

Unit 2

First Nations Governance Over Time

Grades 4-6

Overview

In the Intermediate grades students begin to link the consequences of past actions with present day circumstances. Specifically, they build understandings of the impacts of colonialism. In this unit the focus is on understanding traditional laws and government systems, and the impacts on them by colonialism and Euro-Canadian settlement. The topics can be made part of a larger examination of colonization.

Essential Understandings

- First Nations communities have unique systems of governance.
- First Nations government systems have always been closely tied to land and resources.
- Colonial laws like the Indian Act impacted how First Nations were able to govern themselves, their lands and resources.
- Today First Nations are rebuilding their own systems of government and resuming management of lands and resources in their traditional territories.

Guiding Questions

- What forms did traditional laws and governance systems take?
- What are the impacts of colonialism on the ways that First Nations communities govern today?
- What different perspectives did First Nations and settlers have about land ownership?
- How does government operate in BC First Nations communities today?
- In what ways are BC First Nations achieving self-government and increasing control of their land and resources today?

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Relevant BC Learning Standards for Social Studies 4-6

Grade	Content Standard	Sample Topics (from Curriculum)	Curricular Competencies
4 First Peoples and European Contact	The impact of colonization on First Peoples societies in British Columbia and Canada	More complex political systems, loss of territory, key events e.g. Indian Act, potlatch ban, reserve system, residential schools, treaties	Track the positive and negative effects of key events in BC's development on First Peoples (Cause and Consequence) Identify key events and issues in First Peoples rights and interactions with early governments in Canada (Ethical Judgement)
	The history of the local community and of local First Peoples communities		
5 Canadian Issues and Governance	Past discriminatory government policies and actions	Indian Act; ethnic minorities denied the vote	Identify and assess the significance of individuals who have contributed to the development of Canada's identity in various areas (Significance)
	Levels of government, their main functions, and sources of funding	Local First Nations leaders	Indian Act (Ethical Judgement)
	Participation and representation in Canada's system of government	First Peoples governance	
	First Peoples land ownership and use	Treaties, land claims disputes. How do First Peoples balance economic development with traditional uses of the land?	
6 Global Issues and Governance	Global poverty and inequality issues, including class structure and gender	Treatment of Indigenous people	Explain the historical basis of selected contemporary issues
	Different systems of government	Government decision-making structures and forms of rule Indigenous governance	
	Economic policies and resource management, including effects on Indigenous peoples	How should decisions about economic policy and resource management be made?	
	Media technologies and coverage of current events	How does the media influence public perceptions of major events?	

Resources

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

Blackline Masters

1. First Nations Governance Profile
9. The Land Is Important Because...
13. First Nations Governments
14. Contemporary Forms of First Nations Government
15. Ancestral Government Sentences
16. Land and Culture
17. Culture Tree
18. Stewardship Acrostic
19. Families, Clans and the Land
20. Language, Story and the Land
21. Traditional Laws and Governance
22. The Indian Act and the Indian Agent
23. Indian Act Word Sorter
25. Changes to Control of Lands and Resources
28. Self-Government Agreements
30. Consensus Activity
32. Core Institutions of Government
33. Goals of Self-Government

Recommended Resources

- Collection of resources about local First Nations communities, such as pictures, videos, maps of territories. Also connections with local Elders, knowledge-keepers and community members involved in local government.
- Bouchard, David and Roy Henry Vickers, R. *The Elders Are Watching*. Tofino, BC: Eagle Dancer Enterprises, 1993.
- *The Elders are Watching*. Roy Henry Vickers and David Bouchard. Big Raven, 2011. 9.32 min. <https://youtu.be/4VLBfOqS4j4>
- Silvey, Dianne. *Little Bear's Vision Quest*. Greater Victoria School District. 1995.
- *People of the Land : Legends of the Four Host First Nations*, Theytus Books, 2009.

Feasts and Potlatch resources

- Aleck, Celestine. *Granny and I Get Traditional Names* Strong Stories, Coast Salish Series. Strong Nations Publishing Inc. 2018.
- Carrier Sekani Family Services. *Culture and Diversity*. PDF booklet, 7 pages. <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc923>
- Collison, Pansy. *Haida Eagle Treasures*. Brush Education Inc. 2017. See "Traditions and Culture," pages 192-201.

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- Klockars, Donna. *Planning the Feast*. Strong Readers series, Strong Nations 2013.
- Nelson, Nella. *Welcome Family and Friends to Our Bighouse. Kwakwaka'wakw Potlatch*. Nella Nelson. Union Bay BC: Raven Publishing, 2017.

Websites

- Coast Salish Territory in the Post-Contact Era. Map on the *Sq'ewlets: A Coast Salish Community in the Fraser Valley* website, linked at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc906>.
- *First Nations A-Z Listing*. British Columbia Government website, online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc944>.
- *Húyat Our Voices, Our Land*. <http://www.hauyat.ca>
- Union of BC Indian Chiefs digital collection, Our Homes Are Bleeding. Online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc946>. Map of Indian Agencies at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc945>
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for Indigenous Adolescents. <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc908>.
- "What Does Traditional Consensus Decision Making Mean?" on the Indigenous Corporate Training website, at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc903>.

Additional Resources

- Aboriginal Education SD 52. *Pt'saan: Totem Poles*.
- Aboriginal Education SD 52. *Suwilaayksm Dzepk: Learning About Crests*.
- Collison, Pansy. "The Haida Chief Who Built an Island." (Readers' Theatre). *Haida Eagle Treasures*. Brush Education Inc. 2017.
- Car and Gas Analogy Activity, in *The Indian Act of 1876 was not Part of Treaty* (Saskatchewan 2008), pages 119 to 122. <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc907>
- FNESC. *Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guide 5*. FNESC 2015. <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc924>.
- T'smsyen Nation. *Persistence and Change*. First Nations Education Services, SD 52, Prince Rupert. 2005

Outline of Activities

1. Inquiry into First Nations Governance
 - a. Building background knowledge: identifying First Nations Governments
 - b. Forging an inquiry question
 - c. Gathering information
 - d. Processing information
 - e. Creating and sharing a product
2. Local First Nations Governance Systems
 - a. What is Governance?
 - b. What are some examples of First Nations governments?
 - c. Local First Nations Government
3. Traditional Governance and the Land
 - a. What do you already know?
 - b. Why did people have government in the past?
 - c. Stewardship
 - d. Families, Clans and Stewardship of the Land
 - e. Language, story, and the land
 - f. Traditional Governments
 - g. Consensus decision-making
 - h. Laws of the Feast Hall
4. The Impacts of Colonization
 - a. Colonialism and the Indian Act
 - b. Changes to control of Lands and Resources
 - c. Reserves
 - d. Impacts of colonization and the Indian Act
5. First Nations Governments Today
 - A. What is self-governance?
 - b. Self-determination
 - c. What does self-government look like?

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.

1. Inquiry into First Nations Governance

The topic of First Nations Governance can be studied as an inquiry project. This will probably work best in schools that are part of, or closely associated with, a First Nations community, where students have local knowledge and resources to draw from. Otherwise, ensure that students have a variety of resources available to them.

Here is one approach to engaging students in an inquiry into First Nations Governance. It can be adapted or you can develop your own inquiry model.

a. Building Background Knowledge: Identifying First Nations Governments

Explain to students that they are going to investigate how First Nations governance has changed over time, with a focus on the local First Nations community.

- Decide if students will work individually or in groups. This could be your decision, or it could be a class decision.
- Help students build a base of understanding about the systems of government that operate in the local First Nations community. They should be able to identify local governance organizations, such as traditional governments, Band Council or treaty-based governments, and Tribal Councils.
 - If it hasn't been done already, work with students to complete the local First Nations community profile on Blackline Master 1. If it has, present the information or have students review it.
 - Students can read the text on Blackline Master 13, page 117, *First Nations Governments*, which outlines the different types of governments. (Blackline Masters 11 and 12 provide similar information at an easier reading level.)
 - Emphasize the differences in how the leaders and members of governments are chosen. In Band Councils and treaty-based governments they are elected; in some forms of traditional governance, people inherit their positions; in others the community decides by consensus.
- As students work through their inquiry, you can bring in some aspects of Suggested Activities 2 to 5, as appropriate.

 Blackline Master 13,
page 117, *First Nations
Government*

b. Forging an Inquiry Question

Depending on the age and abilities of your students, you may want to suggest a question for inquiry, develop one as a class, or have students or groups develop their own questions.

- Decide on which model of Inquiry you want students to use: Structured, Guided or Open.
 - If you use the Structured model, you will provide students with the inquiry question.
- Remind students of the main topic: How First Nations governments have changed over time. Where possible, focus on the local First Nation.
- Have students use a learning strategy such as Know-Wonder-Learn to identify what they know about governments in the local First Nations community, and what areas they have questions about.
- Discuss with class some possible questions that they can investigate.
 - Talk about ways to create useful inquiry questions, and give some examples.
 - Suggest students consider some of the Social Studies Curricular Competencies to help create a question (such as cause and consequence, perspective, significance).
 - Some examples include:
 - How have the responsibilities of a First Nations leaders such as a Chief changed over time?
 - Why did the Canadian government want all First Nations to have the same elected form of government?
 - How has control over First Nations land changed?
 - How or why have traditional forms of government continued in many First Nations communities?
 - In what ways are First Nations achieving self-government today?
- Students work in groups or as a class then decide on their question for inquiry.

For more information about Inquiry-based learning and the different models of inquiry, see the Introduction, page 22.

Features of Good Inquiry Questions

- open-ended, do not have a simple or factual answer
- make us think about big ideas
- help us look at ideas in new ways
- require critical, creative and reflective thinking
- require research to find supporting evidence

c. Gathering Information

Students use a variety of sources to gather information to find answers to their question.

- Discuss with students the types of information that can be collected, for example:
 - traditional stories, historical events
 - stories and memories of recent events
 - words and sentences in the local First Nations language
 - primary source evidence such as interviews (conducted by students or written) or websites that contain original documents
 - data, such as statistics, graphs, charts
 - photographs

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- Discuss with students possible sources of information. Some sources include:
 - interviewing members of the local First Nations government
 - talking with family members or members of the community
 - the website of the local First Nation
 - cultural centres
 - textbooks and other published books
- Have students make a plan of how they will gather information. Ask questions such as, Where will you go first? How will you divide up the research tasks?
- Students should record where they found their information so someone else could find it again.
- As students gather information, have them stop and reflect on what they have learned, and what new questions they might have.

d. Processing Information

Students will organize their information and make connections and inferences.

- Discuss with students ways of organizing their information, such as note taking or graphic organizers. This could be an opportunity to teach skills such as note taking and summarizing.
- Students will identify the big ideas or the important points in each of the sources.
- Guide students in ways to extract information from statistical tables, graphs and charts.
- Students should analyse their sources for points of view, accuracy and reliability.
- Have students check over their information to see if there are any topics that have been missed, or need further research.

e. Creating and Sharing a Product

Students will revise and edit their information, then and plan and create a product to present their inquiry findings.

- Students should decide on an audience for their product, and design an appropriate way of communicating information to that audience. For example, it could be for an Elders or Seniors group, for a younger class in your school, or for the general public on a website or YouTube.
- Students should make sure the product communicates findings related to their inquiry question and also the broader topic of "Change in First Nations Governance over time."
- Students should create a first draft of their product, then after review by you and other class members, complete a final product.



Formative Assessment Strategy

Use peer and teacher assessments to provide feedback to students about their projects.

2. Local First Nations Governance Systems

Students will build an awareness of local First Nations communities and their governance systems. How you approach this will very much depend on the location of your school and what relationship there exists 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 using Blackline Master 1, First Nations Governance Profile.

a. What is Governance?

Ensure that students have an understanding of the meaning of governance and the roles that governments play in our lives.

- Assess your students' understanding of what a government is, and what is meant by governance. Review or teach the basic concepts as necessary.
 - In Grade 4, you could use some of the ideas in Activity 2, Decision Makers, in Unit 1, page 32.
 - In Grade 5 and 6, these activities will probably dovetail with the general study of government outlined in the Content Standards.

 **Unit Links**
See Unit 1 Activity 2, Decision Makers, page 32

b. What are Some Examples of First Nations Governments?

Students will build on their prior knowledge to become familiar with the names and functions of various forms of First Nations governance systems.

- Students can use Blackline Master 13, page 117, *First Nations Governments*, to learn about the two main types of systems, the traditional systems and more recent elected systems.
- Identify local governance organizations, such as hereditary or other traditional forms of government, the elected Band Council, hereditary bodies, treaty-based governments, and Tribal Council organizations.
 - Students can use Blackline Master 14, page 118, *Contemporary First Nations Governments* to record information about the different bodies.

 Blackline Master 13, page 117, *First Nations Governments*

 Blackline Master 14, page 118, *Contemporary First Nations Governments*

c. Local First Nations Government

Determine what you and the students know about the local First Nations communities and their governance systems. Build on the students' prior knowledge to learn about how the local government operates. Use the Local First Nations Community profile, Blackline Master 1.

- Gather pictures and make a display of different parts of the community, such as significant buildings (school, community hall, smoke houses, clinic, administrative buildings.)
- There may be a video online that features the community or First Nation.

 Blackline Master 1, page 103, *First Nations Governance Profile*

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- Find or make a digital slide show or video of scenes around the community. Depending on your location, this could be turned into a class project.
- Where possible, give students an opportunity to experience one or more aspects of local First Nations government. For example:
 - Visit the local band 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 ceremony where the leaders are presented 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.
- Have students find out what kinds programs and services the community's government provides. For example, many local First Nations governments have departments of Education, Health, Housing, Economic Development, Lands and Resources and Treaty. Some have their own police force.
 - Students can refer to the Nation's website to see the types of services offered, and how these are delivered to the citizens.
- Have students find out the role of the traditional laws and government in the modern community. For example, are there hereditary leaders that advise the Band Council? What role do Elders and Matriarchs play?
- Have students work in groups to explain the many branches of a local First Nations government. Encourage them to use illustrations or photos where possible. Groups can decide on a format, such as a web, poster, flow chart, digital slide show or booklet.

3. Traditional Governance and the Land

Students will be able to understand the connections between traditional government systems and the land and territories of local First Nations communities.

a. What Do You Already Know?

Assess what understandings you and students have about traditional governance systems. Ask a question such as, What were First Nations governments like before colonization?

- Refer to the Local First Nations Governance profile, Blackline Master 1 to learn or review the information about local ancestral forms of government and relevant words from the First Nations language.
- Students could use Blackline Master 15, page 120, *Ancestral Government Sentences*, to help identify what they know. These cards can be used for a number of different activities:
 - Create sentences using one, two or three of the words from the grid.
 - Pick a column or a row and write a sentence that illustrates the connections between the three words.
 - Work in pairs or groups. Cut out the words into individual cards. One person turns over two words and explains the relationship between them.
 - In pairs, have students identify words they know and words they don't know. After they discuss possible meanings, discuss with the rest of the class to find out which words no one knows.
- Students can revisit this activity later in the unit to assess how much they have learned.

 Blackline Master 15, page 120, *Ancestral Government Sentences*

 **Formative Assessment**
Use student responses to the Ancestral Government Sentences activity to assess their understanding of important features of Ancestral government

b. Why Did People Have Government in the Past?

- Have students read the quote from Ray Warden, a Ktunaxa elder on Blackline Master 16, page 121, *Land and Culture*. Make sure students understand the ideas in the quote, especially the idea of culture. (See the next bullet point.) The quote comes from the video Ktunaxa Nation: Building from their vision, starting at the 5 min 25 sec. mark. <https://bit.ly/2CSjD7N>

What I was told from an Elder at one time,
First there needs to be land.
When there is land it allows people to be there.
When there is land and people then it becomes a culture;
A culture forms out of that.
When you have land, people and culture,
You'll need a way of governing yourself.

- What is culture? Students can review or build on their understanding of what "culture" is. You may want to explain that all people form societies which develop unique cultures, and the people can identify with different cultures.

 Blackline Master 16, page 121, *Land and Culture*

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 Blackline Master 17,
page 122, *Culture Tree*

 **Formative Assessment**
Use this illustrating activity to assess how well students understand the relationships between the land and government in First Nations societies, and guide your instruction in the following activities.

- Have students work in groups to brainstorm what culture means. They could write or draw ideas on a piece of chart paper.
 - Suggest they think about questions such as: What do people in the culture do? Why do they do it? How do they feel about what they do?
- Students can create a "culture tree" like that shown on Blackline Master 17, page 122, *Culture Tree*. They could use the graphic organizer or make their own tree. Discuss what some features of cultures are (the leaves), and what might be the source or roots of the culture.
 - Students can create a tree for a specific culture, such as your classroom culture, their family cultural, Canadian culture, or a sports culture such as hockey or basketball.
 - Some aspects of culture include: ceremonies, laws, beliefs, customs, traditions, ways of life, religion, languages, sports, foods, hobbies, rituals, transportation, holidays, dress, art, music, stories, clothing.
- Have students write a definition of culture in their own words. Then have them compare their definition with definitions found on the Internet or in a dictionary.
- Students could create a drawing or a collage to illustrate the connections between the four elements mentioned: land, people, culture and government.
- Ask students to suggest why First Nations in the past needed to have a government. Students will likely respond in a variety of ways, which the class can discuss.
 - One of the important understandings is for students to recognize that all human societies or cultures develop rules or laws that help their members live and work together.
 - If students mention land and resource management, guide the discussion to introduce the next activity, Stewardship.

c. Stewardship

Students build an understanding of the concept of stewardship of the land, and the First Nations worldviews that people have a responsibility to care for the land.

 *The Elders are Watching*
by David Bouchard and
Roy Henry Vickers
Video:
<https://youtu.be/4VLBfOqS4j4>

- Present *The Elders are Watching* by David Bouchard and Roy Henry Vickers to the students. It is available as a book and as a video. It expresses a message from First Nations Elders or Ancestors to people who have broken their promises of taking care of the land. You may want to read the book to the class, or show the video which combines the text, paintings and photographs.
 - The book has two introductory sections, Thoughts, by Vickers, and Whispers, by Bouchard. The main part of the book is the poem by Bouchard with paintings by Vickers.
 - Note that the word *Ya-A* or *ya-aa* is the Sm'algyax (Ts'msyen language) for Grandfather.
- Before students listen or view the story, ask them to listen for what the Elders see as they are watching.

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- Discuss the story using questions such as:
 - What is the main idea you got from this story?
 - In the repeated phrase, "They told me to tell you the time has come" who do you think is meant by "they," "me" and "you"? Possible responses could be, they: the First Nations ancestors (referred to as Elders); me: a representative or speaker for the Elders (note that the Speaker is an important role in most First Nations traditional governance systems; a person is appointed and trained to speak on behalf of the chief); you: people or humanity.
 - What does "the time has come" refer to? What type of action is needed?
- Students can consider their personal connections with the land.
 - Ask students to reflect on *The Elders are Watching*. Ask questions such as:
 - What was one thing that impressed you the most?
 - What ideas did it make you think of?
 - What feelings did you have as you listened to the story?
 - Students could respond in a variety of formats, such as an illustration, a poem, a collage, a letter to the Elders, or a review of the book/video.
 - Students can use the sentences frames on Blackline Master 9, page 113, *The Land Is Important Because...* to consider ways that the land is important to them.
- Introduce or review the word *stewardship*. Ask students if they have heard of the word, or if they know what it means.
 - Have students find the dictionary meaning of stewardship. In general terms, it means taking care of something that you have the responsibility for managing or looking after. It can be applied to other topics, but it is often used in relation to environmental stewardship.
 - Discuss what stewardship means in terms of general First Nations worldviews. Ask, what connections have First Nations always had with the land? For example, First Nations view all things as interconnected, all things in the universe are related. It is the responsibility of people to give back to the land in exchange for the gifts given by the land.
- Discuss why stewardship of the land was important for the lives of First Nations in the past and today.
 - Ask how First Nations depended on the land and its resources in the past. Ask what might happen if they did not look after the land and resources?
 - For example, people depended on the resources for their food. If they took too much or didn't take care of it properly, they would starve. So would their children and grandchildren.
 - People also depended on the land spiritually, as their cultures and oral traditions were built on their relationships with the land.
 - If possible, find a statement by a local First Nation related to the reasons or the important of being stewards of the land.
- Students can use Blackline Master 18, page 124, *Stewardship Acrostic*, to think more about what stewardship means. They can work in pairs to create

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

 Blackline Master 18,
page 124, *Stewardship
Acrostic*



Formative Assessment Strategy

Use student responses to the Stewardship Acrostic to assess their understanding of the concept of Stewardship from a First Nations perspective

phrases or sentences that begin with each letter of the word and relate to the idea of stewardship, or caring for the land for future generations. The pairs can share their acrostics with the rest of the class.

d. Families, Clans and Taking Care of the Land

Students will build an understanding of the significance of the family, House Group and Clan to First Nations concepts of land ownership.

- Students can use the text material provided on Blackline Master 19, page 126, *Families, Clans and the Land*, to build an understanding of the links between the family or clan and traditional land ownership practices.
 - Make copies of the text, or read it aloud to students.
- Discuss the role of Elders in a family. Ask how people of different ages living together could help each other. (For example, families have a range of ages, so the older people can teach younger people; younger adults can take care of the older family members.)
 - Explain that Elders have knowledge and wisdom; they give advice and pass on their knowledge to younger generations.
- If local First Nations have the Clan system, discuss what the Clans are. If possible, invite Elders or other knowledge-keepers to explain the role of Clans.
 - Gather pictures of Clan crests represented in items such as regalia, masks, poles and other forms.
- Students can research examples of how First Nations organize their lands and territories through the family, House Group or Clans. Here are a number of examples:
 - Gitxsan. The Gitxsan live in the Upper Skeena River region. Their social organization is highly organized and the territories are held by a large number of Wilp or House Groups.
 - Go to the About section of the Gitxsan Nation website, <http://www.gitxsan.com/about/our-way/>.
 - Students can go to the links for each of the three sections under the title "Our Way": The Wilp (House groups); Society; and Traditional System to learn about how House Groups form the organization of land ownership.
 - Students can view a map of Gitxsan territory that shows the lands for each of the Wilp or House Groups. Follow the links Our Land>Territory>Maps, or directly link here: <https://bit.ly/2PXhJpR>.
 - This map shows the entire territories of the Gitxsan, and the individual territories of the Wilp or House Group.
 - The names of the Wilp or House groups are shown in each of the regions on the map. The legend at the bottom lists each Wilp and the name of its head chief as they were in 2007.
 - Students should note that all land within the Nation's traditional territories are covered by House Groups who are responsible for taking care of them. There are no places that are not part of a House Group.

 **Backgrounder**
 For more information see Backgrounder 2, Traditional First Nations Societies, page 237.

 Blackline Master 19, page 126, *Families, Clans and the Land*

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- Heiltsuk. The Heiltsuk live on the Central Coast. Their territories include many islands as well as mainland sites.
 - The website Húyat (<http://www.hauyat.ca>) delves into one particular territory of the Heiltsuk First Nation. It is worthwhile taking the time to explore the entire site. For this activity students can go to the page "Taking Care," which discusses the rights and responsibilities that the Heiltsuk have towards their territories. Access this page at <https://bit.ly/2V7nVz9>.
 - One speaker talks about the differences between the traditional Heiltsuk concept of "taking care" and the more Western notion of Stewardship.
 - Another speaker describes the traditional land management systems in the context of rights and title.
 - An important point is made about groups sharing territories and their resources when necessary, following proper protocols.
- The local First Nations government, Band Council, or Treaty office may have maps that illustrate how traditional territories are used by family groups, Clans or other groupings. If they are available, share them with the class.
- Have students create a diagram that shows the connections between families and the stewardship of their territories. (Diagrams might show a map or a landscape with houses in different regions, or they could show a central village with arrows pointing outwards to from each house to different regions.)



Formative Assessment Strategy

Use student diagrams to assess their understanding of the relationship family/clan and land ownership.

e. Language, Story, and the Land

Students will become aware of the connections between the oral traditions of a First Nation and its land and resources.

- First Nations have words in their language that express important concepts such as laws and territories. They also have words for their oral histories that often form the foundations of their laws. Help students to find and learn the words in the language of the local First Nations.
 - You may have already collected this information of the Local First Nations Community Profile, Blackline Master 1. If so, share or review the words with the students.
 - It is important to understand that these words hold deeper meanings than their literal translations into English. For instance, “laws” are more than a list of rules decided on by a government. They are an unwritten body of practices, values and beliefs that govern how people behave towards the land and towards each other.
- If possible, invite a First Nations language teacher, Elder or other knowledge-keeper into the class to explain and discuss these terms.
- Students can read and discuss the text on Blackline Master 20, page 128, *Language, Story and the Land*, to learn about how First Nations oral traditions connect the people with their territories.
- If possible, find an example of an origin story from a local family group, Clan or First Nation that illustrates a connection with their lands and territories.



Backgrounder

For more information see Backgrounder 4, Language and Oral Traditions, page 239.



Blackline Master 20, page 128, *Language, Story and the Land*

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- Examples of origin stories can be found in the book *People of the Land: Legends of the Four Host First Nations*, Theytus Books, 2009. For a list of the stories, see the Bibliography, page 261

f. Traditional Governments

Students will recognize features of traditional First Nations laws and governance.

- Have students read the text on Blackline Master 21, page 129, *Traditional Laws and Governance*, to learn about some features of traditional First Nations laws.
 - Students can use highlighting strategies as they read to highlight important or surprising points, words they don't know, and questions they have. They can use different ways of marking, such as underlining, drawing arrows, and circling.
- Ask students to compare the type of laws that governed First Nations in the past, compared with the laws that govern us today. How are they the same and different? Students could work in groups to discuss their ideas. They could use a Venn diagram or other comparison graphic organizer to record their thoughts.
- Students could analyze a story to find how traditional laws are embedded in a story. One example is *Little Bear's Vision Quest*.
 - *Little Bear's Vision Quest* by Dianne Silvey. This book can be used to discuss ancestral laws, and forms of community and decision making. Grandfather Bear is an Elder. His grandson Little Bear is mean to his friends so he banishes Little Bear to an island. He reminds him to practice some of the teaching (brushing off in the morning by the ocean). Little Bear eventually learns how to be part of the community.
 - Discussion questions: 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?
- Students can participate in Reader's Theatre using the story "The Haida Chief Who Built an Island," by Pansy Collison. It is found in *Haida Eagle Treasures*, pages 175-183. The narrative embeds many ideas about governance, the land, potlatches and the relationships between two First Nations, Haida and Kitkatla.

 Blackline Master 21,
page 129, *Traditional
Laws and Governance*

g. Consensus Decision Making

Students will be aware of the process of consensus decision making, and its importance to traditional First Nations governance.

- Discuss with students what consensus decision making involves. If students have worked with Blackline Master 21, Traditional Laws and Governance, they can check back on the section about Community Consensus.
- Explain that consensus decision making was very important for traditional forms of First Nations governance.
- Discuss how reaching consensus is different from voting on an issue.
- Give students an opportunity to engage in a consensus decision-making activity. You can use Blackline Master 30, page 141, *Consensus Activity*, to guide the activity.
 - Consensus decision gives all members of the group a chance to speak. This often takes the form of a Talking Circle. For suggestions on using a Talking Circle, see Using Talking Circles in the Introduction, page 19.
- Ask students to reflect on their experiences during the consensus decision making activity. Ask questions such as:
 - What were your overall feelings during the activity?
 - How well do you think you participated in the discussion?
 - Did the decision go the way you wanted to at first?
 - Did anything make you change your mind during the process?
- For more about census decision making in First Nations communities, see the article "What does traditional consensus decision making mean?" on the Indigenous Corporate Training website, at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc903>.
- Have students discuss the question, "What if you don't agree with the majority when you are using consensus decision making?" (See the discussion about unanimity in the above article.)
- Have students work individually or in small groups to create a "Users Guide to Consensus Decision Making." Discuss some of the parts that could make up the guide, such as:
 - How to organize it
 - The role of the leader
 - Skills needed for consensus decision making (such as communication skills, expressing yourself, patience, respecting different points of view, arguing your point).

 Blackline Master 30, page 141 *Consensus Activity*

Backgrounder
 For more information see Backgrounder 6, Public Witness: Feasts and Potlatches, page 241.

h. Laws of the Feast Hall

Students will come to understand the feast or potlatch in First Nations cultures as an important political and economic institution of many First Nations government systems in BC.

- For students who have had attended a First Nations feast or potlatch, ask them to share with the class some of their memories and experiences of the event.
- Give students opportunities to learn about the purposes and the parts of a feast or potlatch using a variety of resources.
 - If you live in an area where local First Nations have potlatches or feasts, students may be able to meet with an Elder or knowledge-keeper who could explain the importance of the feast or potlatch to the local First Nations community. Depending on your community, they may be able to make a field trip to a feast hall.
 - Students could read or listen to parts of books about potlatches, find online resources, or view videos.
- Some books about feasts and potlatches are:
 - Aleck, Celestine. *Granny and I Get Traditional Names* Strong Stories, Coast Salish Series. Strong Nations Publishing Inc. 2018.
 - Carrier Sekani Family Services. *Culture and Diversity*. PDF booklet, 7 pages. <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc923>
 - Collison, Pansy. *Haida Eagle Treasures*. Brush Education Inc. 2017. See "Traditions and Culture," pages 192-201.
 - Klockars, Donna. *Planning the Feast*. Strong Readers series.
 - Nelson, Nella. *Welcome Family and Friends to Our Bighouse. Kwakwaka'wakw Potlatch*. Nella Nelson. Union Bay BC: Raven Publishing, 2017.
- Have students work in groups to outline some of the major components of a feast or potlatch, using the resources they have researched. Ideally students will be able to focus on the local First Nations communities.
- Have students summarize how the feast or Potlatch serves as the important institution for governance in many First Nations communities.

4. The Impacts of Colonization

a. Colonialism and the Indian Act

Students build an understanding of the concept of colonialism, and determine how the Indian Act was a major agent of colonialism, and the major impacts on First Nations.

- Explain that the Indian Act controlled all aspects of the lives of First Nation people. It was a tool designed to compel Indians to want to give up their Indian status and become full Canadian citizens with the right to vote (part of assimilation). Explain that there were approximately 30 First Nations in BC before contact. Through the operation of the Indian Act, there are now roughly 203 First Nation communities (many of which are Indian Bands). Many Nations were forced from operating under a traditional government to becoming multiple Indian Bands.
- Review or teach an understanding of the meaning of colonialism appropriate to the level of your students. Have students work in pairs or small groups to decide on a definition of colonialism. Older students can begin by brainstorming what they already know about the term.
 - See FNESC's *Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guide 5*, Activity 2.3 Colonial Clash (pages 27-28).
<https://tinyurl.com/fnesc924>
- Students can read the text on Blackline Master 22, page 131, *The Indian Act and the Indian Agent*, to find out how the Act affected First Nations government systems.
- Students could play the Pass It On game to simulate the experiences faced by First Nations communities trying to cope with the Indian Act. See Unit 3, page 78.
- Discuss the original purposes of the Indian Act. Ask students to suggest reasons why the Canadian government decided there needed to be specific laws for First Nations.
 - Have students analyse the statement made by Prime Minister Macdonald. Ask them what they think or know "assimilate" means.
- Have students find out which Agency administered their local region. They can refer to a map which shows the agencies as they were about 1916. It is on the Union of BC Indian Chiefs digital collection, "Our Homes Are Bleeding." Online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc904>.
- Students can read about an example of the relationship between a First Nations community and the Indian Agent in "An Indian Agent's Letter Book," in *Persistence and Change*, pages 166-170.
- Discuss the connections between colonialism and the Indian Act.
 - Depending on the age of the students, they could discuss the question as a class or in small groups, or they could write a journal or paragraph response.
 - Students could also create a mind map or web to illustrate the connections.

 **Backgrounder**
 For more information see Backgrounder 7, The Indian Act, page 242.

 Blackline Master 22, page 131, *The Indian Act and the Indian Agent*

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 Blackline Master 23,
page 132, *Indian Act*
Word Sorter

 **Formative Assessment Strategy**

Use the Indian Act Word Sorter activity to assess students' understanding of the impacts of the Indian Act.

 Blackline Master 25,
page 135, *Changes to Control of Lands and Resources*

 **Backgrounder**
 For more information see Backgrounder 8, Indian Reserves, page 243.

- Students can use the activity on Blackline Master 23, page 132, *Indian Act Word Sorter*, to review and summarize what they have learned about the impacts of the Indian Act. Students should cut out the words and phrases, and sort them into categories of their choosing. They could use the Think-Pair-Share strategy to discuss and further develop their ideas.

b. Changes to Control of Lands and Resources

Students will have an understanding of how colonial actions brought about changes to the control of lands and resources in BC.

- Review with students the main ways that First Nations governed and controlled their lands before contact. (They were taken care of by families, house groups, clans and communities who held responsibilities for stewardship over their inherited territories.)
- Ask student how they think colonialism and the Indian Act impacted First Nations use and occupation of their lands.
- Students can read, Blackline Master 25, page 135, *Changes to Control of Lands and Resources*, to find out some ways that control over lands changed from the time of contact until today.
 - Students can use highlighting and annotation techniques to mark up the text to help deepen their understanding and develop questions.
- Students can create a timeline to illustrate the changes in control over lands and resources in BC.
- Students can explore a case study of how BC laws impacted a First Nations community's ability to hunt and provide food for themselves. See Unit 6, Kitsumkalum Beaver Trapping, 1912, page 201.

c. Reserves

Students will investigate the nature of Indian Reserves and their impact on the lives of First Nations.

- Explain that under the Indian Act the lands for each First Nations Band in BC was restricted to a small number of parcels of land that are reserved only for their use. The largest parcel is usually where their main community is located. The parcels of land are only tiny pieces of their original territories. Provincial laws do not apply on reserve lands.
- Use maps to compare the size of reserves with the traditional territories of a First Nations group.
 - The local First Nations offices may have maps of their territories that show the Indian Reserves and the extent of their traditional territories.
 - *First Nations in British Columbia* map. This contemporary map of all First Nations communities in the province also indicates Indian Reserves. Students will find they have to really zoom in to see the tiny parcels of land. Online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc931>

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- Topographical maps produced by the provincial government (1:50,000 scale) show Indian Reserves. If your library has these maps of the local regions, students could use them to identify reserve lands.
- Students can study historical maps for their region made at the time of the McKenna-McBride Commission in 1916. These maps show the reserves that were allocated at that time for all regions of the province. They indicate original reserves (made in the 1880s, 1890s), reserves added during the Royal Commission, and lands that were cut off from original reserves.
 - The maps are online at the Union of BC Indian Chiefs digital collection, *Our Homes Are Bleeding*. Find the map index at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc904>
 - Select the Agency covering your region at the time.
 - This will link to a series of maps. You may find maps for the local area, but it is best to look first at the Final Report Images for the agency (at the bottom of the list.)
- Students can view online map that shows the reserves in the Coast Salish territories in the lower mainland. See the Digital Sq'ewlets website, online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc906>.
- If you have access to volume 2 of the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada* (Royal Canadian Geographical Society, 2018), students can view maps of BC which illustrate the location of reserves in relationship to the home communities.
- Ask students to think about how forcing First Nations onto reserves might have impacted their lives. Have students work in groups to suggest as many ways as they can. Possible responses include:
 - loss of access to traditional territories and resources
 - loss of control and benefit from resources
 - changes in life styles, such as not being able to travel throughout their territories
 - changes in living accommodations, from traditional structures to European-style houses.
 - emotional reactions to being treated unfairly, such as alienation, anger, confusion
- Ask students to reflect on their reactions to the idea of First Nations communities being forced onto reserves. Ask questions such as:
 - How does learning about Reserves make you feel?
 - What is one thing that surprised you about Reserves?
- Have students represent their understandings about Indian Reserves in a format of their choosing, such as a picture, poem, letter or poster.



Formative Assessment Strategy

Use students' representations to assess their understandings about the impacts of Indian Reserves

d. Impacts of Colonization and the Indian Act

Students investigate ways that the Indian Act and other policies of colonization have impacted the lives and governments of First Nations people.

- Have students suggest some of the ways they know or can predict that the Indian Act has affected the lives of First Nations. Students could work in groups to create a list of impacts.
- Car and gasoline analogy. You may want to adapt an activity found in the teaching resource *The Indian Act of 1876 was not Part of Treaty* (Saskatchewan 2008) that demonstrates the impact of the Indian Act through an analogy of a car and gasoline. See pages 119 to 122. The resource is online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc907>.
- Discuss the students' lists of impacts. You could create a class list on the board or chart paper. Have students suggest which two or three impacts they feel have had the most impact. Ask them to support their answer with reasons.
- Students can choose one of the Indian Act laws or other government policies to investigate further. Student can decide on a format to present their findings. It could be a short essay, a letter to the government, a graphic novel format, or a digital presentation. Students can include the following information:
 - A description of the law or policy
 - A comparison with the rights of non-First Nations Canadians
 - Examples and evidence to show the impacts
 - A summary of the impacts



Formative Assessment Strategy

Use students' investigations to assess their understanding of the impacts of the Indian Act on First Nations.

5. First Nations Governments Today

Students build an understanding of the significant moves towards rebuilding self-government in a variety of ways for BC First Nations. These activities apply most directly to the Learning Standards for Social Studies 6, though they can be adapted for other levels.

a. What is Self-Governance?

- Review with students how the systems that First Nations had for governing themselves were largely taken away by colonization and the Indian Act.
- Ask students what they think the term “self-government” means. Discuss what some characteristics of self-government might be for First Nations communities. (For example, First Nations will make their own decisions about important issues such as how to use the land and resources, and how to care for people in their communities)

b. Self-Determination

- Students can examine aspects of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This is a UN agreement signed by most countries of the world, including Canada.
 - UNDRIP explains how the rights of Indigenous peoples around the world, both as individuals and a groups are to be protected by governments.
 - Explain that the term “Indigenous” is being increasingly used as awareness and use of UNDRIP grows.
 - The publication *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for Indigenous Adolescents* is a useful resource for students to use. It can be found online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc908>.
- Discuss the concept of self-determination and how it is linked with self-government. (Generally, self-determination refers to the right of group of people to make decisions about their own lives; self-government is the process for putting self-determination into practice through laws and institutions.)
- Students can read and discuss the important themes of the Declaration found on page 12 of *UNDRIP for Indigenous Adolescents*. The four themes are: the right to self-determination; the rights to cultural identity; the rights to free, prior and informed consent; and protection from discrimination.



c. What Does Self-Government Look Like?

Students build an understanding that self-government takes diverse forms among First Nations throughout BC. It generally involves the establishment of government structures and processes that build on traditional institutions, in a modern context

- Introduce students to four common aspects of self-government. These are: Constitution, Governing Structures, Law Making Authority and Citizenship.
 - Students can use Blackline Master 32, page 143, *Core Institutions of Governance* to identify the four core institutions. It gives the Government of Canada as an example of each of the institutions.
 - Have students work in groups to find out what each of the four terms means. Depending on your class, you could have each group find out about all the terms, or groups could research one and report back to the class.
 - Students can explore how these core institutions are applied in other governments, such as the local municipal government or an organization such as the Scouts or Guides.
- Students can use Blackline Master 33, page 145, *Goals of Self-Government*, to identify the core institutions for First Nations governments that are under the Indian Act, and those that have self-government outside of the Indian Act.
 - Have students use their knowledge of how Band Councils run under the Indian Act to complete the first column.
 - Then students can find out how governing institutions work under a First Nations government that has achieved self-governance. Students could

 Blackline Master 32, page 143, *Core Institutions of Governance*

 Blackline Master 33, page 145, *Goals of Self-Government*

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 Blackline Master 28,
page 139, *Self-
Government Agreements in
BC*.

- work in groups to research a specific First Nation government. The BC First Nations that have negotiated self-government are listed on Blackline Master 28, page 139, *Self-Government Agreements in BC*.
- Students can work individually or in groups to identify how each of the four core institutions are applied in one of the self-governing Nations. They can refer to the websites of the Nations to find the information.
 - They can record their information in the second column of the Blackline Master.
 - If possible, find out how self-government is being used, or is moving forward in a local First Nations community. If there are sufficient resources available students can explore these initiatives working in groups. Otherwise collect the information to share with students.
 - Determine if the local First Nation is engaged in the BC Treaty Process or other process designed to support self-government. Sources of information include:
 - The First Nation's website
 - The BC Government's A-Z listing of First Nations communities in BC, online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc944>.
 - To further investigate the BC Treaty Process, you may want to use some of the activities in Unit 4, Reconciling Indigenous Rights and Title: Treaty and Alternatives.