



# INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS & RECONCILIATION

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

5







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Tile Reconciliation Canoe, BC Teachers' Federation  
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# INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS AND RECONCILIATION

## Teacher Resource Guide • Social Studies 5

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## BACKGROUND

*The Commission recommends that provincial and territorial departments of education work in concert with the Commission to develop age-appropriate educational materials about residential schools for use in public schools. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Interim Report)*

### **Rationale**

Why curriculum about Indian Residential Schools? This unit was developed in response to the call by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to develop age-appropriate educational materials about Indian Residential Schools. In its Interim Report (2012) the Commission concluded that “Canadians have been denied a full and proper education as to the nature of Aboriginal societies, and the history of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.”

The colonial foundations of our country resulted in a relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people that was always unbalanced and unjust. This relationship manifested itself in many ways, including the treatment of Indigenous people as wards of the government, the loss of land and language, and the banning of cultural practices that had sustained the diverse First Nations for millennia.

A key component in this relationship was the imposition of the residential school system which the dominant culture hoped would bring about its goals of “civilizing and Christianizing.” Only in recent years has mainstream society acknowledged the extreme unjustness of the residential school system and the harm it caused to multiple generations of First Nations families and communities.

These learning resources are also a response to The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (1996) which, in calling for a new relationship, outlined four principles of a renewed relationship:

Mutual Recognition  
Mutual Respect  
Sharing  
Mutual Responsibility

The time is overdue for a strengthening of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and this can only be accomplished by a full and truthful understanding of the history of the relationship. Stó:ló educator Bill Mussell gives an insightful view of what a positive relationship could be:

Relationship is a key value in Aboriginal cultures; one must at all times recognize the value of the other and demonstrate respect and a willingness to discover and honour uniqueness in a relationship, whether it is with people, land, creatures, or

the Creator. One is called upon to be open to learning and to become changed for the better by the other; everyone and everything is a potential teacher in the ongoing journey to wholeness. In [a] relationship, one must be willing to take responsibility for the impact of one's behaviour toward the others, as well as responsibility for managing and learning from one's responses to the other's behaviour. ... This traditional way of understanding relationships can be a model for revising the imbalanced relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadians generally.<sup>1</sup>

The educational materials in this curriculum package are designed to help students participate in this renewed relationship.

### ***What is Reconciliation?***

A dictionary definition of “reconciliation” is the reestablishment of a broken relationship, or forging positive accord where there was discord.

In the words of Reconciliation Canada, it is “based on the idea of restoring friendship and harmony – about resolving differences, accepting the past and working together to build a better future.”<sup>2</sup>

There is an important legal context for the concept of reconciliation in Canadian Aboriginal law. Supreme Court judgements for landmark cases such as *Sparrow* (1990), *Van der Peet* (1993), *Gladstone* (1996) and *Haida* (2004) all include discussions of legal and social reconciliation between Canada and First Nations.<sup>3</sup>

The process of reconciliation is complex, and requires full and active commitment of all parties. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission acknowledges, it will take time and commitment to reverse the legacy of residential school system. It affected many generations of students and their families; it will take several generations to bring about reconciliation.

Reconciliation involves more than the Indian Residential Schools. It includes reconciling the gamut of colonial injustices, including a fair settlement of land and treaty issues. Although the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was tasked to reveal the truth about the residential school system, it concludes that it was the whole relationship “shaped over time by colonialism and racism” that needs full attention for the reconciliation process to move forward.

### ***What was the Residential School System?***

The residential school system was a collaboration between the Government of Canada and the mainstream churches to educate First Nations children in an environment that removed them from the influences of their families and culture. The explicit goal was to “civilize and Christianize” the children and to teach them basic trades for the boys and domestic skills for the girls. The system was based on a colonial, racist world view that Euro-Canadian society was superior and First Nations culture and people were inferior. In its Final Report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada called the Indian Residential School system “cultural genocide.”<sup>4</sup> Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin is the highest ranking Canadian

1 William Mussell. Decolonizing Education: A Building Block for Reconciliation. *From Truth to Reconciliation – Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools*. Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2008: 336.

2 Reconciliation Canada Backgrounder, <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/explore/reconciliation-canada-documents/>

3 Tony Knox, Reconciliation In Canadian Law: The Three Faces Of Reconciliation? 2009. [http://mccarthy.ca/pubs/Reconciliation\\_Paper\\_July2009.pdf](http://mccarthy.ca/pubs/Reconciliation_Paper_July2009.pdf)

4 Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future. Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, page 1.

official to date who has used the term “cultural genocide” to describe residential schools.<sup>5</sup>

Under the BNA Act, 1867, the federal government assumed all control of the lives of First Nations people, making them “wards of the government.” This includes responsibility for education. The government funded both day schools located on reserves and Indian Residential Schools. They paid the churches to operate the schools, since there was a historical precedent of missionaries using education as part of their proselytizing.

The Indian Residential Schools were chronically underfunded. Teachers were paid less than in the public schools, and many residential schools operated farms to both feed and subsidize the schools. In these schools, students did much of the work around the school and farm in the guise of “industrial training” and were subjected to the “half-day system” where they attended classes for half the day and worked for the other half.

There were many abuses inherent in the system. The basic premise of removing children from their communities to “kill the Indian in them” was harsh enough. But because of the under-funding and some of the unqualified teachers hired, the schools became a breeding ground for emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

Not only First Nations children attended residential schools. Métis, Non-Status and Inuit children also experienced the system. Métis students were sometimes admitted by church officials, although the governments position was not to fund students without status. In some cases the residential schools were the only option for Métis students to get any kind of education. In the Arctic the schools were run directly by the churches until 1953 when the Department of Northern Affairs and National resources was created and the federal government formally took over the operation of the schools. For more information see chapters 3 and 4 in *They Came for the Children*, and *Métis History and Experience and Residential Schools in Canada* available on the Aboriginal Healing Foundation website.

It should be noted that some students had positive experiences at residential schools. They learned practical skills and self-discipline that helped them in their future lives. Also, there were many committed teachers who endeavoured to nurture students where they could in the system.

For more information about the history of the residential school system, see *They Came for the Children*, published by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and available online at <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=580>. Further resources pertaining to the residential school system can be found in the Resources listing, “Resources” on page 82.

## ***The Way Forward***

In the words of Justice Murray Sinclair, the Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, “education brought us here, education will help us get away from this.” On one hand, generations of First Nations children have been damaged by an inferior education system. On the other hand, public schools systems frequently taught that First Nations people and cultures were inferior. “Because that was taught in the public schools,” Sinclair has said, “generation upon generation of non-Aboriginal children in this country have been raised to believe that Aboriginal people have been, were, and are inferior.”<sup>6</sup>

5 Reconciling Unity and Diversity in the Modern Era: Tolerance and Intolerance. Remarks of the Rt. Hon. Beverley McLachlin, P.C. Chief Justice of Canada at the Aga Khan Museum Toronto, Ontario, May 28, 2015. In *Globe and Mail*, May. 29 2015.

6 Report to Senate Committee 2013



There is growing evidence that many members of Canadian society recognize the importance of fully understanding the impact of the Indian Residential School and other injustices experienced by First Nations people. There is a recognition that, as Sinclair suggests, education is the key to understanding and reconciliation.

For example, in December 2012, School District 78 (Fraser-Cascade) passed a motion to authorize the integration of the residential school experience into the social studies curriculum taught in its schools.<sup>7</sup> The City of Vancouver declared the Year of Reconciliation from June 21, 2013 to June 20, 2014.<sup>8</sup> The Truth and Reconciliation Committee's BC National Event held in Vancouver in September, 2013, saw 10,000 people participate in a Walk for Reconciliation through heavy rain. At that event, 5000 students participated in the BC National Event Education Day.

Although the Indian Residential Schools happened before today's students were born, as British Columbians and Canadians they share the history, and as future leaders will be actively involved in the reconciliation process. These learning resources will give them a reason for positive action.

## PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTION

These learning resources are designed to help Grade Five students attain an understanding of the history of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people over Canada's history. The primary learning resources are published literature, enabling a cross-curricular approach employing both Language Arts and Social Studies learning standards.

While the instructional activities are presented in a structured format that is an example of how they may be incorporated, they are intended to be flexible in their use. They allow for the application of both a First Peoples Pedagogy and the BC Social Studies Curriculum.

### *First Peoples Pedagogy*

This curriculum is guided by a pedagogy that recognizes certain ways of learning inherent in First Nations world views. This curriculum:

- is learner centred
- employs experiential learning and oral texts
- emphasizes an awareness of self and others in equal measure
- recognizes the value of group processes
- supports a variety of learning styles and representation

This pedagogy is based on the desire to bring an inclusive, holistic organization to learning activities. They reflect the following principles of learning, originally developed for the English First Peoples curriculum:

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<sup>7</sup> SD 78 (Fraser-Cascade) Minutes December 11, 2012, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/year-of-reconciliation.aspx>

*First People's Principles of Learning*<sup>9</sup>

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

***Dealing Sensitively with the Topic of Indian Residential Schools***

It is important to deal with the topic of Indian Residential Schools with sensitivity. A great deal will depend on the age, maturity and family background of students, and teachers will be the best judge of how to approach the material.

As teachers go through the unit, they should be aware of the student's reactions to the injustices discussed. It is important to convey to them that the purpose for understanding the past is to be part of a more positive future.

For some students the topics discussed will be sensitive, especially if they have personal connections with residential school survivors. For others, the topics may be controversial, particularly if they feel they have no connection with the issues. Also, in some schools with new Canadians, teachers will need to be aware that some topics may echo feelings that are part of the immigrant experience.

Some considerations for making sure the topic is presented fairly and with sensitivity include the following:<sup>10</sup>

- a classroom is not a platform
- these topics are best taught through discussion rather than instruction
- a teacher is responsible for ensuring exploration of the issue so the discussion promotes understanding and is not merely an exchange of intolerance
- allow time to deal with students' concerns and questions
- be aware of issues that may arise for students both in formal discussions and in and around the classroom; close conversations appropriately; play a role in ensuring potential conflict is dealt with in the context of the classroom
- try to give students the tools and skills to discuss these topics rationally in the school and community

<sup>9</sup> English First Peoples Teachers Resource

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from BC First Nations Studies 12

When discussing sensitive and controversial topics such as the residential school system with students, it is important to set ground rules to ensure a safe environment for sharing ideas and opinion.

- always respect and value what others bring to the discussion
- discussion should protect diverging views among participants
- it is okay to feel discomfort

Students can be encouraged to analyze any controversial issue by asking the following questions:

- What is the issue about?
- What are the arguments?
- What is assumed?
- How are the arguments manipulated?

Much of the text and video content will elicit an emotional response from students. Teachers should be prepared to help students deal with the difficult emotions that may arise. Find people who are knowledgeable about the issue or who are trained to counsel students, such as school counsellors or Aboriginal resource people available in the community. In certain circumstances teachers may wish to refer students to a crisis line for confidential support:

- Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line. Their mandate is to support residential school survivors and their families but their policy is not to turn anyone away. 1-866-925-4419
- Kids Help Phone, an anonymous and confidential phone and on-line professional counselling service for youth. 1-800-668-6868

### ***Using These Resources in Grade Five***

The learning activities in this resource are organized in a sequential format that suggest one way of presenting the content about Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation. However, the activities are designed to be adaptable and flexible. Teachers can follow the sequence of lessons, they can use particular lessons or sections as stand alone activities, or they can adapt the activities to meet their own curriculum planning requirements and the learning needs of their students.

It is important to select activities from all four parts of the unit. Teachers will probably not be able to use all the activities, so planning is essential to choose activities that fit the time frame and also address all the Essential Questions.

It is especially important to include Activity 4.4 to culminate the study on a positive note.

### **British Columbia Curriculum**

At the same time as this resource is being developed, the BC Ministry of Education is in the process of transforming the provincial curricula. While the Social Studies curriculum is still in draft form, it mandates the study of residential schools and their legacies in Grade 5 Social Studies. The new draft Learning Standards for Grade 5 Social Studies include the components listed on the following page. Revisions may be made to accommodate confirmed changes to the BC Social Studies 5 and English Language Arts 5 Curriculum.



### Suggested Responses

Within some of the suggested learning activities, suggested responses are provided (*in italics*). These are not intended to be definitive answers, but to serve as a guide for teachers.

## ***Teacher Resource Overview***

The Resource Guide is made up of four sections:

Part 1: Learning and the Relationship with the Land

Part 2: Why Indian Residential Schools?

Part 3: Inside the Indian Residential School

Part 4: The Healing Journey

*The suggested activities are based on the following:*

## ***Enduring Understandings***

- Both church and state used Indian Residential Schools to promote their goals to destroy traditional culture and assimilate First Nations people into Western culture.
- The legacy of destruction caused by Indian Residential Schools is inter-generational, as family and societal disruption impacted successive generations.
- First Nations people have endured a long journey to bring the hard truths about Indian Residential Schools to the attention of the Canadian government and society, and to see the start of a road to reconciliation.
- All Canadians can help the reconciliation process by learning about and understanding the truths about the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools.

Below are some relevant selections from the Draft English Language Arts 5 Curriculum, and the Draft BC Social Studies Curriculum.

### **Grade 5 English Language Arts**

#### **BIG IDEAS:**

- Exploring text and story helps us understand ourselves, and make connections to others and to the world
- Text can be understood from different perspectives a variety of fiction and non-fiction text types, including those of Canadian and Aboriginal origin

#### **CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES**

- Access and integrate information from a variety of sources and from prior knowledge to build understanding.
- Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to text and develop understanding of self, community, and the world.
- Demonstrate awareness of the oral tradition in First Peoples' cultures and the purposes of First Peoples' texts.
- Identify how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to land
- Exchange ideas and perspectives to build shared understanding.

## Draft Learning Standards for Grade 5 Social Studies

### BIG IDEA:

Economic interdependence and cultural exchange between Aboriginal peoples and Europeans produced conflict and cooperation which shapes Canada's identity today.

### LEARNING STANDARDS

#### Curricular Competencies

Students will develop competencies needed to be active, informed citizens:

- Use Social Studies inquiry processes (ask questions, gather, interpret and analyze ideas, and communicate findings and decisions)
- Construct arguments defending the significance of individuals/groups, places, events, or developments (significance)
- Ask questions and corroborate inferences about the content and origins of different sources (evidence)
- Sequence objects, images, and/or events and recognize the positive and negative aspects of continuities and changes in the past and present (continuity and change)
- Differentiate between intended and unintended consequences of events, decisions, and/or developments and speculate about alternative outcomes (cause and consequence)
- Take stakeholders' perspectives on issues, developments, and/or events by making inferences about their beliefs, values, and motivations (perspective)
- Make ethical judgments about events, decisions, and/or actions that consider the conditions of the time and place, and assess appropriate ways to respond and remember (ethical judgment)

#### Concepts and Content

Students will know and understand the following concepts and content related to Contemporary Canadian Issues:

- discriminatory government policies, including the Head Tax and Komagata Maru; and the responses and reactions over time, including residential schools and internments.
- human rights and responses to discrimination in Canadian society
- levels of government (First Peoples, federal, provincial, and municipal), their main functions, and sources of funding
- participation and representation in Canada's system of government
- First Peoples land ownership and use

## Part One

### *Learning and the Relationship with the Land*

#### **Summary**

This section provides an opportunity for cross-curricular teaching of both prescribed learning standards for Grade 5 Language Arts and Social Studies. It is adaptable to your lesson organization and time frame, but the key component is the first activity using the picture book *Shi-shi-etko*.

The traditional and enduring relationship First Nations people have with the land is central to this section. It provides a contrast for understanding much of what was lost in the Indian Residential School experience. This includes loss of language and culture.

#### **Essential Questions**

- In what ways are First Nations cultures connected with the land and the natural environment?
- In traditional First Nations communities, how was education integrated into daily life?

#### **Key Concepts**

- Education was integrated into daily, ceremonial and spiritual realms of life.
- Education focussed on respect and the relationship with the ancestors and the land.
- Knowledge, skills and beliefs were passed on from generation to generation.

#### **Resources**

##### **Literature:**

*Neekna and Chemai* by Jeanette Armstrong

*Shi-shi-etko* by Nicola Campbell

*The Secret of the Dance*, Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow

Additional books you may consider using are *Fatty Legs* and *When I Was Eight* by Margaret Pokiak-Fenton and Christy Jordan-Fenton

##### **Blackline Masters**

Blackline Master 1 Sort and Predict, page 21

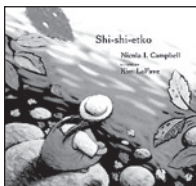
Blackline Master 2 Learning from Generation to Generation, page 22



## Activity 1.1

### Remembering the Land

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#### Resources

- *Shi-shi-etko* by Nicola Campbell
- Video: *Shi-shi-etko*
- Blackline Master 1 Sort and Predict, page 21

#### Vocabulary

fragrant  
gesturing  
kinnikinnick  
patchwork quilt  
rhythmic  
sinew  
sprig  
tanned deer hide

#### Summary

Introduce the unit with the story of *Shi-shi-etko*. A young girl spends the last three days before leaving home for school with different members of her family who teach her about the significance of the land. She collects various plants to put in a memory bag, to hold her remembrances of the land while she is away. Remembering the past is a major theme in the story of Indian Residential Schools, and this element of the story serves to introduce it in a poetic way.

The type of school she is going away to is not specifically mentioned, but there are some clues that can help students create questions about where she is going and why.

The story is rich with sensory imagery, and so offers opportunities for an English Language Arts study of the use of language.

#### Key Concepts

- Respect for the land is at the centre of First Nations culture and education.
- In traditional First Nations culture, education was a family matter.
- A writers' use of sensory imagery enhances the meaning of a story

#### Key Questions

- In what ways can people show respect for the land?
- What are different ways that we learn?
- Why is remembering the past important for understanding the present and the future?
- How do writers use the five senses to bring meaning to their stories?

#### Background

- The presence of family is very significant in this story. In the three days before her departure, Shi-shi-etko's mother, father and grandmother take her out on the land to reinforce their teachings. Mother takes her to the creek and teaches her to remember the land and the ways of her people. Father takes her out in his canoe and also tells her to always remember the land – the trees, mountains and water; he also sings her grandfather's paddle song. Her Yayah (grandmother) takes her into the forest where they gather plants to put into a memory bag.
- An important theme to be found in the story is the strength of the elders, and the community's desire for survival by holding on to their culture and beliefs.
- The number four is significant in many Aboriginal cultures, and in some is considered sacred. Many aspects of the natural world can be divided into four divisions, such as the four seasons and the four directions.

- When Shi-shi-etko leaves her memory bag at the base of the big fir tree, she also leaves a pinch of tobacco. Students may not be aware that tobacco is a traditional offering used by many First Nations people. It has several sacred uses, including giving thanks to the land, expressed by Shi-shi-etko as Grandfather Tree.

## ***Suggested Activities***

### **1. Reading Shi-shi-etko**

#### *Reading Strategies*

- Before reading you may want to begin with a sort and predict activity using the word list on Blackline Master 1.
- As a purpose for listening while you read the book aloud, ask students to listen to find out what the family members teach Shi-shi-etko.

#### *Video*

A 12 minute video of Shi-shi-etko was produced in 2009. You may be able to borrow it locally. It is available for purchase at [http://movingimages.ca/store/products.php?shi\\_shi\\_etko](http://movingimages.ca/store/products.php?shi_shi_etko). (Note: there is also a 6 minute segment of the video available on Youtube.)

### **2. Sensory Images**

Ask students to recall some of the descriptions of different senses Shi-shi-etko experiences. You may want to re-read the book for students to listen for the sensory images, or have them work in groups with copies of the book to construct word lists of the five senses.

- Lead a discussion about how the use of sensory images adds to our appreciation and understanding of the story.
- Use a writing activity to allow students to use imagery, such as
  - given a topic, write a word or phrase for each of the five senses that describes it (e.g swimming in a pool; recess time; cooking dinner)

### **3. Memory Bag**

Lead a discussion about Shi-shi-etko's memory bag. Ask students:

- Why did she put different plants in her memory bag?
- What plants that grow in their neighbourhood could be put in their own memory bag?
- If possible, take the class for a walk in a park or wooded area to observe and record different types of plants growing in the area. It wouldn't be respectful to the land if the whole class gathered samples as Shi-shi-etko did. Instead, students can record the plants by taking digital photos or sketching them.
  - You may want to tie in the sensory imagery activity with this walk. Ask students to observe examples of the five senses.

### **4. Questions From Clues in the Book**

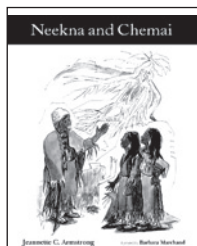
Lead a discussion about what kind of school Shi-shi-etko is going to. Ask students, "What do we know about Shi-shi-etko's school from the story?"

- Have students work in pairs or small groups to create questions about the school Shi-shi-etko is going to.
- Share the questions with the whole class and write them on a chart to post in the classroom.

## Activity 1.2

### Learning from Generation to Generation

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#### Summary

Students continue to learn about the importance of intergenerational learning and the relationship with the land through the book *Neekna and Chemai* by Jeanette Armstrong. Students also have the opportunity to extract information from textual material.

#### Key Concepts

- Respect for the land is at the centre of First Nations culture and education.
- In traditional First Nations culture, education was a family matter.

#### Key Questions

- In what ways can people show respect for the land?
- What do we learn from our families?
- How do people pass on cultural knowledge from generation to generation?

#### Resources

- *Neekna and Chemai* by Jeanette Armstrong
- Blackline Master 2, Learning from Generation to Generation, page 22

#### Background

- *Neekna and Chemai* are two young girls growing up in the Okanagan Valley before contact. The friends learn about their people through interactions with elders. The story is told in the first person, from Neekna's point of view. It is organized around the seasonal cycles, focussing on traditional activities carried out in each season.
- See page 75 for a summary of each season of the book.

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Learning in your Family

Lead a discussion about how and what we learn at home. Ask students:

- Is everything you know learned at school?
- What kinds of things do we learn at home?
- Who are your teachers?

Have students consider different types of knowledge, skills and beliefs they learn at home.

- Students work together in pairs or groups to list different things they learn at home in their families.
- Students may then classify the things they learn in to groups (*e.g. skills, behaviours, beliefs, morals.*)
- Ask students to share ways that they learn cultural knowledge today through families and community. (This is meant to include students of all cultural backgrounds in your class.)



- Where appropriate, discuss the importance of learning and using languages other than English.

## 2. Reading *Neekna and Chemai*

### *Reading Strategies*

- Read the story *Neekna and Chemai* to the class. Ask students to listen for ways that the girls in the story were taught in the days before contact.
- Some possible reading activities to use with *Neekna and Chemai* include:
  - Jigsaw: In groups students could read about one of the four seasons, and share what they learned about things the girls were taught.
  - Concept map: Students could diagram the relationships between learning and the land.
  - Reader's Theatre: Students could write short scripts based on one of the seasons, focussing on what the girls were learning.

## 3. Reading Textual Material

Use the "Learning from Generation to Generation" article (Blackline Master 2) to learn more about traditional First Nations education.

- Read the article aloud to the class. or have them read silently.
- Ask students individually to use the mapping strategy to graphically represent the information.
- Ask students to compare the two types of texts – fiction and nonfiction – they have read to learn about learning from generation to generation.
  - What ideas were present in both texts?
  - How were they different?

## Activity 1.3

### Local Relationship with the Land

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#### Resources

- *A Traveller's Guide to Aboriginal BC* by Cheryl Coull

- Information about local First Nations, such as pictures and stories about locally significant physical features.

#### Summary

Students reflect on the importance of the traditional and contemporary relationship First Nations people have with the land.

#### Key Concepts

- First Nations people's connections to their lands are deeply rooted.
- First Nations people remember their connections to the land through important landmarks and names.

#### Key Questions

- What are some ways First Nations people remember their relationship with the land?
- In what ways can people show respect for the land?

#### Background

- There is a great diversity of First Nations people and societies in British Columbia. For example, many different languages are spoken, and people traditionally lived in different types of houses. Different First Nations have varying protocols about land usage and respect.
- Each unique culture is based very much on the territories where the people lived. For many groups, salmon is the main harvest, and the areas where they are caught were, and still are, important community gathering areas. Some people traditionally lived very mobile lives as they travelled with their main resources, such as caribou. Many First Nations also cultivated additional resources, such as camas bulbs or clam beds.
- Locate information about your local region. There may be locally developed curriculum materials available. A starting point for understanding local communities is *A Traveller's Guide to Aboriginal BC* by Cheryl Coull (Whitecap 1996). For each cultural group in BC, a brief history, local landmarks and individual bands and communities are detailed. Note, however, that it was published in 1996 and some information may need to be updated.
- You may be able to find locally developed posters showing traditional land use studies.
- Additional resources that have origin stories of landmarks and physical features include:
  - *People of the Land*. Theytus Books 2009.
  - *Yamohza and His Beaver Wife* (*Yamoózha Eyits'ò Wets'èkéé Tsá*). Theytus Books, 2007.

## ***Suggested Activities***

### **1. Landmarks**

Investigate prominent landmarks in the local region, or farther afield in British Columbia. These are physical features on the landscape that have an ancient explanation. Often they have an origin story or legend associated with them.

- Start with the example of the Rock Mother mentioned in *Neekna and Chemai*. How does this show the Okanagan peoples connection to the land?
- Find out if there are any similar physical features in your local areas that have origin stories connected with them. Show pictures, or possibly take a field trip to visit it. (Some are noted in *A Traveller's Guide to Aboriginal BC*.)
- Read traditional narratives and legends that explain the origin of landmarks. See, for example, *People of the Land: Legends of the Four Host First Nations*, Theytus Books 2009.

### **2. Connecting to the Land Through Names**

How do First Nations people remember their relationship with the land through names?

- Investigate how names connect people with the land. Some areas of inquiry are:
  - Words that First Nations people use to refer to themselves in their own language. For example, Gitxsan means “People of the Skeena River,” Sekani means “People on the Rocks,” Nuu-chah-nulth means “all along the mountains” and Pascheenaht means “people of the sea foam.”
  - Place names. Find sources that show traditional place names for the local area. Many communities have developed maps or lists of traditional place names. Some are being reintroduced as the official name. For example in 2010, the traditional name Haida Gwaii (meaning Islands of the People) officially replaced Queen Charlotte Islands. Kuper Island, where an Indian Residential School was located (the setting for *No Time to Say Goodbye*) has been officially changed to Penelakut Island.
  - Street Names. In many First Nations communities, streets have been given names in the local language.
  - Traditional and hereditary names often have a connection with the land and territories as well.
- Invite an Elder or knowledgeable community member to the class to discuss the connections between the land and landmarks, place names and personal names.
- Have students collect a variety of place names from as many sources as possible.
- As an art activity, students could illustrate some of the names and make a class display.

## Activity 1.4

### The Secret of the Dance

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#### Summary

This story tells of a time when ceremonial dancing and the wearing of regalia and masks were forbidden by Canadian law. It is based on Judge Alfred Scow's boyhood story. A young boy witnesses the last secret potlatch of his community before the threat of imprisonment caused them to stop dancing. It reinforces the ceremonial and spiritual aspects of traditional education, and the relationship with the land. As well, it introduces the Indian agent and the restrictive laws of the Indian Act that were imposed on First Nations people.

#### Resources

- *The Secret of the Dance* by Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow

#### Vocabulary

defied  
regalia  
authorities

#### Key Concepts

- Ceremonial and spiritual teachings are part of traditional education for First Nations cultures.
- Government regulations damaged First Nations cultural practices.

#### Key Questions

- In what ways did First Nations people respond to government regulations?

#### Background

- In the past the Canadian government passed a special law that controlled the lives of First Nations called the Indian Act. It only applied to Aboriginal people, not to the rest of Canadians. The laws included sending children away to school, banning dancing, feasting and wearing traditional regalia, and restricting their land to small parcels called reserves.
- The laws against potlatching, dancing and wearing regalia are gone.
- Judge Alfred Scow was the first Aboriginal Judge in Canada.
- More background information for this story can be found at the publisher's website, [www.orcabooks.ca](http://www.orcabooks.ca)
- Additional resources on the topic of feasts and potlatches include:
  - *Potlatch, A Tsimshian Celebration*. Diane Hoyt Goldsmith, 1997.
  - *Potlatch*, by Dawn Adams, Pacific Educational Press, 1985.

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Reading *The Secret of the Dance*

Here are some suggestions for questions and discussion points as you share the book with the class.

- Show the first page of the story. What information can students tell from the photograph of the boy and his dog? (*The story probably takes place in 1935, about 80 years ago. The setting is on the ocean or a large lake. The boy has a traditional name, Watl'Kina.*)



- Read the sentence under the picture. Discuss the meaning of defy. Ask students to predict how his family defied the government.
- As you read the story, point out the illustrations that show the connections with the land, particularly the Northwest Coast representations of the animals that emerge out of the landscape.
- Talk about ways that stories were told. (*Told when children restless on the journey; special family stories enacted in the dances with masks.*)
- Why was the boy allowed to stay and watch the dancers?

## 2. Indian Agent

Ask students who they think the Indian Agent was.

- What clues are there to his role in the First Nations community?
- In what ways did the people respond to the Indian Agent?

## 3. Keeping Memories

Recall with students Shi-Shi-etko's memory bag. How was this similar to the action of the people in this story who stored away their regalia?

- Ask students the question: How are stories like memory bags?  
Refer to Activity 1.3 and the stories that were told and dramatized in this book.
- Ask the question: How is learning about the past like opening a memory bag?
- Have students create a Memory Bag to store memories of their learnings in this unit. (See Part One Assessment Activity, Number 2.) Depending on time and resources, this could be an Art activity sewing a fabric bag, or students could bring a bag from home. Alternatively, a manila envelope could be used.

## Part One Assessment Activities

### ***1. Education and Daily Life***

Ask students to support this statement:

*In traditional First Nations cultures, education was integrated into daily life.*

Ask them to find evidence in the books and other materials they have studied.

The responses may take a variety of formats:

- written response
- oral presentation
- picture book
- poster

### ***2. Memory Bag***

Ask students to identify four important ideas they remember or learned from this section. Create objects that represent these ideas to them. They may be pictures of an object, or an actual item. For example, the connection to the land might be represented by a small colourful stone.

- Students should be able to explain the significance of their objects.
- Ask students to put these items in the memory bag created in Activity 1-4.

***Shi-Shi-Etko***  
***Sort and Predict***

**barbecued salmon**

**bathe**

**canoe**

**family**

**father**

**grandfather**

**land**

**memories**

**memorized**

**mother**

**pack**

**paddle song**

**remember**

**school**

## Learning from Generation to Generation

For First Nations children in the past, school was part of family life. Learning time was any time – and all the time. Living and learning went together.

The teachers were everyone in the community. Parents were teachers; aunties and uncles, and especially grandparents were teachers. Grandparents were the respected Elders.

They must have been good teachers because the knowledge, skills, technology and culture that they taught were passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years!

Each community was different. The children learned specific roles and responsibilities that were unique to the place where they lived, and the resources they harvested from the earth.

Children learned to respect the land that they depended on – the sea, the forest, the rivers and lakes. When people hunted an animal or picked some berries, they showed respect by giving thanks. Some people spoke sacred words, thanking the creature. Some gave offerings of food or a special tobacco.

Children learned important beliefs of their people. They learned how they should behave through stories told to them by the Elders. The Elders also taught children about their family history, their clans and tribal groups. At ceremonies like feasts and potlatches they listened and learned the important songs and dances of their family.

They also learn how to get along with other Nations. The Elders passed on laws and ways to respect other groups. These are still used today.

When children grew up, they passed their learning on to the next generation. They became the Elders. They were taught their traditions well and the community endured.

## Part Two

### *What Were Indian Residential Schools?*

#### **Summary**

Part Two investigates some of the reasons for Indian Residential Schools being used to educate First Nations children. It introduces the idea of colonialism, and focuses on the concepts of power and authority applied by the government through the Indian Agent.

#### **Essential Questions**

- How did colonialism disrupt First Nations society?
- Why were First Nations children forced to attend Indian Residential Schools?
- Who held the power to control the lives of First Nations people?

#### **Key Concepts**

- Indian Residential Schools came about as one of the forces of the assimilation of Aboriginal people.
- The institutional, highly disciplined nature of Indian Residential Schools was foreign to First Nations students.
- The Indian Agent held power over much of the daily lives of First Nations families

#### **Resources:**

##### Literature

*Shin-chi's Canoe*, Nicola I. Campbell. Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press 2008.

*No Time to Say Goodbye: Children's Stories of Kuper Island Residential School*. Sylvia Olsen with Rita Morris and Ann Sam. Sono Nis 2001.

##### Blackline Masters

Blackline Master 3 The Indian Act, page 32

Blackline Master 4 Colonial Clash, page 34

Blackline Master 5 Colonialism Across the World, page 35



## Activity 2.1

### Going to Indian Residential School

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#### RESOURCES

*Shin-Chi's Canoe* by Nicola Campbell

#### VOCABULARY

blacksmithing  
kerosene  
mass  
residential

#### Summary

This activity gives students a first look at what the Indian Residential Schools were like, using the picture book *Shin-chi's Canoe* by Nicola Campbell. The story portrays the features of residential schools in an age-appropriate manner through text and rich illustrations.

#### Key Concepts

- Many First Nations children were forced to attend residential schools where they lived apart from their families for a year or more until the age of 16.
- The treatment of many children in Indian Residential Schools was humiliating and taught them to feel unequal and ashamed.
- Writers use symbols to convey meaning in their stories.

#### Key Questions

- What are some of the features of an Indian Residential School?
- How did the way children were treated at Indian Residential Schools make them feel about themselves?
- How do symbols connect with the meaning of a story?

#### Background

- *Shin-chi's Canoe* is about Shi-shi-etko's younger brother Shin-chi, who is sent off to residential school with his sister. His father gives him a toy canoe, which he holds as a reminder of his family life during his year at school.
- Three symbols are prominent in the story. One is the canoe, an important cultural symbol for most First Nations communities. For Shin-chi, it is a personal connection with his family. Another symbol is the children's hair. To many First Nations people, a person's hair is considered sacred, especially when it is grown long. The third symbol is the sockeye salmon, which for Shin-chi was a marker of time passing before he could return home. It is also an important cultural element for most BC First Nations.
- The story portrays the features of residential schools, including:
  - travelling a great distance aboard a cattle truck
  - cutting off hair
  - regimentation of children's lives
  - enforced use of English
  - dormitory situation for sleeping
  - enforced work by children to maintain the institution
  - poor food
  - loneliness

- More background information for this text can be found at the publisher's website, [www.orcabooks.ca](http://www.orcabooks.ca)

## ***Suggested Activities***

### **1. Reading Shin-chi's Canoe**

#### *Reading Strategies*

- Show the cover and ask students to predict what the story will be about.
- Set purpose for listening or reading: ask students to read or listen for ways that Shin-chi's school is different from theirs.
- If you are reading aloud, ask students to predict what will happen next as you read through the book (e.g. listen-sketch-predict; question and revise)
- Post-reading discussion
  - Why did Shin-chi's parents allow him to be taken away to school? (*The laws forced them*)
  - What parts of their lives were Shin-chi and Shi-shi-etko able to control? (*They cut their own hair and put it in a special place; Shin-chi got extra food; kept his toy canoe*)

### **2. What is the main idea?**

Ask students the question, "What is the Big Idea of *Shin-chi's Canoe*?"

- Possible strategies for deciding on the Big Idea
  - As a class or in small groups ask students to list a number of ideas from the story.
  - Which of the ideas are more important, and which are less important? Have students find clues in the book that support which are the most and the least important ideas. (e.g. the title, the illustrations, the ending.)

### **3. Connecting Symbols with Meaning**

Discuss the title of the book. Ask students why the canoe was important to Shin-chi. (*Connection with his father, family and home.*)

- How are canoes important to First Nations people today? If possible show a video clip of a canoe gathering, especially the event that occurred at the Vancouver Truth and Reconciliation event.

### **4. Features of the Indian Residential Schools**

What were some of the features of Indian Residential Schools?

- Help students to define "resident" and "residential." Is there a difference?
- Who were the teachers? Explain that in Shin-chi's school the teachers were priests and sisters (nuns). Point out that schools were run by different church denominations. Shin-chi's was a Catholic school; others were United and Anglican.
- Begin a list of words that describe Indian Residential Schools. You may want to construct a Word Wall and add to it over the course of the unit.
  - Begin with features of the Indian Residential school described in *Shin-Chi's Canoe*.
  - Classify the words (e.g. physical features, student rules, behaviours.)

## Activity 2.2

### Power and Authority

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#### Vocabulary

authority

power

#### Summary

This activity helps students focus on understanding the concepts of power and authority through a personal connection.

#### Key Concepts

- As we grow older, we have more power over our own decisions.

#### Key Questions

- How do power and authority affect students' lives today?
- How does power to control your own lives change as you grow older?

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Power in Students' Lives

Discuss with students how power affects their lives.

- Who are the people who have power in their lives? For example, who has the power to decide what they eat for dinner? To decide when they go to bed? To choose what to watch on tv? What power do they have in their own lives?
- Discuss how a person's power changes as they grow older. Do teens have more power than children?

##### 2. Authority in Students' Lives

Explain that the person or group with the power to make a decision is called the *authority*. Discuss who the main authorities might be at home (*parents*), in the classroom (*teacher*), in the whole school (*principal*).

- Use a chart similar to the following to discuss the connection between authority and power. The class can brainstorm other authorities and the powers they use.

<i>Examples of authority</i>	<i>Power the person uses</i>
sports team coach	
playground supervisor / lunch monitor	
school principal	
band council chief or town mayor	

Response examples:

sports coach: *decides who is on team, who plays and what position they play*

playground supervisor or lunch monitor: *decides who is misbehaving*

school principal: *power to run the whole school and make decisions about what happens in the school*

band council chief or town mayor: *power to make decisions on behalf of the whole community*

## Activity 2.3

### Colonial Clash

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#### Resources

- Blackline Master 3, The Indian Act, page 32
- Blackline Master 4, Colonial Clash, page 34
- Blackline Master 5 Colonialism Across the World, page 35
- Class set of atlases or large wall map of the word

#### Vocabulary

civilize  
collectively  
colonialism  
colony  
discrimination  
inferior  
rights  
superior

#### Summary

This activity examines the reasons for discriminatory policies towards First Nations, including understanding the concept of colonialism and questioning the Indian Act.

#### Key Concepts

- The Canadian government enforced laws that discriminated against Aboriginal people

#### Key Questions

- Why has the Government of Canada treated First Nations people differently from other Canadians?

#### Background

- The Indian Act controlled (and still controls) the lives of First Nations people. As well as laws about Indian Residential Schools, other aspects of the Indian Act include:
  - The creation of Indian reserves that restrict people to small pieces of land and take away rights to their sources of traditional territories.
  - The control over identity was taken away. The government determines who has “Indian status” and who doesn’t
  - First Nations were not allowed to vote
  - Sometimes people had to have permission from the Indian Agent to leave the reserve
  - First Nations could not own property
- Many of these laws are not longer in existence (e.g. people can vote, wear ceremonial regalia) but reserves and land issues still exist, and the Indian Act is still in force.
- This topic will fit well with the content of the draft BC Social Studies 5 concepts and content:
  - Aboriginal policies and the Aboriginal response over time, including those concerning residential schools, treaties, and traditional self-government.
  - contrasting perspectives about land ownership and use.

## ***Suggested Activities***

### **1. Reading the Indian Act**

Share with students copies of excerpts from The Indian Act, Blackline Master 3. Ask them to work in pairs or groups to interpret the meaning of the legal text.

- Ask students to identify:
  - What type of source this is
  - Who wrote it
  - When it was written
  - Where it was written
  - Why it was written
- Lead a discussion about student's personal responses to some of the sections.
- Ask students how the Indian Act affected characters in the stories they have read so far in this unit.
- Ask students to generate questions that arise from their reading of these excerpts of the Indian Act.
- You may want to show students the current Indian Act, which is online at <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/>

### **2. Questioning the Indian Act**

Ask students to consider the question:

- Why did the Government of Canada treat First Nations, Métis and Inuit differently from other Canadians?

Strategies for investigating the question:

- Have students read, or read with them, the article on Blackline Master 4, "Colonial Clash," to discover how First Nations' relationship with newcomers in Canada came to be.
- Discuss the meaning of *colony* and *colonialism*. (Colony = a country under political control of another distant country and settled by people from the distant country.)

### **3. Mapping Colonization**

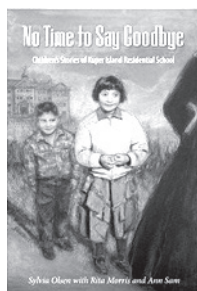
Have students identify regions of the world that were colonized as shown on the map on the Blackline Master 5, Colonialism Across the World.

- You may want students to use an atlas to identify the regions that were colonized. They might write the names on the map along the arrows, or list the regions in a legend and number the arrows.
- The regions are (left to right): North America, South America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, India.
- Ask students to identify which are continents and which are countries. Point out that the continents had many individual countries that were colonized.



## Activity 2.4

### *No Time to Say Goodbye* : Thomas



#### Resources

- *No Time to Say Goodbye*

#### Summary

The story of Thomas powerfully depicts how children were arbitrarily taken away from their homes to go to residential school, and how parents had no control.

#### Key Concepts

- Through the powers of the Indian Act, the Canadian Government had the power to remove children from their homes and send them to Indian Residential Schools

#### Key Questions

- What power did the government and churches hold over the lives of First Nations people?

#### Background

- The story of Thomas is the first section of *No Time to Say Goodbye*. It begins in his home community of Tsartlip, near Brentwood Bay on Vancouver Island.
- NOTE: *No Time to Say Goodbye* is made up of a number of different stories. Not all of them are appropriate for Grade 5, and some refer to sensitive material. Caution should be taken when using the book outside of the classroom.
- The story is divided into four chapters.
  - Chapter 1: Thomas goes fishing with his father
  - Chapter 2: Getting ready to go back to school. We meet brother Joey and Wilson, and classmate Nelson, who is a bully. The chapter ends as the morning bell rings on the first day back at school.
  - Chapter 3: Indian Agent MacDonald picks out Thomas, Wilson, Monica and Nelson to be taken away to Kuper Island Residential School. Wilson is very tearful. Thomas wonders what lays in store for them.
  - Chapter 4: The children are taken away in the Agent's big black car.
- The name of the island where the school was located has been officially changed from Kuper Island to Penelakut Island

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Reading Thomas' Story

Read aloud the story of Thomas in *No Time to Say Goodbye* (pages 7-33).

- Purpose for listening: Who were the authorities in Thomas' life? (*Parents, nuns at day school, Indian agent, priest*)

- Discuss with students how Thomas' life changed from Chapter 1 to Chapter 4.
- Connect the role of Indian Agent MacDonald in the story with the government's power. What power did he have over Thomas' life? Recall what the people in *The Secret of the Dance* felt about the Indian Agent. (*In the Secret of the Dance they were afraid of his authority; they didn't want him to discover them potlatching. In Thomas' story, the Indian Agent had the power to take him away from his family and send him to residential school.*)

## 2. Transportation

Compare the transportation used to take Thomas to school to that used for Shi-shi-etko and Shin-chi. (*Thomas rode by car and ferry; Shi-shi-etko and Shin-chi were taken in the back of a cattle truck.*)

## 3. Authority

Discuss who has authority for sending students to school today.

- Point out that the main authority is the government, which makes the law that all children must attend school. However, parents have the authority to choose which type of school their children go to (public, band, private, home schooling, etc.).
- Who had the authority over First Nations students under the residential school system? Explain that in the days of the Indian Residential Schools, First Nations parents were forced to send their children to go away to the schools. Ask why they think this was the case. Just discuss their responses at this point. You may want to record them on a chart for later discussion.

## 4. Illustrate the Story

Have students illustrate a scene from each of the four chapters of Thomas' story.

- Use one sheet of paper divided into four. Ask them to write a sentence below each picture.

## Part Two Assessment Activities

### ***1. Explaining Indian Residential Schools***

Ask students to explain to someone else the reasons why First Nations children were sent to Indian Residential Schools.

- They should decide on the audience for their explanation, such as parent, older sibling, student in a younger class.
- Ask students to write 3 questions to ask in order to see if their audience understood the explanation.
- If possible, ask students to try out their explanations and follow-up questions, and assess their success.

### ***2. Memory Bag***

Ask students to identify four important ideas they remember or learned from Part Two. Create objects that represent these ideas to them. They may be pictures of an object, or an actual item.

- Students should be able to explain the significance of their objects.
- Ask students to put these items in their memory bag.

# Canada's Indian Act



## CHAPTER 43.

An Act respecting Indians.

A. D. 1886.

**H**ER Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows :—

### SHORT TITLE.

1. This Act may be cited as "*The Indian Act.*" 43 V., Short title. c. 28, s. 1.

### INTERPRETATION.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—
- (a.) The expression "Superintendent General" means the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, and the expression "Deputy Superintendent General" means the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs; Interpretation.  
"Superintendent General."
  - (b.) The expression "Agent," or "Indian Agent," means and includes a commissioner, assistant commissioner, superintendent, agent or other officer acting under the instructions of the Superintendent General; "Agent" or  
"Indian agent."
  - (c.) The expression "person" means any individual other than an Indian; "Person."
  - (d.) The expression "band" means any tribe, band or body of Indians who own or are interested in a reserve or in Indian lands in common, of which the legal title is vested in the Crown, or who share alike in the distribution of any annuities or interest moneys for which the Government of Canada is responsible; "Band."
  - (e.) The expression "the band" means the band to which the context relates; "The band."
  - (f.) The expression "band," when action is being taken by the band as such, means the band in council; "Band."
  - (g.) The expression "irregular band" means any tribe, band or body of persons of Indian blood who own no interest in any reserve or lands of which the legal title is vested in the Crown, who possess no common fund managed by the Government of Canada, and who have not had any treaty relations with the Crown; "Irregular band."
  - (h.) The expression "Indian" means— "Indian."
    - First.* Any male person of Indian blood reputed to belong to a particular band;
    - Secondly.* Any child of such person;
    - Thirdly.* Any woman who is or was lawfully married to such person.



## Indian Act, 1886

**114.** Every Indian or person who engages in or assists in celebrating the Indian festival known as the "Potlach" or the Indian dance known as the "Tamanawas," is guilty of a misdemeanor, and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months and not less than two months: Celebrating a certain feast or dance. Punishment.

**2.** Every Indian or person who encourages, either directly or indirectly, an Indian to get up such a festival or dance, or to celebrate the same, or who assists in the celebration of the same, is guilty of a like offence, and shall be liable to the same punishment. Inciting to celebrate the same. 47 V., c. 27, s. 3.

## Indian Act, 1894

New sections added.

Powers of Governor in Council as to regulations for attendance at school.

**11.** *The Indian Act* is hereby amended by adding the following sections thereto :—

**"137.** The Governor in Council may make regulations, either general or affecting the Indians of any province or of any named band, to secure the compulsory attendance of children at school.

**"2.** Such regulations, in addition to any other provisions deemed expedient, may provide for the arrest and conveyance to school, and detention there, of truant children and of children who are prevented by their parents or guardians from attending: and such regulations may provide for the punishment, upon summary conviction, by fine or imprisonment, or both, of parents and guardians, or persons having the charge of children, who fail, refuse or neglect to cause such children to attend school."

Powers as to establishment of industrial or boarding schools.

Regulations.

**"138.** The Governor in Council may establish an industrial school or a boarding school for Indians, or may declare any existing Indian school to be such industrial school or boarding school for the purposes of this section.

**"2.** The Governor in Council may make regulations, which shall have the force of law, for the committal by justices or Indian agents of children of Indian blood under the age of sixteen years, to such industrial school or boarding school, there to be kept, cared for and educated for a period not extending beyond the time at which such children shall reach the age of eighteen years.



## Colonial Clash

Why were First Nations parents forced to send their children to Residential School? To see why, we have to look into Canada's past.

First Nations people lived in Canada for thousands of years. About 300 years ago, people from Europe came to Canada. The new settlers believed they were superior to First Nations. They did not understand or respect the traditional ways of the many First Nations cultures or their beliefs. The settlers wanted First Nations to become just like them.

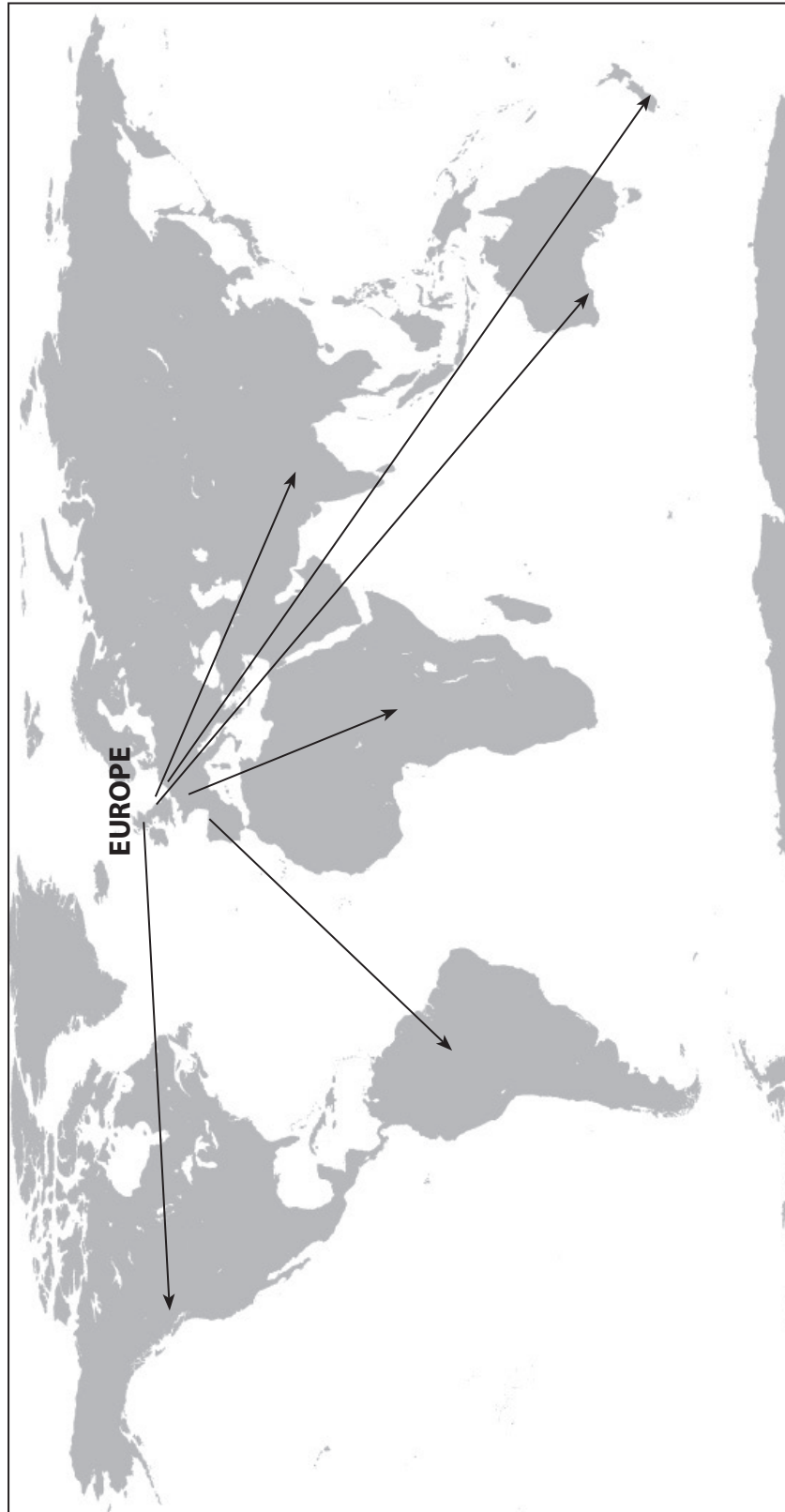
One thing the newcomers didn't understand was First Nations' beliefs about ownership of the land. In truth, all the land was part of the territory of one group or another. They respected it and lived on it for many many generations. But it was not owned by individuals. The land belonged to each group or nation collectively.

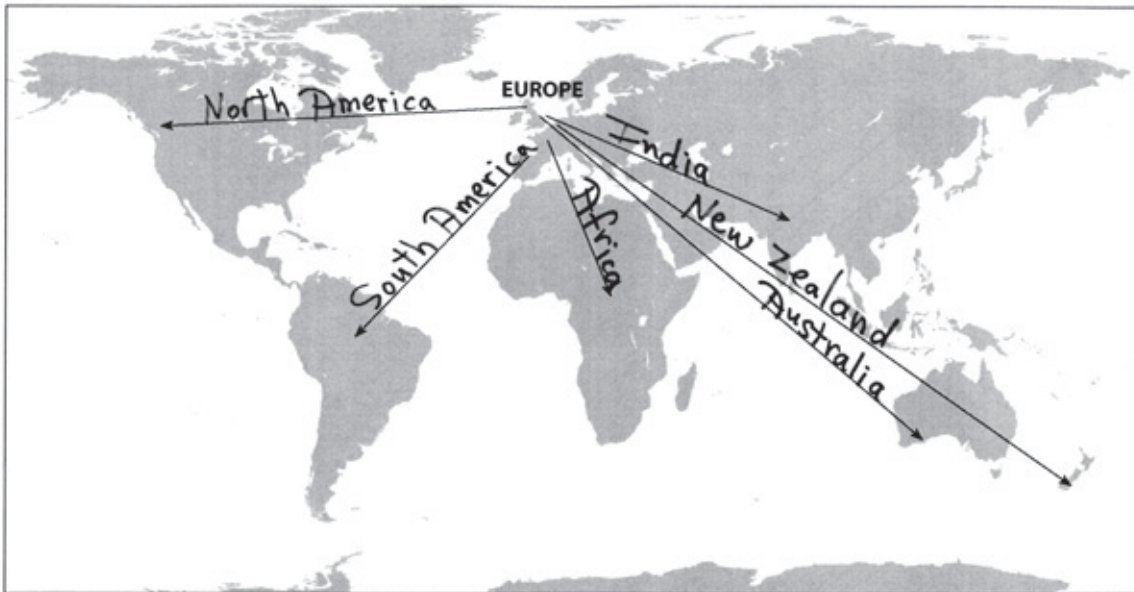
The settlers thought the land wasn't owned, so they built homes where they wanted to. The new settlements were called **colonies**. They were controlled by the government in England or France. Europeans also set up colonies in many other parts of the world.

At first First Nations people welcomed the settlers and helped them survive, but soon they saw that the newcomers did not respect the **rights** of the First Nations people. When Canada was made a country on its own in 1867, the new government made a law that was only for First Nations people. It is called the Indian Act. It took away all the power people had in their lives. The government was the only authority, and First Nations people were treated like children. This law is still in effect today.

The new settlers of Canada supported the government and its laws. One way they tried to control the First Nations people was to send the children away from their homes so their parents and grandparents could not teach them their traditions, culture and language. That is why the Residential Schools were started.

## COLONIALISM ACROSS THE WORLD





Colonialism Map Key

## Part Three

### The Indian Residential School Experience

#### *Summary*

In Part Three students examine what daily life was like for students in the Indian Residential Schools. To keep it age appropriate, the activities focus on the physical aspects of the school: the building and the various rooms where the children lived. Students use some primary source material to understand the problems with poor food experienced in the schools. Another story from *No Time to Say Goodbye* tells about two boys running away, which was a common response of students in surviving the schools. Throughout this section students compare the experiences of residential school students with their own lives.

#### *Essential Questions*

- What was daily life like for students in Indian Residential Schools?
- How did students learn to survive in the schools?

#### *Key Concepts*

- Indian Residential Schools intentionally isolated children from their families, their communities, and their culture.
- Indian Residential Schools instilled the belief that First Nations culture and language were inferior, and children were taught to be ashamed.

#### *Resources*

- *No Time to Say Goodbye: Children's Stories of Kuper Island Residential School.* Sylvia Olsen with Rita Morris and Ann Sam. Sono Nis 2001
- Blackline Master 5 Plan of Indian Residential School, page 48
- Blackline Master 6 Residential School Daily Schedule, page 52
- Blackline Master 10, 11, and 12, School Food, page 58
- Pictures of residential school building facilities including exteriors, dormitories, dining rooms. Some sources of images are:
  - Indian Residential Schools Resources gallery. This site has pictures from all the BC residential schools. Link: <http://irsr.ca/photogallery/>
  - United Church of Canada has images from some of its schools. Link: <http://thechildrenremembered.ca/school-images/>
  - Fallen Feathers productions has some downloadable images. Link: [http://www.fallenfeatherproductions.com/photo\\_gallery.html](http://www.fallenfeatherproductions.com/photo_gallery.html)

## Activity 3.1

### The School Building

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#### Resources

- Pictures of exterior and interior of residential schools
- Pictures of public schools in the past
- Blackline Master 6, Map of BC Indian Residential Schools, page 47.

#### Vocabulary

dorm  
dormitory  
ominous

#### Summary

This activity focus on the physical aspects of Indian Residential Schools, including the imposing buildings and the interior features, which included both learning, living and working spaces. Most of the institutions also included a large area of farmland and associated outbuildings.

#### Key Concepts

- The physical aspects of the Indian Residential Schools emphasized the isolation from family.
- The Indian Residential School buildings created self-contained communities intended to assimilate First Nations children into Canadian society.

#### Key Questions

- How were Indian Residential School buildings different from school buildings today?

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Comparing School Buildings

Ask students to think about the question: *How were Indian Residential School buildings different from our school building?*

- Here are some strategies to investigate the question:
  - Discuss with class words on the Word Wall that describe features of the residential schools. Which describe the physical aspects?
  - Ask students to list things they already know about the physical aspects of the schools from the books and other work done in the unit. Students may want to review *Shin-Chi's Canoe* and Thomas' story to find descriptions of the schools in the text and illustrations.
  - Examine photographs of the Indian Residential School buildings. Many are available on line:
    - Indian Residential Schools Resources gallery. This site has pictures from all the BC residential schools. Link: <http://irsr.ca/photogallery/>
    - United Church of Canada has images from some of its schools. Link: <http://thechildrenremembered.ca/school-images/>
    - Fallen Feathers productions has some downloadable images. Link: [http://www.fallenfeatherproductions.com/photo\\_gallery.html](http://www.fallenfeatherproductions.com/photo_gallery.html)
- Work with students to develop categories with which to compare schools (e.g. exterior, grounds, types of rooms).
- Have students develop a comparison chart for the two types of schools. You may want students to work individually or in small groups.



- Extend the comparison activity by asking students to illustrate some of the major features of the schools.

## 2. Sensory Imagination

Ask students to imagine the schools of the past. Have them write one or two descriptive phrases or sentences for each of the five senses.

## 3. Other Schools in the Past

Students may be interested to investigate what other schools looked like in the past, especially local schools.

- Find pictures of early day schools and public schools in the region.
- Ask students the question: How are schools of the past similar to our schools today, and how are they similar to Indian Residential Schools?

## 4. Where Were Indian Residential Schools in BC?

Use the map of Indian Residential Schools in BC, Blackline Master 6, to locate the school or schools closest to your community.

- Find out to which school most First Nations people from your area were sent.

## Activity 3.2

### Mapping a Day in the Life of a Student

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#### Resources

- Blackline Master 7  
Plan of Residential  
School, page 48
- Blackline Master 8  
Residential School  
Daily Schedule, page  
52
- Materials for creating  
maps

#### Summary

This activity asks students to compare their daily routine with that of students who attended Indian Residential Schools. It uses spatial skills to compare maps of the past and the present.

#### Key Concepts

- The daily life for students at Indian Residential Schools was highly regimented.
- Many students spent half of their day working to maintain the institution.

#### Key Questions

- How was daily life for student at an Indian Residential School different from daily life of students today?

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Mapping a Day in Your Life

Ask students to map the places they go during a normal school day, and show the route they travel from place to place.

- Lead a class discussion about the divisions in their day (e.g. morning routine, school, after school, dinner, bedtime).
- Ask students to make a schedule of their main activities on a typical day.
- Discuss how these might be represented on a map.
- Have student create their own maps.

##### 2. Mapping a Day in the Life of an Indian Residential School Student

Use the plans of St. George's Residential School, Lytton, (Blackline Master 7) and the schedule of a typical daily routine (Blackline Master 8) to track a day in the life of a student visually.

- Have students select a bed in the appropriate dorm and mark it with a "1." (To make it more realistic you could assign beds.)
- Following the schedule, students label the location of each activity with its number.

##### 3. Comparing Daily Routines

Lead a discussion with students about how their present day maps are different from the residential school student's map.

- Compare the other people that the students – present day and in Residential School – would be doing these activities with.
- Ask students to write a summary of the main ways that the two days are different.

## Activity 3.3

### Life at an Indian Residential School

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#### Resources

- Blackline Master 9  
Memories of St. George's  
Residential School,  
page 53

#### Summary

This activity continues to investigate what life was like for students at Indian Residential Schools using textual materials. It explores the memories of one student who attended St. George's, the same school that was used for the example in Activity 3.2

#### Key Concepts

- The operations of Indian Residential Schools were dictated by the goals of assimilation

#### Key Questions

- How did the authorities of the school maintain control?
- Was the treatment of students at Indian Residential Schools fair?

#### Background

- This memoir is adapted from a sociology essay written by a university student in 1953. It describes an unnamed friend's experiences at St George's Residential School. As the student explained, "He consented to assist me in the 'own story technique' for my assignment. The 'own story' as he told it to me is an endeavour to describe an Indian Residential School education system." The essay eventually found its way into the BC Archives in Victoria. (Clarence Walkem, "Life of an Indian Lad in a Residential School," MS 2327.)

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Reading About St. George's Residential School

Use the text on Blackline Master 9, Memories of St. George's Residential School in the 1940s, as a reading activity to learn about one boy's experiences.

- Ask students to find places mentioned in the text on their maps of St. George's Residential School.
- Discuss how school life changed for the children as they grew older.

##### 2. Gender Differences

- Point out that this is a boy's story. Ask students what might be the same and what might be different for girls.
- Present some stories of school experiences from a girl's point of view: *My Name is Seepeetza* by Shirley Sterling, pages 24-26. (Note that Seepeetza

goes to school all day; her story takes place in 1958, after the half day system had been abolished.)

*They Called Me Number One* by Bev Sellars. Read aloud sections from Chapter three, particularly pages 29-36.

### 3. Additional Resource

See the “School Life” section of the video *Fallen Feather*, which includes a tour of Kamloops residential school and interviews with survivors.

## Activity 3.4

### School Food

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#### Resources

- Blackline Master 10  
School Food, page 58

#### Summary

In this activity students use primary source documents to find evidence about the topic of food in Indian Residential Schools. These include two examples of official correspondence between Department of Indian Affairs officials, and a unique letter from a student.

#### Key Concepts

- The operations of Indian Residential Schools were dictated by the goals of assimilation.

#### Key Questions

- What does the quality of food served at Indian Residential Schools tell us about attitudes towards the children?

#### Background

- The food was notoriously bad in Indian Residential Schools. This was in part due to economics. Schools were always short of funds; however, staff were always fed adequately. This would tend to support the notion that the perception of First Nations being inferior seems to have permitted a lack of empathy on the part of the staff.
- Document 1 is an excerpt from a School Inspector's report about food at Kuper Island School, where the book *No Time to Say Goodbye* takes place. The Inspector's report was not unique. Schools often scrimped on food because of the shortage of funds to operate the school. In this case the school was selling the butter they made from the milk to raise extra money, leaving the students to drink less nutritious skim milk. You may want to explain what a separator is, and discuss the process of making butter from milk.
- Document 2 is a letter written home by a student at Sechelt Residential School. Unlike Kuper Island and the other schools discussed so far, the Sechelt Residential School was close to the Sechelt community. This is unique because letters home were usually censored by the staff, and students were made to re-write them until the staff was satisfied with the way they reflected on the school. The letter is transcribed on Blackline Master 10, and the original handwritten letter is also included as Blackline Master 11 if you want to show students the original.
- Document 3 is a longer piece of correspondence from Indian Agent Halliday to the Department of Indian Affairs regarding food and nutrition at Alert Bay Industrial School. Transportation to isolated coastal communities in that period depended on the coastal steamships that delivered groceries from stores in Vancouver.

## ***Suggested Activities***

### 1. Reading Primary Source Documents

Use the primary source materials on Blackline Masters 10, 11 and 12 to investigate one of the problems of the Indian Residential Schools: providing proper food and nutrition. Ask students to use the following questions to examine the evidence in the documents:

- Who created the document?
- What type of primary source is this? (letter, photograph, legal document, diary entry, etc...)
- When and where was the primary source created?
- Who was the intended audience of the document?
- Why was the source created?
- What does this document tell us about food in Indian Residential Schools?

### 2. Student Letter

Ask students to summarize the boy's main complaints about Sechelt Residential School. (*Not allowed to speak with family or people in community; school like a prison; food only fit for pigs; other complaints that he doesn't want to talk about.*)

### 3. Perspectives on Food and Nutrition

Discuss the changing perspectives people have on nutrition from the 1920s to today. Would we consider butter more nutritious than peanut butter? Why do you think butter was believed to be nutritionally superior?

Read the Inspector's Report about Kuper Island food.

- Talk about the irony of students having to take care and milk the cows, but the butter was sold to make money for the school.
- Recall from *Shin-chi's Canoe* the differences in food eaten by the children and by the staff.

### 4. Questioning Poor Food

Ask students to answer this question: "Why did the children in residential schools so often have poor food?"



## Activity 3.5

### *No Time to Say Goodbye: Joey's Story*



#### Resources

- Copies of *No Time to Say Goodbye*

#### Summary

This activity uses another section of *No Time to Say Goodbye* to illustrate some further aspects of life in a residential school. It deals with running away, a common way for students to resist authority. It also includes a section comparing life in the schools in different time periods.

#### Key Concepts

- Students coped with the Indian Residential School experience in different ways.

#### Key Questions

- Why did students run away from Indian Residential Schools?
- What positive experiences did students have at Indian Residential Schools?

#### Background

- NOTE: *No Time to Say Goodbye* is made up of a number of different stories. Not all of them are appropriate for Grade 5. Caution should be taken when using the book outside of the classroom.
- In Joey's story (pages 63-107) Joey runs away with a friend. They end up at Joey's aunt and uncle's home. There is a great deal of content about life in the Indian Residential School woven in. In Chapter 6, his aunt and uncle recall what the school was like for them, an earlier generation.
- His aunt lived at Kuper Island full time as her mother had died. She had a doll which she kept under her pillow until a nun decided she was too old for dolls. Things she learned were how to make the bed, how to pray and how to work.
- His uncle thought that things were pretty good for him. When he first went, he only spoke his own language, no English. Kids like Joey spoke English at home. He made his own toys: paper airplanes. They were taught to "pray for forgiveness for being Indian." He did many jobs around the school farm.

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Reading Joey's Story

- The first part of Joey's story is an exciting adventure. Use reading strategies such as Listen-Sketch-Predict and Mood Swing.

##### 2. Different Experiences

- Compare and contrast the school experiences of Joey and of his aunt and uncle.
- Talk about how Stumpy found out that his grandfather was dead, and how this shows the attitudes of the authorities to the feelings of their students.

##### 3. Character Study

You may want to delve into character studies of Joey and his friend Stumpy. Use the Character Web strategy.

## Part Three Assessment Activities

### ***1. Comparing School Experiences***

Ask students to compare their school experience with children attending Indian Residential School. This could be in written form, as a chart or a poster.

### ***2. Coping and Survival***

Ask students to reflect on the strength of students at Indian Residential Schools. How did they cope and survive? What evidence from the books and documents help to reach conclusions?

A variety of formats could be used, such as:

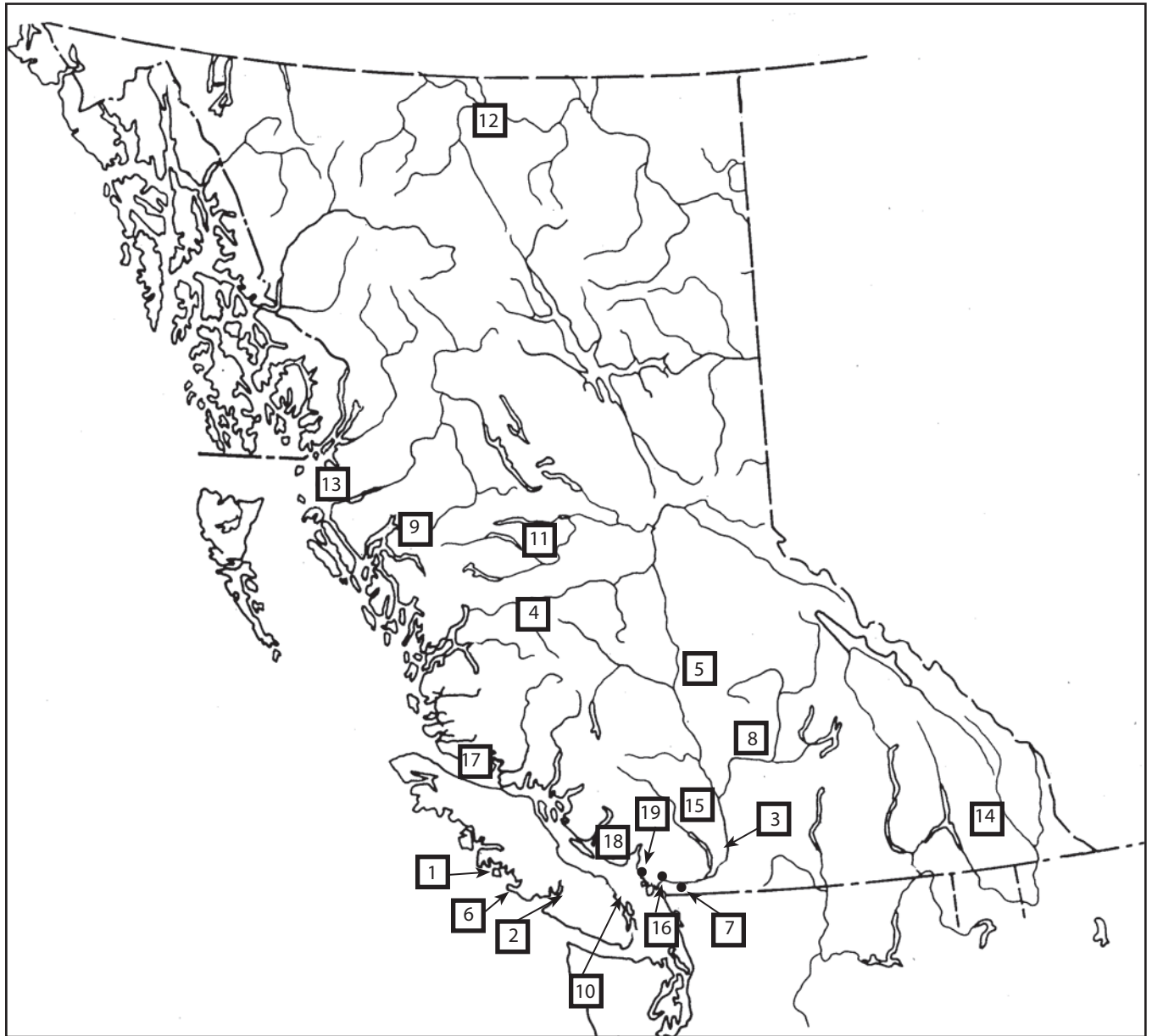
- a letter to Thomas or Johnny
- a poem
- a visual representation
- a written response

### ***3. Memory Bag***

Ask students to identify four important ideas they remember or learned from Part Three. Create objects that represent these ideas to them. They may be pictures of an object, or an actual item.

- Students should be able to explain the significance of their objects.
- Ask students to put these items in their memory bag.

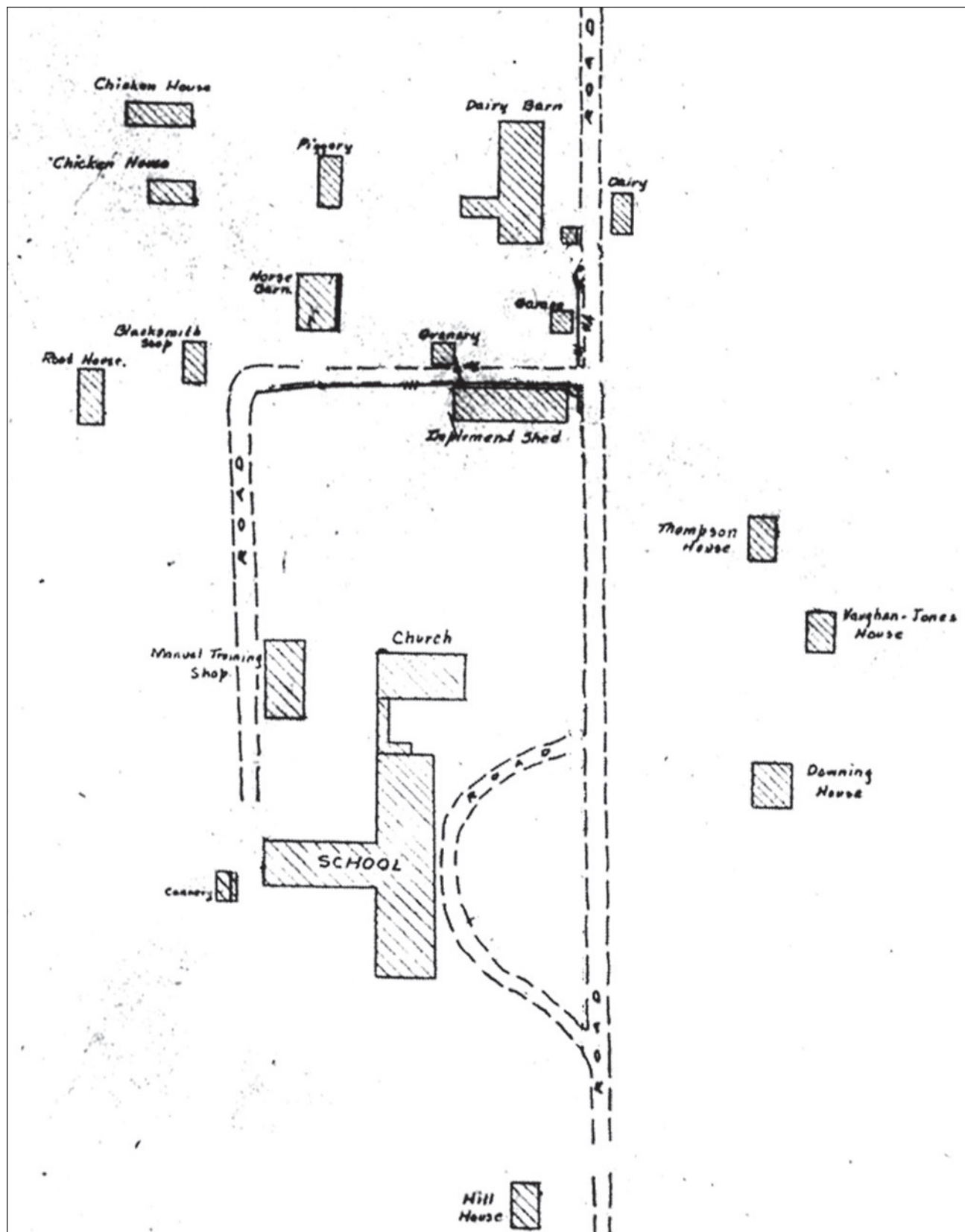
## British Columbia Indian Residential Schools



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Ahousat / Flores Island (P/UC 1901-1939)              | 11 Lejac (RC 1910-1976)                                  |
| 2 Alberni (M/UC 1891-1973)                              | 12 Lower Post (RC 1940-1975)                             |
| 3 All Hallows, Yale (A 1900-1918)                       | 13 Port Simpson / Crosby Home for Girls (M/UC 1874-1948) |
| 4 Anahim Lake Dormitory (1968-1977)                     | 14 St. Eugene's / Kootenay (RC 1898-1970)                |
| 5 Cariboo / St. Joseph's / Williams Lake (RC 1886-1981) | 15 St. George's, Lytton (A 1901-1979)                    |
| 6 Christie / Clayquot / Kakawis (RC 1900-1983)          | 16 St. Mary's, Mission (RC 1863-1985)                    |
| 7 Coqualeetza (M/UC 1888-1940)                          | 17 St. Michael's, Alert Bay (A )                         |
| 8 Kamloops (RC 1890-1978)                               | 18 Sechelt (RC 1912-1975)                                |
| 9 Elizabeth Long Memorial, Kitimaat (M/UC 1893-1941)    | 19 St. Paul's, North Vancouver (RC 1889-1958)            |
| 10 Kuper Island (RC 1890-1975)                          |  |

A = Anglican Church M/UC = Methodist, later United Church  
 P/UC = Presbyterian, later United Church RC = Roman Catholic Church

## St. George's Residential School 1950 Map of School Grounds

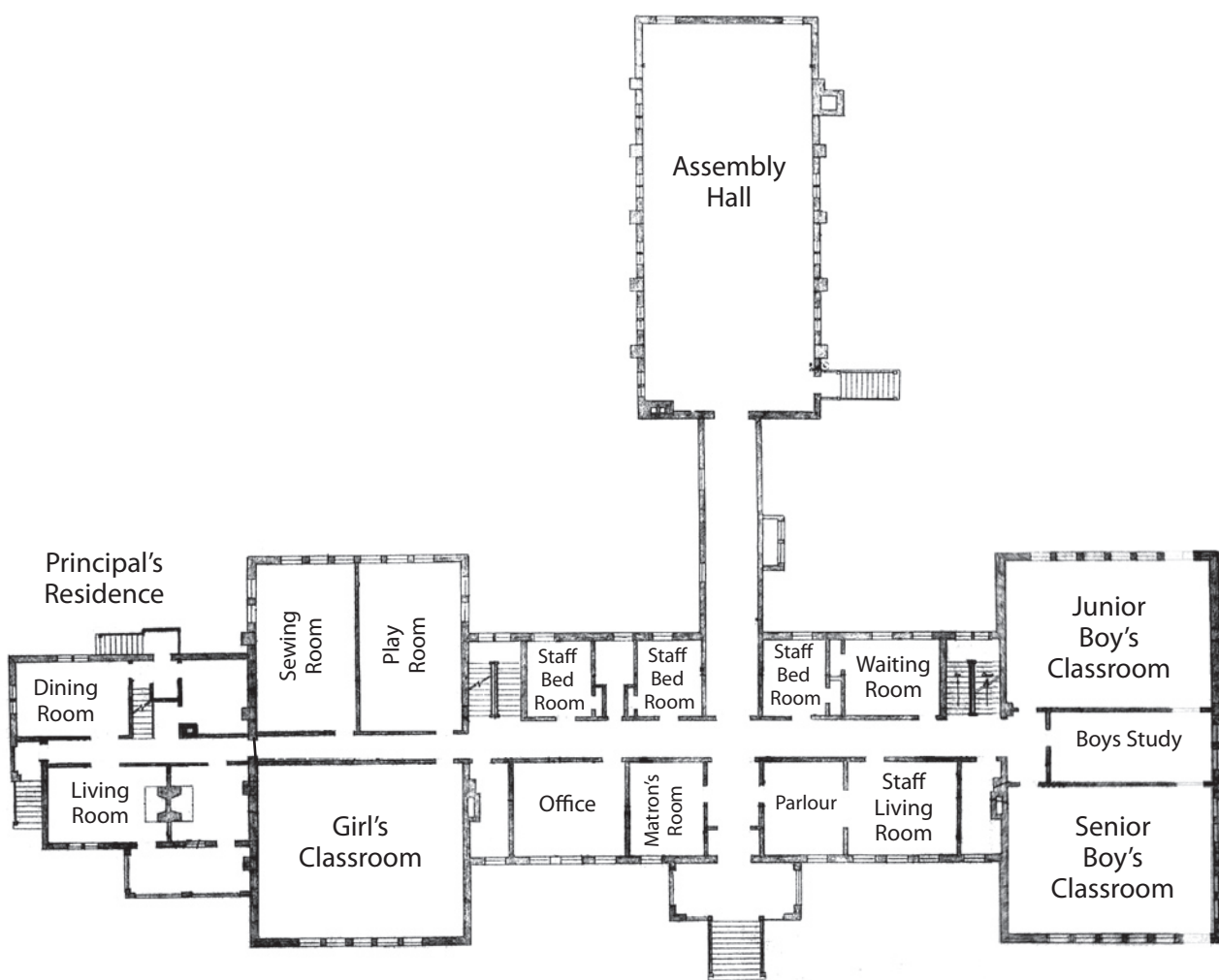


## St. George's Residential School 1950

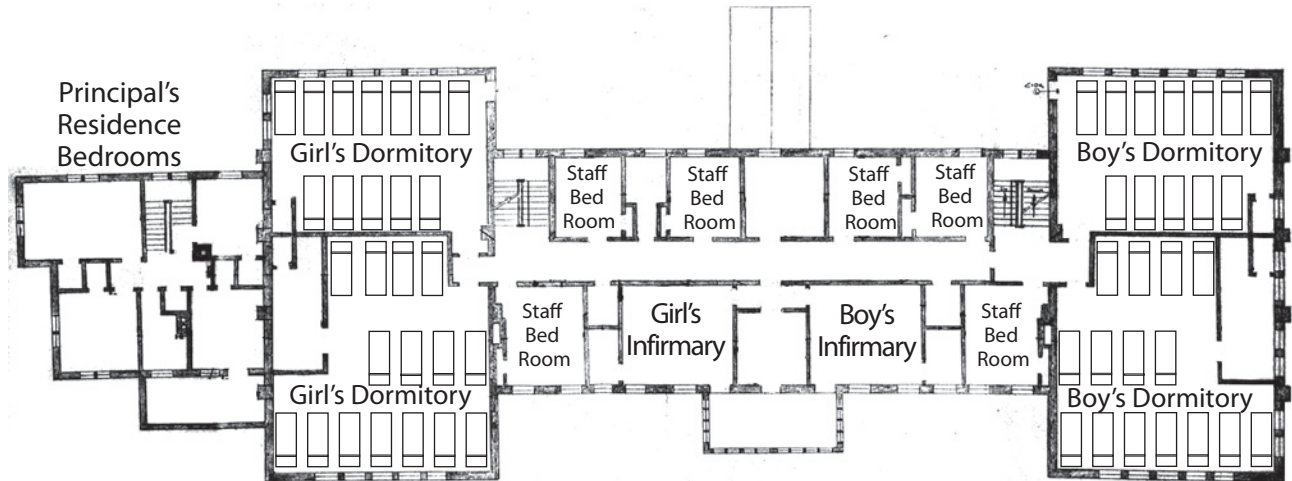


**Basement**

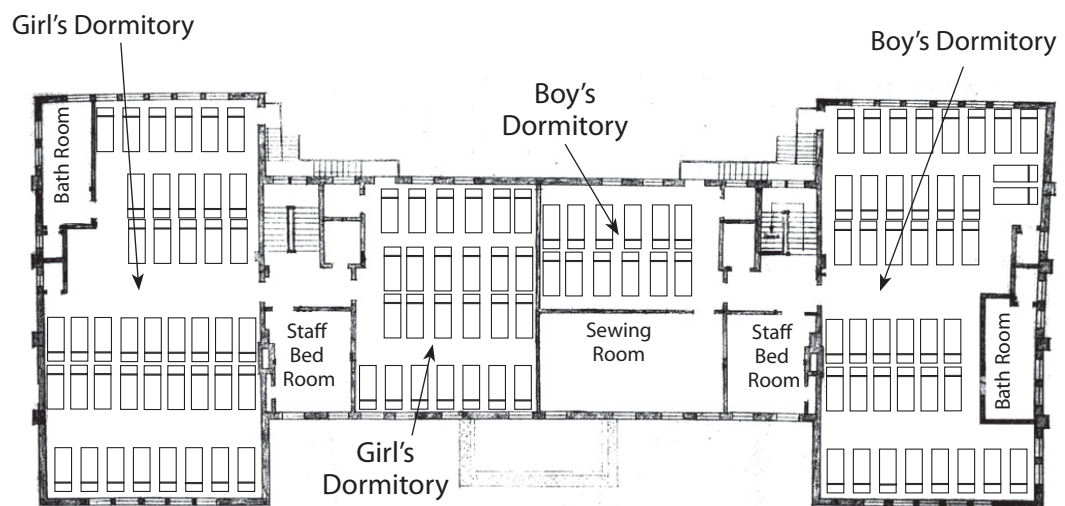


**First Floor**





## Second Floor



## Third Floor

## Sample Residential School Daily Schedule

### Grade 5a Boys

1. 7:00 Wake up. Dormitory room unlocked. Wash and dress.
2. 7:30 Bell rings. March down stairs to dining room for breakfast.
3. 8:00 March to Church for prayers. Boys sit in front rows.
4. 8:15 March up to dormitory to make beds and do work assignments. Your assignment: sweep boys' staircase.
5. 9:00 Bell rings, go to the boys' classroom for lessons.
6. 10:30 Recess.
7. 12:00 Lunch in dining room.
8. 1:00 Go to the piggery to clean and feed the pigs.
9. 4:00 Free time.
10. 5:00 Dinner in dining room.
11. 6:00-8:00 Free time, get ready for bed.
12. 8:00 pm Lights out.

### Grade 5a Girls

1. 7:00 Wake up. Dormitory room unlocked. Wash and dress.
2. 7:30 Bell rings. March down stairs to dining room for breakfast.
3. 8:00 March to Church for prayers. Girls sit in back rows.
4. 8:15 March up to dormitory to make beds and do work assignments. Your assignment: clean washroom.
5. 9:00 Bell rings, go to your work assignment. Today's assignment - laundry room.
6. 12:00 Lunch in dining room.
7. 1:00 Bell rings: go to girl's classroom for lessons.
9. 4:00 Free time.
10. 5:00 Dinner in dining room.
11. 6:00-8:00 free time, get ready for bed.
12. 8:00 pm Lights out.

## Memories of St. George's Residential School in the 1940s

I went to school when I was seven because I wanted to go to school. Stanley and George (my two older brothers) used to tell me about St. George's when they were home in the summer. They told me there were lots of kids there to play with, so after they went back I asked my father to let me go to school. Dad wanted me to go to school in town at the Public school but I didn't want to go there because I didn't know anybody going to that school.

I was by myself on the Reserve so I kept asking my mother to send me to School. Not long after my birthday they took me to St. George's on a Sunday afternoon. I remember coming down the road in the car and I could see the big building. It was all red and made of bricks and it looked real big to me.

Father, mother and I waited in the Waiting Room for the Supervisor to bring Stanley and George. I was kind of scared until Stanley and George came in. After Mom and Dad had left, the Principal told Stanley to take me to the Boys' Matron.

She gave me a pair of blue overalls, a pair of socks, a night-gown and towel – all of them had the number 423 on them. I didn't know then as I know now that I was going to remember that number forever. Stanley folded my clothes for me and put them in his suitcase and took them to the storage room. I did not see them again until the school term was over.

### The Dining Room

I remember my first meal at St. George's. The Boys' Supervisor blew his whistle and all the boys – about ninety – lined up in the boys' basement three long lines six feet apart. I didn't know where to go so I

stood beside Stanley in the second line; George was in the third line behind us against the lockers.

The Boys' Supervisor told Stanley to put me in the front line near the end beside an older boy. After a while the Superintendent (called the "Sup") ordered, "Stand at ease, attenshun, left turn, forward march!"

When we got in the dining-room the girls were coming in from the other side of the room in the same way as the boys. The older boy who was in the lead was at one end of the table with the eight kids divided into two fours on each side of the table while the other older boy was at the other end.

Before sitting down, the nine tables of boys and the nine tables of girls stood in their place at the table until all was quiet and "Grace" had been said. On the wooden tables knives and forks were laid for each person and in the centre on a plate were ten pieces of cake. At one end ten tin cups stood with a jug of milk and at the other end ten tin plates, a bowl of potatoes and a bowl of stew.

It was the job of the older boys sitting at the ends of the tables to dole out the food, and the kids along the sides of the tables passed the food along. After supper the Supervisor said, "Quiet, Stand, Grace," then we filed out again into the basement.

### Bed Time

When we got back into the basement all the small boys lined up against the lockers and the Supervisor sent us upstairs. George led me up flights of stairs to the Third Floor. There the Boys' Matron showed me to my bed and put two sheets and one pillow-case on it. The three blankets were already on the straw-filled mattress. George helped me make my

bed while the other boys were getting into their night-gowns.

I got into my night-gown which was a long dress past my knees. There were about forty kids in the dormitory and we were called Number Ones. Stanley was older and he was a Number Two. The biggest and oldest boys were called Number Threes.

Then we all got down on our knees beside our beds and the matron led the dormitory in saying the Lord's Prayer. We all got into our beds. The matron before leaving said "Good night children," and the kids said, "Good night Mrs. Smith."

Then she locked the door (with a latch bolt) and turned out the lights. A short interval after the lights were out the boys started whispering or talking with one another. It was dark and I was scared, but George, whose bed was not near mine, tip-toed over to my bed and talked to me until I fell asleep.

## Morning Routine

The next morning about seven-thirty the matron unlatched the door and woke the boys with a good morning. As the other boys were getting up I suddenly realized that I had wet my bed for the first time since I could remember. After we were all dressed and washed we lined up at the door and the bell rang.

The matron opened the door and we marched down the stairs, slowly at first down to the second floor and by the first floor we were quicker. On the basement flight we were running since the older boys were no longer in sight of the matron.

Stanley, a Number Two who had been awakened half an hour earlier, was playing marbles with a few of his friends on the cement basement floor. Some Number Threes were around since they were awakened about six by

the farm boss to milk thirty cows to supply the school milk.

Ten minutes after I reached the basement I could see them through the window coming back, three of them pushing a two-wheeled cart loaded with two or three eight-gallon cans of milk to the kitchen for breakfast.

The Supervisor, shortly after the milk delivery and after he had finished his breakfast in the separate staff dining-room, blew his whistle and the boys lined up as before and entered the dining room.

After breakfast we marched through the basement and under the archway into the chapel. The chapel was only about sixty feet away from the north wall of the boys' basement. After a short service we were marched out and up to the dormitories to make our beds.

## The Work List

The working assignments that were carried out every morning after we made our beds were scheduled once a month by the Supervisor. On the work list each boy had a chore to do each morning before the school session started. The boys' matron supervised the second and third floors, sweeping the three dormitories, washing the washroom and the toilet. The two teachers, while they put work on the board, watched the sweeping and dusting of their classrooms.

The boys' supervisor was in charge of the boys sweeping the basement, cleaning the washroom, sweeping the stairs and the woodpile boys splitting wood for the kitchen and laundry. One of the farmhands in charge of the meat house had boys deliver meat to the kitchen and to the married workers of the school living in houses around the main buildings.

Another farmhand saw that boys filled sacks with vegetables and boxes with apples from the roothouse and delivered them to the kitchen, also a box of apples to the boys' and girls' supervisors to use at recess. On the way from the cellar to the woodpile boys would grab an apple if the coast was clear.

After the work was done we would report to the one in charge who would inspect the job. If he was not satisfied with it he would make you do the whole thing all over again. If there wasn't time before school you would have to do it after school between four and five which was a free period every day.

These work jobs were graduated according to age. The Number Ones started out by sweeping their own dormitory, then the stairs, the washrooms and finally the classrooms in consecutive order as they advanced through school. I went through this work list while I was passing grades one to three; at grade four most of us who were still too small for farm or barn-boy work were sent to the manual training room.

This room had about six work benches, a pile of lumber along one end and a blackboard and at the other end long, benched desks. We made milking stools, tea trays, tie racks, bob-sleds for winter, coffee tables, cabinets and other things.

Some of the bigger boys would be a farm or barn-boy only every other month. Some larger than we were would make a complete circuit, being in manual training and then a boiler room boy. I never got to be a boiler room boy. Two boiler room boys helped the engineer in the engine room. It was below the auditorium and had two boilers to keep the water hot and in winter to keep the school radiators hot. The boiler room boys cleaned out clinkers from the furnace and restoked it with coal.

One of them went to school at nine, the other helped the engineer and one of the cooks open preserves of tomatoes, peaches or pears from the kitchen or from the cannery. These had been canned in the fall when cannery-boys and girls peeled and cleaned the fruit and put it in the tins. If the boiler-boy was not doing this he and the engineer would check the plumbing system. Most of the time, however, the boiler boy just sat in the boiler room trying to look busy in case someone came in. It was a good place to be because you could always set aside a couple of tins for later.

## Farm Work

I remember when I as a barn-boy for the first time. We carted empty milk cans to the dairy and garbage to the piggery. The boys, without turning the cows out, started cleaning the gutters. I looked down the sides and could see the cows' hooves an inch or more away from the edge of the gutter. The bigger boys pushed the debris down to the far end while walking in the gutter behind all those hooves. Then one gave me a push-broom while another stepped into the gutter saying, "I'll show you."

Grades 1, 2 and 3 went to school the whole day. However, grades 4 and up had to go to school only half a day. They were divided in 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b etc. In the morning the A division of the two grades would distribute themselves according to the work list. After the empty milk cans and garbage had been taken care of the boys put on coveralls and rubber boots, turned the cows out to pasture and the heifer into the heifer pen.

The farm boys assembled in the granary where the farm Sup. dished out the chores according to season. In the fall they picked fruit, reaped the harvest, dug and hauled potatoes and vegetables,

gathered corn for school use or processed it for silage stored in a huge silo for cattle feed. In winter there was woodcutting. Trees were cut, limbed, hauled to be cut in blocks by a buzz saw and stacked into a pile. This was about a mile away from the school. When school was closed we had to haul a couple of wagon loads to replenish it.

Sometimes we had to help slaughter a pig or cow. We did no actual butchering but had to help clean and wash the carcass and weigh and quarter it. Sometimes we worked in the granary selecting and separating seeds in preparation for the spring planting. Planting and general farm work occupied the growing season.

In the winter when it was too cold to work the barn-boys cleaned the barn. Fewer farm boys and more barn boys were needed in winter because the cows had to have straw bedding and gutter cleaning was increased. In the spring and fall this was reversed and more farm boys were needed.

Nearly all the boys wanted to be farm boys because we never knew from day to day what we would be doing. The barn work was much more routine. Milking, cleaning, cooking pig feed, taking care of garbage went on day after day and two and a half hours a day must be spent in stinking piggens. At four o'clock it was time to drive in the cows again. I used to get a kick out of watching the cows watching at the pasture gate for us to open it. Then they would enter the barn and go directly to their allotted stanchions and if one of the younger heifers got into the wrong place the older one would bunt it out with her head. We locked them up and returned to the school grounds.

## The Weekend

Saturday was clean-up day. Dormitories and classrooms were mopped out, basement and dining room were hosed and dried with sacks. The two shifts washed the barn and piggery with a hose. All this had to be done by noon. The woodpile boys had to split twice as much wood as usual for the kitchen and laundry.

Every Saturday morning one of the Number Threes, usually the eldest, would have a list of some twenty names who would have their hair lopped off in a crew cut. The barber shop was the boys' reading room between the two classrooms.

After lunch on Saturday we were free and we looked forward to it every week. The Number One boys went for a walk with the Matron. The Number Twos and Number Threes were allowed to choose where we would go for the walk and every other week were allowed to go to town three and a half miles away. We had to dress in our Sunday clothes and walked around town for an hour or so after we had bought what we could afford. Then we assembled to be counted by the Sup. before being marched back again to the "jail-house." The Reserve close by was out of bounds unless special permission was granted.

Sunday was church day. We slept an hour longer, even the milkers. After the cows were milked the boys made a start at cleaning the barn because we would have to come back after breakfast to do it. After breakfast all the Number Threes had to finish cleaning out the barn. We were expected to go to Sunday School at 10 o'clock. After this all the boys had to change into their Sunday clothes - black corduroy pants and clean shirt.



The Sunday clothes were folded and put into cubby-holes with the owners' numbers in the sewing room. Here also once a week we got our change of clothes.

So we were lined up and marched into Church in our Sunday clothes, with still the same work boots. After we left the church we marched upstairs, changed into our blue denims and folded our Sunday clothes away into their cubby-holes for next week. After lunch we did the same as Saturday afternoon with some variations in the walk.

None of the boys did homework in the evenings, some might read comics or Westerns; most of the time we played marbles and those not playing would look on. In the winter they would let us sleigh-ride down the school hill if it was not too dark, or some of us would go to the cellar to steal a few apples. In the fall we would go over the hill which was out of bounds and run to the orchard half-a-mile away where we filled our shirts with apples and cached them by digging a hole and burying them so we could have an apple any time we wanted it.

I became a Number Three when I was thirteen and was allowed then to go into the boys' reading room. It had a long bench, a couple of chairs and a table, a loud speaker and a gramophone, no books, one or two old magazines and a newspaper that the staff had finished with. The loud speaker was connected with the radio in the staff sitting room. We only listened to the news and sometimes a fight, but most of the time we played the gramophone and listened to Western records and we used to know them by heart and sometimes we would join in and sing.

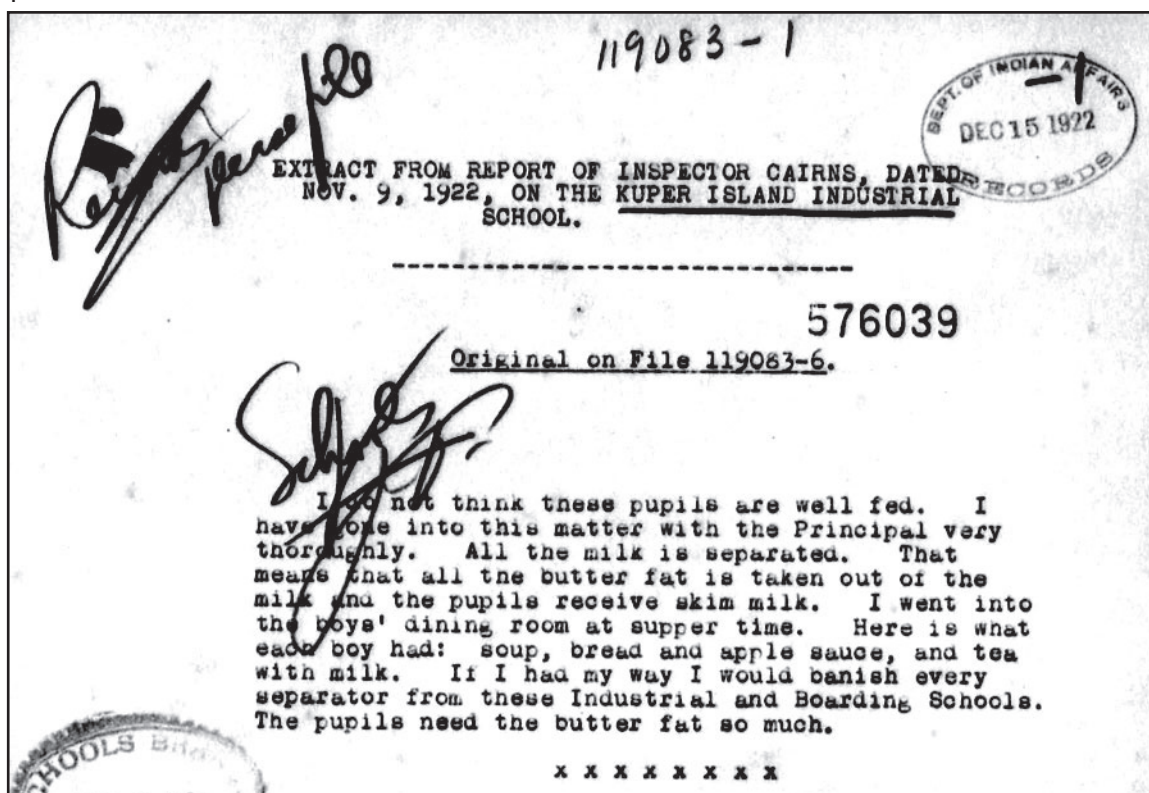
In grades 4 and up the boys and girls were taught in separate rooms as the school did not believe in having them together at any time. I have no clear memory of the teachers. One would be strict and one would be easy. Disobedience meant the strap either by the teacher or the principal. We didn't know where we were most of the time. The teacher might get mad if he asked a question and we answered it, or he might get mad if we didn't. The threat was the strap. The result was we answered, "I don't know" to almost everything. Even now I find myself answering "I don't know," just from habit. After a while they would get mad at us for answering "I don't know" and rap us over the knuckles with a ruler. Most of the time we were just plain scared. We did not know why a teacher was nice today and bellowed at us tomorrow. We were mixed up and confused.

It gets me mad now when I think about the years I spent in that place. If I'd known then what I know now, I wouldn't have taken it. We went through that murder of everything we were and stood for, and for what – very little! I have never been in jail but I know I went through one. They seemed to want to drive out or beat out of us every bit of life and pleasure; they acted as if we shouldn't be alive. I don't know what I hated the most, but whatever it was, it seemed to grow and grow as I got older until I got sick and tired of it all and quit. I want to learn, too; if that was getting education, I'd had enough.

Source: BC Archives, MS 2327

## School Food

### Document 1



Source DIA School Files C8777 p 608

### Document 2

Sechelt School

June 22 1933

Dear Father

I am writing a few lines to let you know things that are going on in the school. I wonder if the chiefs could do something about it. We are not allowed to talk to our parents or any of those who are in the village. We are not even allowed to smile or say hello at them. This school is not a school at all, it is a jail house. Now it is more than a jail.

And the food is pig food it is not fit for human beings to eat it. Some [stone?] apple core, rotten spuds and worms and rotten meat and they force us to eat it that why some boys get sick. They don't like to eat it. That all I can think to say. I can say some more but that all I can tell you.

Arthur Jeffries

Source DIA School Files C8781 f887-23 pp 1319-1320

Sahelt School  
Jan 29<sup>th</sup> 37  
Dear Father  
I am writing you here  
to let you know things that  
are going on in the school  
I wonder if the chiefs would  
do something about it  
We are not allowed to  
talk to our parents or  
any of those who are in  
the Village we are not  
even allowed to smile  
or say hello to them  
The school is not a  
school at all it is a  
jail house in our view  
more than a jail  
And the food is a pig  
food it is not fit for



human being to eat  
it. some stone apples  
core. ~~rotten~~ spreads  
and worms and rotten  
meat and they force  
us to eat it that  
why some boys get  
sick they don't like  
to eat it. that all  
~~I can say to you~~  
I can say something  
but that all I can  
tell you  
Arthur Jeffries



Document 3

156-0-1

**INDIAN AGENTS' OFFICE**

Alert Bay, B. C.

11th June, 1928

R

Sir,—

156-0-1

DEPT. OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 10 1928  
RECORDS

IN YOUR REPLY REFER TO  
No. 23  
ALSO  
TO DATE OF THIS LETTER

Your letter of May 20th was duly received but owing to the fact that I was called away for a few days and on my return the Principal was away for a few days I was unable to act upon it until this week.. On the 8th inst. I went to the Industrial School and had a long interview with the Principal regarding the food supplies for the school. Mr. Spackman allowed me the free use of his requisitions and while on the whole there is ample food supplied for the boys it was pointed out to Mr. Spackman that many changes could be made that would benefit the boys and which in my opinion should be made commencing with the next quarter.

I find, first, that no butter is allowed for the boys but as a substitute they use peanut butter the average being 100 lbs. a quarter for from 40 to 41 boys. I consider peanut butter a very very poor substitute for butter and that this quantity is insufficient. I find also that there is a scarcity in other rich foods and I suggested to Mr. Spackman that he increase the amount of beans used as food to at least three times the quantity which is being used at present.

With regard to meat the school has been handicapped until recently owing to the fact that in order to buy meat at all economically, the week's supply has been bought at one time, and there is no proper refrigerator to keep it in, and even if there was, bringing it up on the boat in small quantities sewed up in sacking the meat is tainted before they get it. Mr. Spackman assured me, however, that now there are two cold storage plants handling meat at Alert Bay he has suggested to his Church Committee at Winnipeg that he be allowed to buy the meat locally, which would allow more choice as to what they purchase and also allow a little better quality of meat. The quantity for the boys school has been insufficient. Had all the meat been in good order which arrived it would have been much more nearly a sufficient quantity than it has been under the present conditions.

The boys at the school look healthy and



-2-

look to be well fed, but during the last year there has been an unusual amount of illness and I talked this matter over with the principal to see if he did not think that it was on account of the ~~not~~ not having enough fats. It was pointed out to him that in their native habitat Indians live on more or less oily foods, they use large quantities of fish and use very largely fish oils and also eat a great many of the hair seals which are very fat indeed. I found at the school that there was a very small quantity of fish on the diet list. It must be admitted however that at times it is difficult to get fresh fish, but it would appear from the quantity that would be used there that an arrangement might be made to get a good weekly allowance.

I found also that the allowance of sugar was only 4 lb. a day for the boys in the school and I think that this should at least be doubled. I suggested to the principal that if he would use more beans and would buy mess pork in barrels and cook it with the beans that it would help out materially with the fats and would not increase the cost of their living as they would make up for it in other ways.

*Corrected  
See letter  
June 14  
H.M.*

I also took up the matter of the diet with the principal so far as the Girls' Home is concerned and I found that a much more liberal allowance had been made for the girls than for the boys. There, as in the boys school, no butter was allowed for the girls but the amount of peanut butter per capita was larger but still insufficient to keep the girls in good growing condition also at this institution there was found a scarcity of vegetables as they were limited to what they grow in their garden with the exception of potatoes.

To my mind, the great difficulty exists in the fact, that these schools and their diet are controlled very largely by a committee at Winnipeg who have to deal with a large number of schools but they, apparently, know nothing whatever about climatic conditions and what is best for this particular place, and the principal informs me that he has taken up this matter of the scarcity of ~~foods~~ with them but they have done nothing to remedy it. A copy of this report is being given to the Principal for his guidance and it is to be hoped that steps will be taken to make the school in every way as efficient as it might be.

The agent has been for two years past pressing the need of a new school building which is as much needed or perhaps more so than a change in the diet at the schools.

WMH/I  
The Secretary,  
Dept. of Indian Affairs,  
Ottawa.

Your Obedient Servant,

*W. M. Halliday*

W. M. Halliday  
Indian A

gent.



## Part Four

### The Healing Journey

#### *Summary*

Part Four first looks at what happened to the students when they returned home from Indian Residential School, and the intergenerational impact of the schools. Then the road to reconciliation is examined.

#### *Essential Questions*

- What issues faced students when they returned home after residential school?
- How did Indian Residential Schools affect family life for First Nations families, from one generation to the next?
- What is the purpose of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?
- How can all Canadians gain a full understanding of the effects of the residential school system?

#### *Key Concepts*

- While some students had positive experiences at residential schools, the very nature of the institution's form and function meant an overriding negative effect of Aboriginal societies.
- When students returned home from Indian Residential Schools, they often felt estranged from their families and communities.
- In many cases parenting skills were lost because children had no role models to follow; the effects accumulated over generations.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established by the government to provide all Canadians with a fuller understanding of Indian Residential Schools and their legacy.

#### *Resources*

- *A Stranger at Home*. Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton. Annick Press, 2011
- Blackline Master 13, The Effects of Indian Residential School, page 71
- Blackline Master 14, Apology by Government of Canada, page 74

## Activity 4.1

### Returning Home



#### Resources

- *A Stranger at Home*

#### Summary

In this activity students consider what happened to students when they returned home. Were they able to fit into their families and communities, or were they outsiders? They use the book *A Stranger at Home* to find out about one example of such experiences.

#### Key Concepts

- When students returned home from Indian Residential Schools, they often felt estranged from their families and communities.

#### Key Questions

- What problems did Indian Residential School children face when they returned home?

#### Background

- Olemaun Pokiak arrives in Tuktoyaktuk to meet her family after being at residential school in Aklavik for 2 years. However, her homecoming is not what she expected. Her mother doesn't welcome her, treating her like a stranger. She couldn't eat the food her mother served, and she could barely speak her own language. She felt like she no longer belonged to her family.
- *A Stranger at Home* is a sequel to Christy Jordan-Fenton's book *Fatty Legs*.
- For additional ideas see a novel study online: <http://prmsastrangerathome.blogspot.ca/>

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Thinking About Returning Home

Lead a discussion about what the experience might have been like for students returning home from Indian Residential School after being away for a year or more.

##### 2. Reading *A Stranger at Home*

Use the book *A Stranger at Home* as a read-aloud or as a novel study.

- Questions for discussion:
  - What were Olemaun's expectations as she returned home? What really happened when she was reunited with her family?
  - How did she try to adapt to living with her family again?
  - What were her feelings towards the strange man who came into the store?

##### 3. Comparing With Other Stories

Compare the experiences of characters in several stories that have been read.

- Compare Shin-chi's homecoming with that of Olemaun.
- Compare this ending with that of Joey's story in *No Time to Say Goodbye*.

## Activity 4.2

### Legacies of Indian Residential Schools

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#### Resources

- Blackline Master 13, The Effects of Indian Residential Schools, page 71

#### Summary

In this activity students think about some of the lasting effects of the Indian Residential Schools on the students and their families. To make sure it is age-appropriate, it focusses on effects on personal identity and feelings, loss of parenting skills, and loss of language.

#### Key Concepts

- Many students of Indian Residential Schools experienced a sense of inferiority or lack of self confidence.
- The impacts of Indian Residential schools passed on from one generation to the next.
- One significant legacy of Indian Residential Schools was the loss of language.

#### Key Questions

- What were the lasting effects of Indian Residential Schools on how people felt about themselves?
- What were the lasting effects of the schools on families and communities who did not go to Indian Residential Schools?

#### Background

- Source of quotes:
  - Barbara; Eileen: *Amongst God's Own. The Enduring Legacy of St. Mary's Mission*. Terry Glavin and Former Students of St. Mary's. Mission BC: Longhouse Publishing 2002.
  - Bev: *They Called Me Number One*. Bev Sellars. Vancouver: Talon Books 2013.
  - Robert: *Behind Closed Doors. Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School*. Penticton: Theytus Books, 2006. p115.

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. Lasting Memories

Suggest that students who attended Indian Residential Schools had memories of their years there. Some were good memories, some were bad memories.

- Ask the class to suggest some memories that the students in Indian Residential Schools might have taken away with them. Discuss what evidence they have to support these conclusions.
- Ask students what memories of Indian Residential Schools might last a long time.

## 2. Lasting Impacts

Discuss with students how these memories of Indian Residential Schools might affect their lives after they left school. How did residential schools make people feel about themselves? How might the effects of the residential schools be passed on from one generation to another? Ask them to consider these questions:

- How did the experiences at Indian Residential Schools affect how people felt about themselves and their personal identity?
- In what ways could the impacts affect children who did not go to residential school?

Possible strategies for investigating these questions:

- Read some quotes from Indian Residential School Survivors to learn about some of the legacies of the residential school system. Distribute copies of Blackline Master 13, Survivor Quotes.
- Gather evidence from other sources read previously. Refer to what students learned in Activity 2.1.

## 3. Language Loss

Discuss the significance of traditional languages to First Nations people and their communities. If possible, relate the discussion to the local language instruction which may take place in your school or community.

- Invite a speaker of the local First Nations language to discuss the significance of knowing the language, and some examples of its use.
- View a map of the diverse First Nations languages spoken in British Columbia. Some suggests sources are:
  - First Nations People's Cultural Council has an interactive map online at: <http://maps.fphlcc.ca/>
  - The Museum of Anthropology at UBC has an online map. Search keywords "moa language map."
  - The First Nations Languages Program has a list of all the languages, including those that are extinct, as well as a map. <http://fnlg.arts.ubc.ca>
- Ask students the questions:
  - How did Indian Residential Schools contribute to the loss of language and culture?
  - What were the consequences of language loss for people and communities?

## Activity 4.3

### Towards Reconciliation

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#### Resources

- Blackline Master 14, Apology by Government of Canada, page 74
- Video *All Nations Canoe Gathering*  
<https://vimeo.com/75805827>
- Video *Educating Our Youth: Vancouver Event Student Responses*.  
<https://vimeo.com/75812900>

#### Vocabulary

apology  
reconciliation

#### Summary

This activity introduces students to the concept of reconciliation and the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

#### Key Concepts

- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established by the government to provide all Canadians with a fuller understanding of Indian Residential Schools and their legacy.

#### Key Questions

- What is the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

#### Background

By 2005, the Government of Canada was facing a large number of court cases seeking restitution from damages suffered by survivors of Indian Residential Schools. That year the survivors and the government reached a negotiated settlement, known as the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. It provided financial compensation to survivors and established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In 2008 the Government of Canada issued a formal apology for the Indian Residential Schools. Part of the apology included this statement about the goals of the TRC:

A cornerstone of the Settlement Agreement is the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This Commission presents a unique opportunity to educate all Canadians on the Indian Residential Schools system. It will be a positive step in forging a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians, a relationship based on the knowledge of our shared history, a respect for each other and a desire to move forward together with a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us.

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. The Apology

Present the Government of Canada's 2008 Apology to students. A portion of the statement is found on Blackline Master 14. You may want to show video clips of the Prime Minister delivering the statement, as well as the response of some First Nations and other leaders. These can be found on the internet.

- Discuss the idea of apologizing at a personal level. When and why do we apologize? What are the motivations and the end results? Ask students to give examples of times they have apologized, and what happened afterwards.

## 2. Truth and Reconciliation Commission

View two short online videos from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

- All Nations Canoe Gathering <https://vimeo.com/75805827>
- Educating Our Youth: Vancouver Event Student Responses. Online at <https://vimeo.com/75812900>
- Discuss the meanings of “truth” and “reconciliation.”
- Work together as a class to determine the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Use resources such as
  - The TRC website: [trc.ca](http://trc.ca)
  - Recent news articles
  - Video taken at various regional events, particularly the Vancouver event in the fall of 2013.
- Ask students the question, “What will reconciliation look like when it is achieved?”

## Activity 4.4

### Taking Action

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#### Resources

- It Matters to Me website. (search “TRC it matters”)
- Project of Heart website: [www.projectofheart.ca](http://www.projectofheart.ca)
- Reconciliation Canada website: <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/>

#### Summary

In the final activity students plan an activity that helps them pass on their understanding of the Indian Residential Schools

#### Key Concepts

- Individuals and groups across Canada are coming together to take action for reconciliation.

#### Key Questions

- What positive actions can be taken to bring about reconciliation?

#### Suggested Activities

##### 1. People Taking Action

Find examples of projects and events students and others have done to promote reconciliation. See the Project of Heart website and Reconciliation Canada website for ideas and examples. Project of Heart, created by a teacher Sylvia Smith, has become an important site for reporting on what schools across Canada are doing to promote reconciliation.

- Ask students why they think it is important that all Canadians need to understand about what residential schools have done.

##### 2. Plan an Activity

Plan with students an activity that helps pass on what they have learned about residential schools to others (perhaps for another class, or their families)

- Ask students to review all the objects in their Memory Bags. They should make new objects for Part Four. Which objects seem to hold the most significance to them?
- Discuss what are the most important things to know about the history of Residential Schools as Canadians.
- Have students carry out the activity and evaluate its success.



## Part Four Assessment Activities

### ***1. Why It Matters***

Ask students to reflect on why it matters to them to understand the importance of knowing about the history of Indian Residential Schools.

- Refer to the TRC website, “It Matters to Me” (keyword search “trc it matters”)

### ***2. Memory Bag***

Ask students to use the items in their Memory Bags as a culminating activity.

- Challenge students to create a project that connects the various objects to what they have learned in the unit. Let the students guide the creative possibilities of how the objects can be transformed.

## The Effects of Residential Schools

### Robert

*(Kamloops Residential School)*

I look back on my own life and I can see how my experiences in the residential school affected me. The way I related to my children, I was distant. I couldn't express myself, I couldn't say "I love you" very well, couldn't hug them. Whenever they cried too much, I couldn't deal with that. Because I couldn't cry, I didn't know what crying was. I was brought up in the school, we were taught never to cry.

When I was there, there was no affection between the supervisors and the children. There's only rules. So it's not like a home situation, you don't have the adult in your life saying to you "I care about you, I love you."

### Barbara

*(St. Mary's Mission 1945-1954)*

Although my dad didn't talk about his years at residential school, I think the things that he did or learned that affected my life was the feeling part, like saying I love you, or giving me that hug. I think if he hadn't gone there he would have those things but he didn't.

So like myself he wasn't able to reach out and say I love you and I appreciate you. That is what really bothers me is we weren't able to do that or know how to. Now that my grandchildren are around I am able to do that and it is a different story. I give them the love that I wasn't able to give to my children.

**Bev**

*(Williams Lake Residential School)*

Ridicule from the nuns encourage ridicule from other kids. We really had to be careful we didn't violate anyone's turf or offend someone by appearing better than anyone else, like what happened when someone would get new shoes.

If our shoes got too small for us, the nuns would usually give us hand-me-downs from older girls. Only when the hand-me-downs were so worn that no other girls could wear them would the nuns break out a new pair. This should have been a joyous occasion, but

*no one* wanted to get the new shoes. With new shoes came the burden of trying not to look at your new shoes. The kids saw this as "showing off." If word got around that we were too proud, we became the target of more kids.

The message of "don't try to be better than anyone else" had an effect on me for years. The more invisible I was, the better. The more mediocre I was the better. *Don't strive to be the best, strive to be the least!* And it was seen as okay to be the least.

**Eileen**

*(St Mary's Mission 1961-1965)*

I think that residential school had a lot of impact on my mom in the way that she raised her kids. When I was six, my parents separated, and we had to go live with my dad because my mom said that she was not able to raise her kids. She felt like residential school was a big part in not being able to raise us kids.

I think for a while what I learned at residential school has impacted my kids too. The older kids got the most impact, but I went through my own native spirituality. Like when I was 18 years old or in high school, it

was almost like I was embarrassed of the native spirituality, or the superstitions of the old people was embarrassing, and I think that it came from residential schools.

We were taught that the native beliefs were just like superstitions or something, and when I first came out of St Mary's I really believed that. I didn't feel good about being a native, and I think that came from being here at St. Mary's. It wasn't until I started growing in the spirituality, in the native way, that I started being proud of myself.

## Government of Canada Apologizes for Indian Residential Schools, 2008

Prime Minister Harper offered a full apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential Schools system in the House of Commons on 11 June 2008. This is a portion of the apology.

I stand before you, in this Chamber so central to our life as a country, to apologize to Aboriginal peoples for Canada's role in the Indian Residential Schools system.

To the approximately 80,000 living former students, and all family members and communities, the Government of Canada now recognizes that it was wrong to forcibly remove children from their homes and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that it was wrong to separate children from rich and vibrant cultures and traditions that it created a void in many lives and communities, and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that, in separating children from their families, we undermined the ability of many to adequately parent their own children and sowed the seeds for generations to follow, and we apologize for having done this.

We now recognize that, far too often, these institutions gave rise to abuse or neglect and were inadequately controlled, and we apologize for failing to protect you.

Not only did you suffer these abuses as children, but as you became parents, you were powerless to protect your own children from suffering the same experience, and for this we are sorry.

The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long. The burden is properly ours as a Government, and as a country. There is no place in Canada for the attitudes that inspired the Indian Residential Schools system to ever prevail again.

You have been working on recovering from this experience for a long time and in a very real sense, we are now joining you on this journey. The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the Aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly.

Nous le regrettons

We are sorry

Nimitataynan

Niminchinowesamin

Mamiattugut

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper,  
Prime Minister of Canada

## Literature Resources

### Neekna and Chemai

Jeannette C. Armstrong. Penticton: Theytus Books, 2008.

#### *Background*

Neekna and Chemai are two young girls growing up in the Okanagan Valley before contact. The friends learn about their people through interactions with elders. It is told in the first person, from Neekna's point of view. It is organized around the seasonal cycles, focussing on traditional activities carried out in each season.

#### *Summary*

##### Chapter 1: Winter

Neekna's family gathers for a meal in their underground lodge, and Chemai is invited to join them. They discuss the various jobs they will do that day. Later the girls spend time with Great-Grandmother, who explains about important ceremonies that will happen in the winter, in preparation for the coming season's work. She tells them a story about a boy who was disrespectful of the North Wind.

##### Chapter 2: Springtime

The girls gather plants with Neekna's grandmother. The next day the community moves to a seasonal food gathering camp to harvest bitterroot. Grandmother explains the origin story of how bitterroot came to be an important food source, and why the people give a special ceremony of thanks at its harvest.

##### Chapter 3: Summertime

As this chapter begins, the girls are travelling to a saskatoon berry picking ground. After the camp is set up the Chief offers thanks to the berries for giving themselves up as food for the people. After picking saskatoon berries, the people ride horses up into the high country to pick blackberries. Then they whip up some soapberries for a treat.

##### Chapter 4: Fall

In the fall the community moves to a salmon camp. At the start of fishing, the whole community shares the first salmon that is caught. The people dry the salmon, and as the days grow shorter they prepare to return to their winter



camp. They pass a large rock known as Rock Woman. Grandmother tells the story of how a woman was changed to a rock to watch over the Okanagan valley. They give her gifts to honour her. Back at winter camp, the men go hunting, and the people hold a feast of thanks for all the food they gathered. Neekna understands how important it is that she has received the knowledge passed down for generations, from great grandmother, grandmother and mother.

## **No Time to Say Goodbye : Children's Stories of Kuper Island Residential School**

Sylvia Olsen with Rita Morris and Ann Sam, Sono Nis 2001.

### ***Background***

This book tells the story of children from the Tsartlip First Nation who attended the Kuper Island Residential School in the 1950s. Tsartlip is north of Victoria on Vancouver Island, near Brentwood. Kuper Island is near Chemainus. Significantly, the name of the island has been changed to Penalakut Island, to honour the Penalakut First Nations whose traditional territory it is. The book is fictional, but is based on the experiences of members of the Tsartlip First Nations who shared their stories.

The included stories are:

Thomas: Nine year old son of the Jones family whose story illustrates how children were taken away to school.

Wilson: The youngest of the Jones family. His story introduces children's initiation to Kuper Island Residential School, Wilson's humiliation by one teacher and support by another teacher.

Joey: Joey Jones and a friend run away from school, and learn about how the school used to be from his aunt and uncle.

Monica: This tells the residential school experience from a girl's point of view, and touches on the issue of sexual abuse in a discrete but direct way.

Nelson: An older boy from Tsartlip gets into a number of altercations, including with one of the priests, and another student.

The stories of Thomas and Joey are used in these learning resources. The other sections may be used at the teacher's discretion.

### ***Summary***

Thomas (pp 7-33)

We meet the Jones family through the eyes of nine-year old Thomas.

Chapter 1: Thomas goes fishing with his father.

Chapter 2: Getting ready to go back to school. We meet brother Joey and Wilson, and classmate Nelson, who is a bully. Chapter ends as the morning bell rings on the first day back at school.

Chapter 3: Indian Agent MacDonald picks out Thomas, Wilson, Monica and Nel-

son to be taken away to Kuper Island Residential School. Wilson is very tearful. Thomas wonders what lays in store for them.

Chapter 4: The children are taken away in the Agent's big black car.

Joey (pp 62-107)

Joey and his friend run away from school.

Chapter 1: Joey is upset when he learns his brother Wilson is going home. He vows to come up with a plan to go home.

Chapter 2: Several years later, Joey makes a new friend, nicknamed Stumpy, who is from Pauquachin, near Tsartlip. They make a plan to run away together.

Chapter 3: After an incident when Stumpy stands up to Brother Jerry in defence of another boy, the boys vow to put their plan in action.

Chapter 4: Joey tells Thomas of the plan, and asks him to help get food for them. The boys make final plans for their escape.

Chapter 5: That night the boys escape, using a canoe to paddle to Chemainus. They continue to head home, walking south along the railway tracks with a mixture of fear and exhilaration.

Chapter 6: They reach Esquimalt, where Joey's aunt and uncle live. The boys stay overnight with them. Aunt Phyllis and Uncle Willie tell the boys about their experiences at Kuper Island a generation earlier. Stumpy learns his grandfather has died while he was in school. Willie and Phyllis drive the boys home to Tsartlip.

## The Secret of the Dance

Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow.

Orca Books, 2006

This story tells of a time when ceremonial dancing and the wearing of regalia and masks were forbidden by law. A young boy, based on Judge Alfred Scow's boyhood story, witnesses the last secret potlatch of his community before the threat of imprisonment caused them to stop dancing.

## Shi-shi-etko

Nicola I. Campbell

Groundwood, 2005

Shi-shi-etko is a young girl who will be going away to school in four days. Her family - mother, father and grandmother - teach her about the significance of the land, and she collects various plants to put in her memory bag, to hold her remembrance of the land while she is away.

Video trailer available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKerhCGjSDE>

Full length video available at [http://movingimages.ca/store/products.php?shi\\_shi\\_etko](http://movingimages.ca/store/products.php?shi_shi_etko).

## Shin-chi's Canoe

Nicola I. Campbell

Groundwood Books / House of Anansi Press 2008

*Shin-chi's Canoe* is about Shi-shi-etko's younger brother Shin-chi, who is sent off to residential school with his sister. His father gives him a toy canoe, which he holds as a reminder of his family life during his year at school.

## A Stranger at Home

Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton

Annick Press, 2011

This is the sequel to *Fatty Legs*.

Olemaun Pokiak arrives in Tuktoyaktuk to meet her family after being at residential school in Aklavik for 2 years. However, her homecoming is not what she expected. Her mother doesn't welcome her, treating her like a stranger. She couldn't eat the food her mother served, and she could barely speak her own language. She felt like she no longer belonged to her family. She learns her family won't be going back their home on Banks Island, but instead were settling in Tuk. She read to her family from a book a nun had given her, with her father translating. She recalls her older sister reading to her as a child, and her desire to learn to read was what motivated her to go to residential school.

[http://www.bookrapport.com/images/pdfs/2011/lessonplan\\_fentons2.pdf](http://www.bookrapport.com/images/pdfs/2011/lessonplan_fentons2.pdf)

## Additional Literature Resources

### Fatty Legs

Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton

Annick Press, 2010

Eight-year-old Margaret Pokiak, an Inuit girl from Banks Island, NWT, desires to learn to read. Her father warns her about the residential school, but finally agrees to let her make the five-day journey to attend it. Margaret runs into a nun she calls the Raven, who humiliates her. Margaret refuses to be intimidated.

### My Name is SEEPEETZA

Shirley Sterling

Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992

This is a fictionalized account of two years in the life of Martha Stone, at a Catholic-run Indian Residential School in the interior of BC. Told in a diary format, it goes from September 1958 to August 1959. Some diary entries are from the school, while others are on her family's ranch.

### When I was Eight

Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton

Annick Press, 2013

This is a picture book version of *Fatty Legs*.

## GLOSSARY

### Aboriginal

In legal terms, Aboriginal is the umbrella term for all Indigenous Canadians under the terms of the Constitution Act, 1982. Aboriginal peoples are comprised of First Nations (or Indians), Inuit and Métis, three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. In general usage Aboriginal is an alternative term for First Peoples, First Nations, or Indigenous people of Canada.

### Boarding School

Not to be confused with private boarding schools of Great Britain and other countries. Boarding schools, first mentioned officially in the Indian Act in 1894, were residential institutions built on a reserve to serve the students of the local community. One government official writing in 1897 described them as “an advance on Reservation Day schools, where children could be removed from home influences and have the benefit of civilized surroundings without being taken away from their parents’ sight” (Indian Affairs RG 10 v6039 f 160-1-1 p 40-41). They generally received less funding than Industrial schools (\$60 per student compared with \$72 for industrial schools in 1897). Boarding schools in British Columbia included All Hallows, Yale; Elizabeth Long Memorial, Kitimaat; and Crosby Home for Boys and Girls, Port Simpson. Boarding schools ceased to exist in practical purposes in 1920, when all schools were termed Indian Residential Schools, although the term continued to exist in the Indian Act until 1951.

### Day School

A school located in a reserve community, similar to a public school. Children lived at home with their families. At first local schools were established by church missionaries. Eventually they were included in the Indian Act and funded by the federal government. They continued to be run by churches until the 1950s, when the Department of Indian Affairs became responsible for their operation. Indian Day Schools continued into the 1970s, until they became band run schools or were incorporated into a nearby provincial school district.

### Department of Indian Affairs (DIA)

For most of the last 150 years, the branch of the federal government responsible for Status Indians was called the Department of Indian Affairs. It moved to different ministries from time to time. From 1873 Indian matters were part of the Department of the Interior. In 1880 the Department of Indian Affairs was created as a separate branch under the Department of the Interior, and the Minister of the Interior was the Superintendent of Indian Affairs. In 1936 it was moved to the Department of Mines and Resources and in 1949 moved to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. In 1965 it became its own ministry, called Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). This later became Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). In 2011 the department’s name was changed to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC).

## Indian

From the earliest times of colonization, the Indigenous people of North America were referred to by outsiders as Indians. Today the preferred word is First Nations, although some Indigenous people still use the term *Indian* within their own communities. In terms of these curricular resources, *Indian* is used in historical and legal contexts. For example, it is the Indian Act which still has legal and governmental importance today. For further discussion, see *First Nations 101*, p. 161.

## Indian Act

The Indian Act is the body of laws that relate only to Canadians who are recognized as Registered Indians. Since its creation in 1876, it has controlled many aspects of economic, cultural, educational and personal lives of First Nations people. However, it is still the only government document that recognizes the special status of First Nations peoples and communities. It allows for certain rights including health services, education, subsidized housing and exemption from taxes in certain situations, but all in exchange for land and other rights. Many of the earlier restrictive sections of the act, such as the Potlatch ban and not being allowed to vote, have been removed, but there are still many active and archaic clauses that continue to govern lives of First Nations people.

## Indian Agency

An administrative unit of the Department of Indian Affairs. Each province was divided into regions called agencies, usually based on geographical and linguistic groupings. Each agency had an Indian Agent who was responsible for the status Indians within that agency. The number and location of agencies changed over time. The first agencies in British Columbia were created in 1881, with six agencies. By 1913, there were fifteen agencies. (See a map of those agencies at [www.ubcic.bc.ca/Resources/ourhomesare/testimonies/](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/Resources/ourhomesare/testimonies/).) Indian agencies continued to operate until 1969.

## Indian Agent

The Indian Agent was the local representative of the Federal Government and the Department of Indian Affairs, and was responsible for administering the Indian Act on the reserves in his jurisdiction. Agents held a great deal of power in the daily lives of First Nations people, and approved or vetoed any actions of band councils. Most details of what might be considered municipal governance had to pass through the Indian Agent. Any items funded by the department, such as side walks or school supplies had to be ordered through the agent. In some agencies people could not leave their reserve without a permit from the Indian Agent. Some agents tried to be proactive for the First Nations in their agencies, as far as the Indian Act allowed. Much depended on the character and beliefs of the individual agents; some were more enlightened than others. Until 1910, BC Indian Agents reported to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs of British Columbia. After that they reported to officials in Ottawa.

## Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement

This legally binding agreement reached through the courts in 2005 and was the impetus for subsequent actions, including financial compensation for survivors, the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and money dedicated specifically to the healing process. It came about as the result of the Government of Canada facing an overwhelming

number of court cases seeking and awarding financial compensation for survivors. Following the Agreement in Principle, which was signed in November 2005, a lengthy judicial process followed in which nine provincial and territorial courts held separate hearings to certify the class action suit in their jurisdictions, and approve the final settlement. In British Columbia the hearing was held in the Supreme Court of British Columbia before Chief Justice Brenner in October 2006 and is referred to as *Quatell v. Attorney General of Canada*. Chief Justice Brenner's conclusions, based on testimony of BC speakers, formed the major catalyst for the federal government to eventually deliver its apology in 2008.

### **Industrial School**

An Industrial school was an early form of residential school. It was based on the British Industrial Schools which were established in the mid 19th century to deal with poor, neglected or delinquent children and teach them a practical trade. It combined the Victorian values of social improvement and productive labour, as well as the abiding goal of Christianity and civilization for Aboriginal children. In British Columbia most Indian Residential Schools began as Industrial Schools. The term was dropped in 1920 when all schools where First Nations students were housed were termed Indian Residential Schools (although the term Industrial school persisted in the Indian Act until 1951.)

### **Intergenerational Legacies**

The lasting effects of Indian Residential Schools that are passed on from one generation to the next. Even though people may not have attended residential schools, they can still be impacted through the experiences of their parents and grandparents who attended an Indian Residential School. These intergenerational legacies can include loss of language and culture, disrupted parenting skills, or cycles of abuse.

### **Reserve**

A Reserve, as defined by the Indian Act, is “a tract of land, the legal title to which is vested in Her Majesty, that has been set apart by Her Majesty for the use and benefit of a band.” Generally a First Nations Band has a number of parcels of land associated with it. The main community is established on one of the reserves, and the resources of other reserve lands may be used by the First Nation. For example, many First Nations have fishing sites that have been set aside as reserves. In general, federal law, not provincial, applies to reserve lands. Reserves were first created in BC by the Indian Reserve Commission in the 1880s and 1890s, and further under the McKenna-McBride Commission of 1916. They were generally selected by government officials, usually with little consultation, from the traditional territories of each Band. Note that in the United States the term “reservation” is used, while in Canada the term is “reserve.”

### **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada**

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement in 2008. Thousands of survivors, their families and others across Canada made statements to document memories of the schools and their impacts. An Interim Report was released in 2012. The Final Report was delivered in 2015 including 94 recommendations for future action. The statements, documents and other materials are housed at the National Research Centre on Indian Residential Schools at the University of Winnipeg, where the work of the Commission will be carried on.



## References and Resources

### Background Resources

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2014 Reconciliation & the Way Forward. Collected Essays & Personal Reflections. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

## Resources Specific to BC Indian Residential Schools

### ***Coqualeetza***

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### ***Elizabeth Long Memorial Home, Kitimat***

Kelm, Mary-Ellen

2006 *The Letters of Margaret Butcher: Missionary-Imperialism on the North Pacific Coast*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press.

### ***Kamloops***

Jack, Agnes (ed)

2006 *Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School*. Penticton: Theytus Books.

### ***Lejac***

Moran, Bridget and Mary John

1997 *Stoney Creek Woman: The Story of Mary John*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

### ***St. Mary's, Mission***

Carlson, Keith Thor (ed.)

2001 *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre. See Plate 23, pp 68-69.

Glavin, Terry and Former Students of St. Mary's

2002 *Amongst God's Own: The Enduring Legacy of St. Mary's Mission*. Mission BC: Longhouse Publishing.

### ***Port Simpson, Crosby Home***

Hare, Jan and Jean Barman

2006 *Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Manly, Eva

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### ***Williams Lake***

Furniss, Elizabeth

1995 *Victims of Benevolence*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

Sellars, Bev

2013 *They Called Me Number One*. Vancouver: Talonbooks.

## Survivor Accounts of Residential Schools

Jack, Agnes (ed)

2006 *Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School*. Penticton: Theytus Books.

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Aboriginal Healing Foundation and the Fort Nelson First Nation

2002 *Surviving Spirit. A Look Back at Residential School.* By the Community of Fort Nelson First Nation.

Carrier Nations Elders and Storytellers

2013 *We are Telling Our Stories for Our Children and Grandchildren : Nekehkoh'inkež Nechaikoh huba Nek'u'a nats'uwulnuk.* Nazo, Kluskus, Red Bluff and Ulkatcho Bands.

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2015 *The Survivors Speak.* Online at [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca).

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## Resources for Student Online Research

### Primary Source Documents

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1922 *The story of a national crime : being an appeal for justice to the Indians of Canada ; the wards of the nation, our allies in the Revolutionary War, our brothers-in-arms in the Great War - Bryce, P. H. (Peter Henderson)*  
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Larmondin, Leanne

1997 *Church, Diocese Fight Abuse Lawsuits.* Anglican Journal, vol 123, no. 8. <http://sisis.nativeweb.org/resschool/oct97ang.html>

### Secondary Research Sources

Aboriginal Healing Foundation

(These resources can all be downloaded from <http://www.ahf.ca/publications/residential-school-resources>)

A Condensed Time line of Residential-School Related Events. <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/condensed-timeline.pdf>

A Directory of Residential Schools in Canada. <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/residential-school-directory.pdf>

*The Healing Has Begun.* 2002. 24 pp. <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/the-healing-has-begun.pdf> [Historical overview and signs of change, as of 2002.]

*Métis History and Experience and Residential Schools in Canada.* <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/metiseweb.pdf>

*Misconceptions of Residential School.* <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/misconceptions.pdf> [1 page poster. Information is also available in *The Healing Has Begun.*]

First Nations Leadership Council

Backgrounder: History of Canada's Indian Residential School System.

[http://www.fns.bc.ca/pdf/Backgrounder\\_ResidentialSchoolHistory.pdf](http://www.fns.bc.ca/pdf/Backgrounder_ResidentialSchoolHistory.pdf)

Historical Time line From 1700s to the Present

Union of BC Indian Chiefs time line of history of contact and relationships with First Nations and newcomers. <http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/Resources/timeline.htm>

IndigenousFoundations.art.ubc.ca

Residential School System. <http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/home/government-policy/the-residential-school-system.html>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

2015 Calls to Action

2015 Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future. Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

2015 The Survivors Speak.

2015 What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation

All TRC documents available online at [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)

Where are the Children? Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools

Legacy of Hope Foundation. [www.wherearethekids.ca](http://www.wherearethekids.ca)

## Video

The Awakening of Elizabeth Shaw. DVD. 2005.

Available to order at [manlymedia.com/](http://manlymedia.com/)

Educating Our Youth: Vancouver event student responses

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. [vimeo.com/75812900](https://vimeo.com/75812900).

The Fallen Feather. Indian Industrial Residential Schools Canadian Confederation

2007 97 min. Documentary. [fallenfeatherproductions.com](http://fallenfeatherproductions.com)

Powwow at Duck Lake

1963 National Film Board of Canada. 14 min 30 sec.

[www.nfb.ca/film/powwow\\_at\\_duck\\_lake](http://www.nfb.ca/film/powwow_at_duck_lake)

What is Reconciliation

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. 2 min 55 sec. [vimeo.com/25389165](https://vimeo.com/25389165)

Where Are the Children? Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools

Legacy of Hope Foundation video. [www.legacyofhope.ca/projects/where-are-the-children/video](http://www.legacyofhope.ca/projects/where-are-the-children/video)

Also available on Vimeo: [vimeo.com/27172950](https://vimeo.com/27172950)

## Curriculum Resources

100 Years of Loss - The Residential School System in Canada

Legacy of Hope Foundation

From Apology to Reconciliation: Residential School Survivors

A Guide for Grades 9 and 11 SS Teachers in Manitoba (Manitoba Education Teacher resource Guide and DVD)

Indian Residential School Resources

[irsr.ca](http://irsr.ca)

This BC based site has lesson plans, photo galleries and video links.

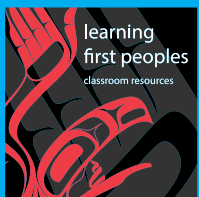
Power of Place, Curriculum Enhancement Toolkit

[www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/fundedresearch/Graham-Toolkit-AbL2006.pdf](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/fundedresearch/Graham-Toolkit-AbL2006.pdf)

The toolkit was designed to help teachers integrate more elders and resource people into their classrooms. Appendix B has a planning sheet that teachers can use as an example of how to prepare for invited elders or resource people.

The Residential School System in Canada: Understanding the Past - Seeking Reconciliation – Building Hope for Tomorrow

Comprehensive Teacher's Guide developed by the Government of Northwest Territories, Government of Nunavut, and the Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2013. (Second ed.) Available online: [www.ece.gov.nt.ca/files/Early-Childhood/ns\\_-\\_residential\\_schools\\_resource\\_-\\_second\\_edition.pdf](http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/files/Early-Childhood/ns_-_residential_schools_resource_-_second_edition.pdf)



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