to both men and women. The Six Nations is a matriarchal society so many decisions are made by clan mothers and carried out by the men and hereditary chiefs. There have always been laws and rules to follow for decision making.

<realpeopleshistory.com/history/six-nations-history>

The Wampum Belt

Wampum belts symbolize treaties between nations. These were often made out of shells and have been used to maintain relationships for many years.

Beverly shows a Wampum belt in ***Six Miles Deep***. (Wampum belts were used to symbolize agreements, prior to the time of written treaties.) She shows the two rivers on it that run side by side: one representing the Six Nations and one, the Europeans with whom they built a relationship and created a treaty. Each Nation was to operate under their own laws and co-exist peacefully. The three white rows of beads on the belt represent peace, trust and friendship.

The Haldimand Deed of 1784

Frederick Haldimand-Captain General and Governor-in-Chief of the province of Quebec wrote the deed which became finalized on October 25, 1784, under the reign of George III, by the grace of God of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith. Since the Mohawk and other members of the Six Nations lost their settlement during the American Revolution, the deed grants “in His Majesty’s name [...] the said Mohawk Nation and such others of the Six Nation Indians as wish to settle in that quarter to take possession of and settle upon the banks of the River commonly called Ouse or Grand River, running into Lake Erie, allotting to them for that purpose six miles deep from each side of the river beginning at Lake Erie and extending in that proportion to the head of the said river, which them and their posterity are to enjoy forever.”

sixnations.ca/LandsResources/HaldProc.htm

Douglas Creek Estates

Douglas Creek Estates was undergoing the development of luxury homes under the developer Henco Industries. The homes were to be located within the boundaries of the Haldimand Deed, but outside reserve land near Caledonia, Ontario.

Before Viewing

Find out what prior knowledge students have and then activate their learning through some of the following strategies:

- Ask students what they know and want to know. Keep track of their learning in these areas. You can hand out paper for this purpose or use one main chart at the front of the room with three columns on it. Smart board tools allow electronic files to be saved and reviewed. The columns should be labelled, **know**, **want to know** and **learned**. Begin by brainstorming with your students. For example, you can ask what they know about land claims with specific reference to the Six Nations or ask what they know about the Six Nations. Next ask students what they want to know about The Six Nations or about land claims. As you gain new insights, complete the **learned** column. This needs to be done repeatedly.
- Students could be told the theme of the movie and then asked to brainstorm a list of related words, phrases and notions. Students then work with a partner to clarify their notes or to add to their list. They can write or draw about these notions and then extend their learning through the film **Six Miles Deep**. Some of the main themes in the film include Haudenosaunee governance – roles and responsibilities, chief and council, the Wampum belt, land claims, lease and

purchasing of land agreements, private corporation and government roles and responsibilities.

- Review vocabulary and define unfamiliar terms; students could also illustrate a picture, find a synonym or write links to show how vocabulary is interrelated. Another option is to sort vocabulary into categories. Vocabulary may include:

Haudenosaunee, Iroquois, Six Nations, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, Tuscarora, Cayuga, Long House people, Great Lakes, clan mother, hereditary chief, constitution, Wampum belt, teachings, balance, Mother Earth, Guswenta – River of Life, matriarchal society, prophecies, consensus, Canadian government, land claims, chief and Council, Haldimand Deed, lease agreement, Indian Act, MacKenzie King, Mounted Police, definition of human, voting rights, rule of law.

Douglas Creek Estates, Henco Industries

- Map out the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and compare it to what is claimed within territory 40 and 40B of the Haldimand Deed.
- Learn about Douglas Creek Estates. What do they market? Whom do they serve?

Asking questions that lead to inquiry:

Raising questions, when learning about a topic, leads to extended learning. It is important for educators to accept all questions and to assist students in formulating good questions. Start by defining a clear task for the students. Students should know what types of question deepen understanding. They must consider the point of the question; identify open-ended and closed questions; and categorize questions that lead to high levels of thinking. It may help to look at Bloom's Taxonomy, in which levels of thinking and understanding move from remembering to understanding, to applying, to analysing, to evaluating and then to creating.

Verbs used to generate remembering questions and tasks include tell, list, recall, match, draw and write. Verbs for understanding include explain, outline, discuss, compare, demonstrate, and interpret. Verbs for applying include complete, classify, change, produce and modify. Verbs for analyzing include distinguish, investigate, take apart, differentiate and deduce. Verbs to develop evaluating questions include judge, decide, justify, verify, argue, recommend, assess, prioritize, value and defend. Verbs for creating include design, imagine, propose, devise, hypothesize, add to and, originate.

Some sample questions and tasks related to the film may include:

Remembering:

- Write the name of the nation in this film (Six Nations Reserve).
- Locate the territory on a map (Grand River near Lake Erie-near Caledonia, Ontario).
- Write a brief description of the role of the clan mothers.
- Tell me which policy is referred to most often (Indian Act).
- What types of governance are discussed? (Haudenosaunee governance, chief and council governance and Canadian government).

Understanding:

- Discuss how this land claim relates to other land claims in Canada.
- Restate the main point of the film.
- Summarize the role of the clan mothers.
- How does this film relate to other Nations/situations?

Applying:

- Construct a plan of action to promote the initial agreement, as shown on the wampum belt, of this land claim.
- Show how the clan mothers were successful in their stance.
- Show how the Indian Act can be used to define rights in the classroom.
- Calculate the ratio of land traditionally belonging to the Haudenosaunee to that of the existing reserve.

Analyzing:

- Compare and contrast the governance models discussed.
- Examine the remarks made by the local community. Some comments were very hostile. One comment made supported the Six Nations. Discuss these comments in the classroom and ask for students to share their own opinions
- Compare the Haudenosaunee Constitution to the Canadian Constitution. Compare these constitutions to the Indian Act.

Evaluating:

- Distinguish between the views presented. Show evidence to support one side.
- Recommend changes to the Indian Act.
- Critique the stance and severity of the Haudenosaunee in relation to the Canadian government.

- How would you defend the role of the clan mothers?

Creating:

- Create policies you would want to enact between yourself and the Six Nations. You may want to consider the original agreement made with the wampum belt. What kinds of policies would you promote? How are they similar or different from the Indian Act?
- Propose a solution to land claim issues and present it.
- Construct a governance model with values and a constitution.
- Predict the reaction of the Canadian government and local communities to other unresolved land claims.

During Viewing

Students will take notes and extend their learning from *Six Miles Deep*. Strategies they can use to keep track of their notes include:

- Keeping an information frame to which words can be added to main themes
- Making a mind map;
- Noting areas to compare and contrast;
- Drawing diagrams or label maps;
- Noting all points of view on the issues raised.

After Viewing

Discuss what you viewed. This can be done in a variety of ways.

- Students can think-pair-share their new understandings. Be sure to provide descriptive feedback when discussing areas mentioned, to clarify what was learned.
- Compare the Haudenosaunee clan system with a clan system in your area.
- Chose one area to research further. Your presentation could take one of many forms. For example, it could be a speech, commercial, written essay, poster, PowerPoint presentation, play, diorama or interview. You must show what you learned and what you want others to learn from your project.
- Create a rubric to show what a good project will look like so that students can reflect and evaluate their progress. Clear criteria are best.
- Hold a debate in which opposing perspectives are assigned. Present arguments in a safe environment and provide evidence for your thinking.
- Keep a learning journal to show how and what you have learned. What had the biggest impact on your learning journey?
- A sample rubric may include:

Sub Headings for Criteria	1	2	3	4
Structure and Organization	Information is not well organized or structured	Information is somewhat organized but can be found confusing	Information is well organized and connections are seen.	Information is well organized and creative, connections are easily seen and quality sources are visible.
Information and sources	Information presented had little to no relevance to the topic	Information gathered was limited and sources are not sited well or not well qualified	Information was gathered from a variety of sources and are qualified	Sources are relevant, well sited and show a number of perspectives in a balanced manner.
Questions	Questions are developed through teacher input with little creative thought	Questions show one perspective or limited in levels of thinking.	Questions are focused and student is challenged to learn at a deeper level.	Questions are focused, lead to deep levels of thinking, are creative and thoughtful. Questions lead to socially just Contributions and solutions.
Aboriginal Perspectives	Understandings of Aboriginal Perspectives and contributions are not achieved or valued	New knowledge is learned and some appreciation for Aboriginal Perspectives and contributions is valued	Clear understandings of Aboriginal perspectives and contributions is shown and valued.	Clear understandings of Aboriginal perspectives and contributions are valued and experienced. New connections and contributions are made
Evidence and communication of argument	Evidence is not clear to promote the task of defining, analysing and to show an understanding of how to move toward a socially just community	Evidence of some understanding, analysing and moving toward a socially just community are shown	Clear evidence of understanding, analysing and moving toward a socially just community are shown.	Clear understanding of understanding, analysing and moving toward a socially just community are achieved. New contributions and connections are made to promote social justice

Resources

<update.ocap.ca/node/709> News event – “Six Nations Clan Mothers Lay it on the Land” by Paul Legal, *Hamilton Spectator*

[realpeopleshistory.com/history/six-nations-history/Real Peoples History](http://realpeopleshistory.com/history/six-nations-history/Real%20Peoples%20History)

ainc-inac.gc.ca/br/is/vor-eng.asp Indian and Northern Affairs – The Indian Act

afn.ca/article.asp?id=59 Assembly of First Nations

kahnawakelonghouse.com/index.php?mid=1 Kahnawake longhouse

realpeopleshistory.com Iroquois Clans Program