

Unit 1

Governance in First Nations Communities

Grades 2-3

Overview

Primary students can begin to learn about the decision makers in their lives and communities, and expand to learning about decision makers in regional, national and global communities. These activities begin by including First Nations content in general discussions, then focus on First Nations in the local community, wherever possible.

Essential Understandings

- Governments make decisions about how we live in our country and our communities.
- Traditional First Nations governance is comes from a deep understanding and connection with the land and environment.
- First Nations forms of governance are as diverse as the people and their territories.
- First Nations were forced to change their traditional governments to an elected government similar to European governments.

Guiding Questions

- Who makes decisions that affect us?
- Who are First Nations leaders?
- What laws or rules do First Nations people follow to use and take care of the land?

BC Learning Standards: Relevant Content Standards for Social Studies 2-3

Grade	Content Standard	Sample Topics (from Curriculum)	Curricular Competencies
2 Regional and Global Communities	Relationships between people and the environment in different communities		Identify significant peoples and places in BC Canada and the world (Significance) What would happen if there was no one leading a community or country? (Causes and Consequences)
	Roles and responsibilities of regional governments	Leaders in your community and places where they meet	Who should make decisions about the future of the community or the country? (Perspective)
3 Global Indigenous People	Cultural characteristics and ways of life of local First Peoples and global indigenous peoples	Worldviews, protocols, spiritual beliefs, values, kinships, traditional teachings	How have First Peoples government and leadership changed over time? (Continuity and Change)
	Governance and social organization in local and global indigenous societies	Consensus, confederacies, Elders, reservations [sic], band council, traditional leadership	What values were significant for local First Peoples (Significance)
	Relationship between humans and their environment	Protocols around the world that acknowledge and respect the land	Identify features of Indigenous cultures that characterize their relationship to the land

Resources

For further information on these resources, see the annotations in the Bibliography, beginning on page 255.

Blackline Masters

1. First Nations Community Profile
2. Who Decides?
3. Leaders
4. What is a Government?
5. Government Word Sort
6. First Nations Community Pocket Chart Labels
7. Two Forms of First Nations Government
8. Band Council Place-mat Activity
9. The Land is Important Because...
10. First Nations Laws and the Land
11. Ancestral Governments
12. Elected Governments

Recommended Resources

- Maps of local First Nations communities
- Access to websites of local and other First Nations
- Abood, Debora. *I Know I am Precious and Sacred*. Peppermint Toast Publishing. 2016.
- Boreham, Brenda and Terri Mack. From the Mountains to the Sea series: *We Live Here* and *We are a Community*.
- Campbell, Nicola. *A Day With Yayah*. Tradewind Books 2018.
- McLeod, Elaine. *Lessons From Mother Earth*. Groundwood 2002.
- Morven, Amelia, Nisga'a Elder. "When the Volcano Erupted." Available in *First Nations Journey of Justice*, Grade 5, pages 143-146. Online at <https://bit.ly/2CQCO1H>
- Silvey, Dianne. *Little Bear's Vision Quest*. Greater Victoria School District, 1995
- Spalding, Andrea and Alfred Scow. *Secret of the Dance*. Orca Books, 2006.
- Vickers, Roy Henry and Robert Budd. *Orca Chief*. Harbour Publishing, 2015.
- Vickers, Roy Henry and Robert Budd. *Peace Dancer*. Harbour Publishing 2016.

Resources for Feasts and Potlatches

- Aboriginal Education SD 52. *P'te'ex dił Dzepk, Clans and Crests*.
- Aleck, Celestine. *Granny and I Get Traditional Names*. Strong Stories: Coast Salish Series.
- Klockars, Donna. *Planning the Feast*. Strong Readers series. Reading Level 17.
- Thompson, Sheila. *Cheryl Bibalhats: Cheryl's Potlatch*. Yinka Dene Language Institute, 1991.
- *Potlatch*. Queen Charlotte Island Readers. Dawn Adams, 1985.
- *Potlatch: A Tsimshian Celebration*. Dianne Hoyt Smith, 1997.

Additional Resources

- First Nations Education Steering Committee. “The Spirit of Celebration.” *In Our Own Words*, pages 99-106. FNEsc 2012. <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc929>.
- *Hartley Bay*. Hartley Bay School and Community student video. <https://youtu.be/URmy7JVpD2c>
- *Welcome to Tsay Keh Dene*, Tsay Keh Dene community brochure. Online at the Tsay Keh Dene website, or link at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc901>

Outline of Activities

1. First Nations Communities
 - a. Local First Nations Communities
 - b. The Importance of Elders
2. Decision Makers
 - a. What is a Decision?
 - b. What is a Leader?
 - c. What is a Government?
3. First Nations Governments
 - a. Local First Nations Governments
 - b. Roles and Responsibilities of First Nations Governments
4. The Land and Government
 - a. Our Relationship with the Land
 - b. First Peoples Relationship with the Land
 - c. Making Sure the Land is Cared For
 - d. Laws For Taking Care Of Each Other
5. Governments Change Over Time
 - a. How Did First Nations Governments Work in the Past?
 - b. Public Witnesses: Feasts and Potlatches
 - c. The Indian Act Changes the Government
6. First Nations Community Project

Suggested Activities

Note: There are more activities here than most teachers will incorporate into their units. It is not expected that you will use all of the activities, or follow the sequence as it is described. These activities are intended to be adapted to fit the needs of your students and classroom, as well as inspire ways that you can respectfully include relevant First Nations knowledge and perspectives in your course.

Most of these activities are geared for the Content Standards for SS 3. However, Grade 2 teachers will be able to adapt some ideas into their Social Studies discussion about leaders, decision makers and communities. This acknowledges the cyclical nature of learning where ideas are repeated with more depth.

1. First Nations Communities

Students will build an awareness of how First Nations communities are similar to and different from non-First Nations communities in BC. If your school is not located in a First Nations community, then wherever possible, focus on the closest local First Nations community.

How you approach this will very much depend on the location of your school and what relationship there exists or may be established between local communities, school and district Aboriginal Education staff and you. See *Making Connections with First Nations Communities* in the Introduction, page 9.

If you haven't already completed it, you may want to gather information about the local communities in *First Nations Governance Profile* on page 103. There is also a guide to completing the Profile on page 17.

 *First Nations Governance Profile* on page 103

a. Local First Nations Communities

Students will build an awareness of the local First Nation community or communities.

- Begin by determining what you and the students know about the local First Nations communities. Build on the students' prior knowledge. What do they already know about the community or communities? If not located in a First Nations community, in whose traditional territory is the school located? Students may be familiar with this through acknowledgments of territories that take place in the school and community.
- Respecting the community: For students in schools that are not situated in a First Nations community, discuss why it is important to show respect for the community when they are studying it, as well as the First Nations' broader traditional territories. For example, remember they are real people living in a real community; avoid stereotyping; recognize differences in perspectives and worldviews.

 Blackline Master 6, page
109, *First Nations
Community Pocket Chart
Labels*

- Gather the following data as a class, or present the information to students. You may want to use Blackline Master 6, page 109, *First Nations Community Pocket Chart Labels*, as labels for a pocket chart by copying and enlarging them, and create corresponding cards for the local information. Then you can display and work with the information as the class learns about it.
 - Traditional Territories: Whose territory do we acknowledge? Why do we acknowledge traditional territories? (See Introduction, page 11.)
 - Location: where is the First Nations community located in relation to your school?
 - Names: what name or names is the community known by? Some communities have the proper name in the local language and also have an English name.
 - What First Nation do we/they belong to?
 - What Tribal or National Council we/they belong to?
 - What Language do we/they speak?
 - What language group do we/they belong to?
- Gather pictures and make a display of different parts of the community, such as significant buildings (school, community hall, smoke houses, clinic, administrative buildings). Note that in some communities certain buildings and events in the community may need permission to be photographed.
- There may be a video online that features the community.
 - For example, see *Hartley Bay*, <https://youtu.be/URmy7JVpD2c>. This is a student-made video showing a variety of aspects of the Gitga'at community of Hartley Bay.
- Find or make a digital slide show or video of scenes around the community. Depending on your location, this could be part of the culminating project described in Activity 6.

b. Identify Unique Characteristics of First Nations Communities.

Students gain an appreciation for the characteristics that make First Nations communities unique.

- Approaches to this activity will depend on your location. Some possible approaches to gathering information include the following:
 - Visit the First Nations government or Band Council office
 - Find the community on a satellite map such as Google maps or Apple maps. Students could draw sketch maps of the community.
 - Look at the local community's web site.
 - Find out about community events and celebrations, such as National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebrations, pow wows, canoe races, Slahal tournaments.
 - If available, show students a map of the local First Nations community to see what types of buildings are found there. If your school is not in that community, students can compare the buildings with those in their own

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community. Alternately, students can look at a map of another First Nations community. One good map is found in the Tsay Keh Dene community brochure, *Welcome to Tsay Keh Dene*, found online at the Tsay Keh Dene website, or link at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc901>

- Share books or stories that could illustrate some features of First Nations communities.
- Some characteristics that make First Nations communities unique are:
 - Most (but not all) people who live there belong to one First Nation and share ancestral ties.
 - Many people in the community are related.
 - The community is usually located in the traditional territories where their ancestors lived for hundreds or thousands of years.
 - Many communities are on First Nations (or Indian) Reserves, within the Nations' broader traditional territory.
 - First Nations communities have their own government.
 - Many communities have a First Nations government or Band Council office and other public buildings such as a school, community hall, a feast hall, a gym, a health clinic, and one or more churches.
 - First Nations have different kinds of leaders. For example, there are spiritual and cultural leaders as well as different kinds of political leaders.

c. The Importance of Elders

Students will build an awareness of the role of Elders in First Nations communities.

- Ask students if they know what the word “Elder” means. Students can share their ideas. You might ask, “How is Elder different from “elderly?”
 - Note that not all “Elders” like to be referred to as such. In some communities, knowledge-keepers is more appropriate. “Old People” is used just as respectfully in some communities as “Elders” is used in others. Some communities use a traditional word from their language, or the old people are referred to as Grandma or Grandpa, or Grandmothers and Grandfathers, regardless of familial relationship.
- If your school is in a First Nations community, or students have had the opportunity to work with Elders, students could discuss and record important teachings they may have learned. Alternatively, students could consider teachings from grandparents or other older people in their family.
- If possible, invite an Elder into the classroom, or visit them in an appropriate location. Before the visit, discuss why Elders are important. Talk about the need to be respectful and define the word respect. Have students prepare some questions for an Elder about what it means to be an Elder.

 **Cross-Curricular Connections**

- English Language Arts.
- Co-ordinate reading these books about Elders with your English Language Arts lessons.
 - Connect with the importance of oral communication

- Share one or more picture books or stories that are about Elders, or give an example of the roles Elders play. Suggestions include:
 - *I Know I am Precious and Sacred*. Debora Abood 2016.
 - *Lessons From Mother Earth*. Elaine McLeod, Groundwood 2002.
 - *A Day with Yayah*. Nicola Campbell, Tradewind Books 2018.
- Elders often share their knowledge orally, through stories, instructions or advice. In many communities they also are key to passing on the traditional First Nations language.
 - You could connect learning about Elders as leaders with the English Language Arts curriculum, and the topic of communicating orally.

2. Decision Makers

This activity introduces the idea of government and community leaders as important decision makers. It begins with a discussion of the concept of decision making, then leads into the roles that some people – leaders – have in making decisions about communities. It then asks students to think about what a government is.

a. What is a decision?

Students will explore the types of decisions we make in our lives, and how some decisions are more important than others. This could also be extended by discussing the potential positive and negative consequences of decisions.

- Ask students if they have ever made a decision. If they don't understand the word, ask if they have ever had to make a choice. For example, did they ever decide to play a game with other kids? Ask students to give other examples of decisions or choices they have made.
- Discuss with students who makes the decisions in their families. Ask questions such as, Who makes most of the decisions in your family? What decisions does your family make together? What decisions do you make on your own?
- Discuss who makes decisions around the home. Students can use Blackline Master 2, page 104, *Who Decides?* to identify who makes some decisions around home.
- Discuss who makes the decisions around the school. Ask questions such as:
 - What kind of decisions does the principal make?
 - What kind of decisions do teachers make?
 - What kind of decisions do students make?
 - Ask questions about other adults with roles at your school, such as playground supervisors or lunchroom monitors.
- Discuss what might happen when not everyone is going to like the decision that is made. Ask, How do you make decisions when you know some people are not going to like your decision?

 Blackline Master 2, page 104, *Who Decides?*

- Discuss the difference between big or important decisions and small or not so important decisions. Give students a number of examples of decisions, and ask them to decide if they are big or small decisions. Students could make a voting card with BIG on one side and SMALL on the other.
- As you read out the examples, they hold up the appropriate side of the card.
- Students could sit in a circle so everyone can see the cards.
- As students vote, discuss the different decisions. Who is making the decision? Who is affected by the decision? What could be the consequences of the decision?
- Here are some examples of different kinds of decisions:
 - What should I wear to school today?
 - My friend did something wrong. Should I tell the teacher?
 - Should the judge send the criminal to prison?
 - Who should my auntie vote for in the next election for Prime Minister?
 - What book should I pick from the library?
 - Should the city council allow people to build a 20 story building in my neighbourhood?
 - What should I have for a snack today?
 - Should the chief and council vote to build a new swimming pool for the community?
- Have students work in pairs or small groups to create their own examples of big and small decisions. They can share them with the class for further discussion.
- Have students think about what makes a big decision. Ask, how is a big decision different from a small decision?
 - Guide students to come to their own definition or list of characteristics of a big or significant decision. (For example, it impacts many people, the results are long lasting, usually made by people in position of power and leadership.)
- Students can work in groups to role play examples of a big decision and a small decision.
 - Depending on your class and time available, students could decide on one type of decision to act out, or develop a skit for each type.
 - Students can present one of their role plays to the rest of the class, and the class can tell if they are showing a small or big decision.

 **Formative Assessment Strategy**

Use the role play activity to assess students' understanding of different types of decisions

 **Cross-Curricular Connections**

Arts Education.
Focus on the Content Learning Standard:
• Personal and collective responsibility associated with creating, experiencing, or sharing in a safe learning environment

b. What is a Leader?

In this activity students will come to understand that there are many types of leaders. Some of these are political leaders, or leaders of governments.

- Ask students to tell you who they think makes the following decisions:
 - Who decides where to build a new road?
 - Who decides what to do if someone breaks the law?
 - Who decides who is going to be captain of the hockey team?
 - In a First Nations community, who decides when to hold a feast, potlatch, powwow, or other cultural event?

- Explain that we pick certain people to make important decisions for groups we belong to. People that have extra responsibilities to make decisions are usually called leaders.
 - Ask students to give some examples of leaders that they know about. Discuss some of the roles and responsibilities of the leaders that students suggest.
- Discuss the differences between formal leaders – people formally chosen for a leadership role – and informal leaders – people in a family or groups who lead by example.
- Create a list of types of leaders, or use the examples of leaders given on Blackline Master 3, page 105, *Leaders*. Older students can identify the groups that those leaders make decisions for.
- Students can classify the examples of leaders. You could work with the whole class, or have students work in small groups using the words on Blackline Master 3, *Leaders*. For example, some are of leaders of governments, some are leaders of community groups. Some are volunteers, some are paid.
- Ask questions such as:
 - Who are the most important decisions makers?
 - Are any leaders more important than others?
 - What makes a leader important?

 Blackline Master 3, page 105, *Leaders*

c. What is a Government?

Students build an awareness of the role governments play in societies.

- Ask students if they know what a government is. Students can suggest some words or ideas they know about governments.
 - Write the words and phrases on the board, or create a word wall.
- You could use Blackline Master 4, page 107, *What is a Government* to help guide students' thinking about the concept of government.
 - Provide students an opportunity to find or view books from the library that discuss various governments.
 - Students could work in pairs or small groups to answer the questions.
 - Students could take the Blackline Master home to get help from their families.
 - You could use the questions from the Blackline Master as discussion starters.
- Use the words listed on Blackline Master 5, page 108, *Government Word Sort* to consolidate students' learning about what a government is. Students can cut the words into cards and use them for a number of activities.
 - Work with a partner to identify words they know and words they don't know, then find out the meanings of words they aren't sure of.
 - Sort the words in one or more ways.
 - Pick two words and tell how they are connected.
 - Pick one word and act it out. Others can guess what word they are acting.
 - Make a crossword puzzle out of the words.

 Blackline Master 4, page 107, *What is a Government?*

 Blackline Master 5, page 108, *Government Word Sort*

 Formative Assessment Strategy
Use one of the word activities to assess students' understanding of the concept of government.

3. First Nations Governments

a. Local First Nations Governments

Students will become aware that First Nations communities have unique forms of government.

- Where possible, give students an opportunity to experience one or more aspects of local First Nations government in some way. For example:
 - Visit the local First Nations government office or treaty office if you are on or near a First Nations community.
 - Find a short video of a local hereditary leader or elected leader speaking about a topic, or a video of a feast or other public event where the leaders are introduced or speaking.
 - Arrange a classroom visit by a representative of a local band council, treaty government or ancestral government to visit the class.
 - View the website of the local First Nation. Depending on the design of the website and technological capabilities, students could do this independently or as a class.
- Discuss the two types of government systems many First Nations have. If you have already worked with Blackline Master 5, *Who are Our Leaders* (Activity 1c), you may already have discussed the two systems.
 - Read aloud or tell in your own words the text on Blackline Master 11, page 115, *Traditional Governments*, and Blackline Master 12, page 116, *Elected Governments*. Ask students to listen for the differences between the two types of government as you read.
 - After you read each section, have students recall the main points, and share verbally, write, or otherwise represent them.
 - Ask, why do you think there are two different types of governments?
- Students could use a Venn Diagram to record differences and similarities in the two types of government. They can use the graphic organizer on Blackline Master 7, page 110, *Two Forms of Government*.
- Explain or review what forms of government are found in local First Nations communities.
- Discuss the leaders in the two different governments. Traditional leaders are either hereditary (born into the position) or selected by consensus. Elected Chiefs and council are voted in by band members from their community.
 - Note that not all First Nation communities in BC may have traditional Chiefs now.
- Have students brainstorm questions they might ask a First Nations leader. Direct them to think about questions that relate to roles, responsibilities and how decisions are made.
 - If possible, arrange an interview with a leader. It may also be possible to select some questions and email a leader. (Make sure you arrange it with the leader first.)

 Blackline Master 11, page 115, *Traditional Governments*

 Blackline Master 12, page 116, *Elected Governments*

 Blackline Master 7, page 110, *Two Forms of First Nations Government*

b. Roles and Responsibilities of First Nations Governments

Students consolidate their understanding of local First Nations governments.

- If you have already discussed the governments in the local First Nations communities in earlier sections, you may want to review the information now.
- Have students research more about how the local First Nations government looks after the community. Ask them to find out what services the Band Council or other government provides to the people.
 - If your school is within a First Nations community, they may be able to tour the Band Council office to see the different departments.
 - Most First Nations have extensive websites that detail the various departments and services provided.
- Students can work in groups using a placemat activity to illustrate the roles and responsibilities of the Band Council. Students can create their own graphic organizer by folding a piece of paper into four, or they could use Blackline Master 8, page 112, *Band Council Placemat Activity*, as a template. Here are some sample responses:
 - Who are they? Chief Councillor, Councillors; they are members of the First Nations community.
 - Who do they serve? They serve the people who are members of the First Nations Band; they serve the citizens of the First Nations community; they serve the people who live in the reserve community and band members who live away from the community.
 - How do they get elected? They volunteer to run for council; eligible voters use a secret ballot to vote for the people they want; the people with the majority of votes are elected to the position.
- Students can work in groups to show the different services that the government provides. You may want each group to take one service, and find out as much as they can about it.
 - Students can create charts, pictures, diagrams or posters to illustrate the services and departments.
 - Services that Band Councils and other First Nations governments typically provide include the following:
 - Water and sewage systems
 - Housing
 - Education
 - Language and Culture support
 - Land and Resources management
 - Health
 - Social Assistance
 - Family Development
 - Economic Development (most communities run their own businesses)
 - Treaty negotiations
 - Police (some First Nations have their own police service)

 Blackline Master 8, page 112, *Band Council Placemat Activity*

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- Ask students to think about what types of services the local government does not provide. Discuss which governments do provide those services. (For example, the post office is a service run by the federal government. The provincial government is responsible for driver's licenses.)
- Students can find the similarities and differences between two types of local government, First Nations and municipal. They can investigate the services provided by the local town or city where you live, in the same way that they researched the First Nations community.
 - Students can see which services are similar to those in the First Nations community, and which are different.
 - Have students use a T-Chart to compare the services and responsibilities of First Nations and the local municipal governments.

4. The Land and Government

Students build on their understandings of the connections of First Peoples and the land, and see how traditional governance was in a large part concerned with managing the land and its resources. Then they learn about changes brought about by colonization through the Indian Act and other policies.

a. Our Relationship with the Land

Students will build an awareness of what is meant by “The Land” and explore at a personal level ways that the Land is important.

- Ask students to think about the question, Why is the Land important? If necessary, discuss what we mean by the Land. For example, it includes the ground, the air, the water, and all the plants and animals that live on the earth. You may want to explain that there are similar words we can use, such as the Earth, or nature.
 - If possible, find words in the local First Nations language that refer to the land.
 - Students can work in groups or as a whole class to think of as many answers as they can to the question. Students can record their ideas in words and pictures, or you can record the ideas on the board.
- Have students pick two or three of the most important reasons why the land is important. They can draw a picture to illustrate the important reasons.
- Students can use the sentence frames on Blackline Master 9, page 113, *The Land Is Important Because...*, to give reasons why the land is important. Students could illustrate one or more of their reasons.
- Students can go on a nature walk to experience some of the local aspects of the natural world. Ask them to reflect on how they feel when they are walking in nature.

 Blackline Master 9,
page 113, *The Land Is
Important Because...*

b. First Peoples Relationship with the Land

Build on students' responses from the previous activity to develop an awareness of the importance of the land for First Nations in the past, present and future.

- Share a story with students that illustrates the connections that First Peoples have with the land. Some suggested stories include:
 - *Lessons From Mother Earth* (Elaine McLeod, Groundwood 2002)
 - *A Day with Yayah* (Nicola Campbell, Tradewind Books 2018)
 - From the Mountains to the Sea series: *We Live Here* and *We are a Community* (Brenda Boreham and Terri Mack, Strong Nations 2015)
- Discuss or explain to students that in the past, First Nations communities depended on the land around them to for everything they needed to live. Ask, “How would your life be different if you couldn’t go to the store to buy your food or clothes?”
- Ask students to imagine that they had to get everything they needed from the land around them. Would they be able to survive? What types of things would they need to know? What would they need to do?

c. Making Sure the Land is Cared For

These activities lead students to understand the connection between caring for the land and how people govern themselves.

- Read or tell a story that teaches a lesson about the importance of taking care of the land. Here are some examples:
 - *Orca Chief* (Roy Henry Vickers and Robert Budd, Harbour Publishing, 2015) Four Kitkatla (Gitxaala) men go on a fishing trip, disturb the Orca or Killer Whale Chief whose village is under the sea, and mistreat one of the sea creatures. The Chief brings the men down to his undersea house and he is angry with them for not showing respect to the creatures of the sea. However, he teaches the humans about the many food resources to be found in the sea. The humans learn and take their knowledge back to their people. Key concepts for this topic conveyed in the narrative include:
 - Humans must show respect for the natural world, the land, or specifically in this case the animals of the sea. The men broke the laws of respecting the natural world.
 - The importance of the social organization with the chief as leader, mirrored in the animal world.
 - The qualities of the Orca Chief reflect the good qualities of a human chief: honest, gives advice, expects respect, his kind, teaches and passes on knowledge.
 - *Peace Dancer* (Roy Henry Vickers and Robert Budd. Harbour Publishing 2016.)
 - When children from the Tsimshian village of Kitkatla mistreat a crow, a great flood covers the Earth. The villagers tie themselves to the top of Anchor Mountain and promise to teach their children to value all

life. When the water recedes the villagers appoint a chief to perform the Peace Dance at every feast to pass on the story of the flood and the importance of respect.

- “When the Volcano Erupted,” told by Amelia Morven, Nisga’a Elder. This story tells of how children mistreated the salmon, which resulted in the eruption of a volcano and the destruction of many people and villages. Found in *First Nations Journey of Justice*, Grade 5, pages 143-146. Online at <https://bit.ly/2CQCO1H>.
- Students can use Blackline Master 10, page 114, *First Nations Laws and the Land*, to learn more about the connection between the land and ancestral governments. You may want to make individual copies for students to read independently, or project the text for the whole class to read.
 - Read with students, or have them read independently the text on Blackline Master 10. Ask, “What does the text say has stayed the same over time?” (First Nations have always had governments that look after the land.)
- Discuss the laws that are listed on Blackline Master 10. (Make sure students understand that these aren’t the only laws that First Nations had in the past. These are some general laws followed by most First Nations.)
- Ask students to suggest why these are important laws for looking after the land. Students can discuss each point as a class or in small groups to explain why they are important. Some suggested reasons why these laws are important are:
 - *Thank the plants and animals when you take them for food:* This shows respect for the plants and animals that give their lives so people can survive.
 - *Only take what you need:* This ensures sustainability of resources; it makes sure that people don’t take too much, so that there is enough for other people, and enough for the future.
 - *Share your food with others:* This makes sure everyone in the community has enough to eat, even if they aren’t able to hunt, fish or gather berries.
 - *Only take food from your own land:* makes sure that there are enough resources to go around, that all the resources of the land are used wisely, and that someone doesn’t take too much.
- To demonstrate their understandings of the laws, ask students to illustrate one or more of the four laws.
 - Students can choose one of the laws of the land to illustrate on their own.
 - Students can work in groups to illustrate all four.

 Blackline Master 10, page 114, *First Nations Laws and the Land*

 **Formative Assessment**
Use students’ illustrations to gauge the level of understanding of the relationships of First Nations with the land.

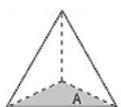
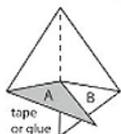
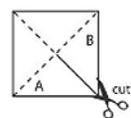
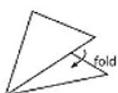
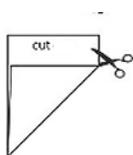
d. Laws For Taking Care Of Each Other

Students understand that some laws in the past were about how people treated each other.

- Explain that some rules and laws are about how people take care of each other. Discuss what written or unwritten rules there are in your school and class for people respecting each other. Ask what the consequences are for breaking the rules.

 *Little Bear's Vision Quest*
Dianne Silvey, Greater
Victoria School District, 1995

- Explain that in the past in First Nations communities, if a person didn't respect others they were usually dealt with in their family. Sometimes Elders would be called on to guide them. Sometimes, however, if a person did something seriously wrong, they were banished or sent away from the community.
- Read with students *Little Bear's Vision Quest* (Dianne Silvey, Greater Victoria School District, 1995) which illustrates a character who doesn't respect his friends and is banished until he learns to change his ways.
 - This book can be used for different purposes. It is used in an activity about ancestral laws, and it also can be used to discuss themes of community and decision making. In this story Little Bear is mean and selfish with all his friends. Grandfather Bear, as an Elder, banishes him to an island until he learns to behave differently.
 - Grandfather Bear represents the leader in the community. He's the Elder. He hears that his grandson, Little Bear is being mean to his animal friends so he banishes Little Bear to an island. He reminds him to practice some of the teachings such as brushing off in the morning by the ocean.
 - It takes Little Bear some time to learn that his words hurt people and how mean he has been. Only until the second visit from Sister Whale does Little Bear reflect on his bad ways.
 - The community welcomes him back and Little Bear gains the understanding of forgiveness and how being part of a community means you need to be kind to one another.
 - The story implies that there are unwritten laws of how we behave with each other. It also illustrates how Elders were, and still are, authorities about a community's laws.
 - The punishment Little Bear received was banishment, a common form of enforcement of laws in Indigenous societies, although in real situations it would have involved a more serious breach than being mean to your friends.
- After reading, discuss the book with questions such as:
 - How do you think Grandfather Bear made the decision to banish Little Bear?
 - How do you think Sister Whale knew it was time for Little Bear to return?
 - These decisions require thinking. What criteria do you think they used to make these important decisions?
 - Why is it important that people look out for each other?
 - How does being selfish affect other people?
- Students represent main sections of the story through a hands-on activity. One suggestion is to make a four-corner diorama (also known as pyramid diorama).
 - Students can work in groups to decide on four important parts of the story. They will represent them by creating backgrounds and cutting out figures.
 - Steps in making the four-corner diorama. For detailed construction directions see craft websites such as <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc921>



Making a triarma

- Make 4 triaramas. See diagram. Cut a piece of 8.5 x 11 paper into a square. Cut on one of the diagonal fold marks from the corner to the centre. Fold to make a pyramid by overlapping two sides next to the cut. Glue or tape them together.
- Glue four triaramas back to back.
- Demonstrate the steps to students and encourage them to plan ahead when making their dioramas. They may want to draw and colour the backgrounds before they glue the pieces together.

5. Governments Change Over Time

a. How Did First Nations Governments Work in the Past?

Students will be able to identify some features of traditional governance systems, and connect them with caring for the land and each other.

- Ask students if they think all First Nations in BC had the same kind of government in the past. Ask them to give reasons why or why not. (Guide students to an understanding of the diversity of BC First Nations whose traditional territories are in a many different parts of the province. The land is very different from one place to another. This diversity is reflected in the diversity of governing systems.)
- Review or read with students Blackline Master 11, page 115, *Ancestral Governments*. Ask students to listen for two different ways that First Nations choose their leaders. (Some are hereditary and the title is inherited. Some are chosen by the whole community by consensus.)
- Recall with students that First Nations leaders are often called Chiefs in English. However, every First Nation has its own words for chief and other leaders. Find the local words used for different leadership roles, such as chief, advisors, councilors, watchmen.
 - If possible, work with a local First Nations language teacher to develop a list of words related to governance in the local First Nations language.

 Blackline Master 11, page 115, *Ancestral Governments*

b. Public Witnesses: Feasts and Potlatches

Students will understand that the feast, potlatch or other public gathering was an important part of traditional governance. It was the place that important events took place that were witnessed by the whole community. Feasts and potlatches are still important today.

- Give students opportunities to read or listen to one or more books that describe a feast or potlatch. Some suggested resources are:
 - *Cheryl Bibalats: Cheryl's Potlatch*. Sheila Thompson. Yinka Dene Language Institute, 1991.
 - *Granny and I Get Traditional Names*. Celestine Aleck. Strong Stories: Coast Salish Series.

 **Cross-Curricular Connections**
See the Primary unit “The Spirit of Celebration” for ways to integrate feasts and potlatches into other curricular areas. See *In Our Own Words*, pages 99-106 (FNESC 2012) <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc929>

- *Planning the Feast*. Donna Klockars. Strong Readers series.
- *Potlatch*. Queen Charlotte Island Readers. Dawn Adams, 1985.
- *Potlatch: A Tsimshian Celebration*. Dianne Hoyt Smith, 1997.
- Students could work in groups to use one book to find out special features of a feast or potlatch that are described in the book. They could find out why the feast is held, how people prepare for it, and what happens at the event.
- Have students record what evidence they found that shows that the feast or potlatch is used as a system of government.

c. The Indian Act Changes the Government

Students can begin to understand how colonization impacted traditional governance systems of Indigenous people in Canada.

- Read with students Blackline Master 12, page 116, *Elected Governments*. Ask students to listen for two main types of elected governments First Nations communities have today (Band Council or Treaty).
- Explain that after Canada became a country, the government passed special laws that controlled the lives of First Peoples, called the Indian Act.
 - Depending on your students, you may want to discuss more about the reasons for the Indian Act, but it is probably best to follow the lead of the students and their questions about the Indian Act.
 - Explain that one of the big changes the Indian Act made was the change in the way the government worked in First Nations communities.
- Read the picture book *The Secret of the Dance* to help students understand how changes brought about by the Indian Act affected First Nations. It tells of the time when holding potlatches and wearing regalia were forbidden, from the point of view of a young boy.
- Explain that under the Indian Act, First Nations lost control of most of their territories. They were forced to live on small pieces of land called Indian Reserves. They lost control of most of their territories. You can ask students how they would feel about the idea of a group of people being forced off their lands.

 Blackline Master 12, page 116, *Elected Governments*

 *Secret of the Dance* by Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow. Orca Books, 2006

6. First Nations Community Project

Students can work together to create a project about a local First Nations community. Decide if groups will each create their own project, or if they will each take one section of a whole-class project.

- Discuss how a project about the community will reflect what they have learned about governance. Ask, What questions do we have about the community's governance? What more do we need to find out about how the community works?
- Have students decide on what form the final product will take. For example, it could be a movie, book, blog, or gallery display.