

# Unit 3: Stories of the Seasons

Kindergarten – Grade 1



## Overview

Relationship to the seasons and seasonal cycles are foundational to many First Peoples. This unit uses a range of resources and activities to introduce students to seasons, seasonal cycles, the importance of seasonal cycles to First Peoples, and some of the seasonal activities practiced by First Peoples.

This unit is designed to be delivered incrementally over the course of the school year and whenever possible into the following school year. The activities focus on connecting learning to a sense of place (connecting with place and with the land), a foundation of Indigenous knowledge. For more information on the above concepts refer to *Connecting Learning to the Land and Place* on page 15.

## Key Big Ideas

	Kindergarten	Grade 1
<b>English Language Arts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stories and other texts help us learn about ourselves, our families, and our communities.</li> <li>Through listening and speaking, we connect with others and share our world.</li> <li>Curiosity and wonder lead us to new discoveries about ourselves and the world around us.</li> </ul>	
<b>Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily and seasonal changes affect all living things.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily and seasonal changes affect all living things.</li> </ul>
<b>Mathematics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objects have attributes that can be described, measured, and compared.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objects have attributes that can be described, measured, and compared.</li> </ul>
<b>Arts Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People create art to express who they are as individuals and community.</li> <li>Dance, drama, music, and visual arts express meaning in unique ways.</li> </ul>	

## Key Curricular Competencies

	Grade 1	Grade 2
<b>English Language Arts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning</li> <li>Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to stories and other texts to make meaning</li> <li>Use language to identify, create, and share ideas, feelings, opinions, and preferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning</li> <li>Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to stories and other texts to make meaning</li> <li>Show awareness of how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to family and community.</li> </ul>
<b>Science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience and interpret the local environment</li> <li>Recognize First Peoples stories (including oral and written narratives), songs, and art, as ways to share knowledge</li> <li>Express and reflect on personal experiences of place</li> </ul>	

<b>Mathematics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use mathematical vocabulary and language to contribute to mathematical discussions</li> <li>• Incorporate First Peoples worldviews and perspectives to make connections to mathematical concepts</li> </ul>
<b>Arts Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore artistic expressions of themselves and community through creative process</li> <li>• Reflect on creative processes and make connections to other experiences</li> <li>• Express feelings, ideas, stories, observations, and experiences through the arts</li> </ul>

**Learning Goals**

- Develop an understanding of a sense of place, its significance to First Peoples, and how to use it to deepen their understanding of the natural world.
- Foster a connection with place and the land in the context of the local environment in order to gain a deeper understanding of seasons and living things.
- Develop an understanding of the importance of seasons and seasonal cycles to First Peoples.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Students will use reading, listening, and speaking skills to discuss, make connections to, and interpret First Peoples stories, knowledge, and teachings.
- Students will communicate their ideas, reflections, and understandings of First Peoples stories, knowledge, and teachings through writing, oral language, and visual arts.
- Students will communicate their understandings of the impacts of seasons and seasonal cycles on themselves and living things in the local environment using mathematical concepts, written language, oral language, and artistic expression.
- Students will create a Seasons Booklet that journals their connections to land and place, their experiences, and their learning.

**Themes Addressed**

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| ▪ seasons, seasonal cycles, seasonal activities   | ▪ listening             |
| ▪ land and place                                  | ▪ storytelling          |
| ▪ relationship to the natural and spiritual world | ▪ dreams & visions      |
|   | ▪ symbols and symbolism |

**Lesson Plans in this Unit**

- Connecting with Place and the Land
- Introducing the Seasons
- Fall
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer

**Assessment**

- Seasons Booklet
- Berry Painting

### **Authentic Texts**

- *A Day with Yayah* by Nicola Campbell
- *Lessons from Mother Earth* by Elaine McLeod
- *A Walk on the Shoreline* by Rebecca Hainnu
- *A Walk on the Tundra* by Rebecca Hainnu
- *Neekna and Chemai* by Dr. Jeannette Armstrong
- *Byron through the Seasons* by Dene Children of La Loche and Friends
- *From the Mountains to the Sea: We Share the Seasons* by Brenda Boreham and Terri Mack
- Strong Readers books: *Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter* – these could be displayed while students make their seasons books
- additional resources depicting local seasonal practices – consult with your district Indigenous contact for support



## **Suggested Instruction and Assessment Approach**

### **Connecting with Place and the Land**

“Place is any environment, locality, or context with which people interact to learn, create memory, reflect on history connect with culture, and establish identity. The connection between people and place is foundational to First Peoples perspectives of the world.”

(BC Ministry of Education Science Learning Standards 2016)

Ask students: What is land? What is place? As a class brainstorm a definition for both terms.

Discuss why it is important to respect the land. Define “respect” to the class. Read a story that illustrates why the land or environment needs to be respected. It could be a picture book, such as *Lessons from Mother Earth* by Elaine McLeod, or a local traditional narrative that demonstrates what happens if people don’t respect the land. Consult with your district’s Indigenous contact for assistance in finding traditional narratives from the local First Peoples in your community.

Discuss the question “What do we need to know about the land in order to live on it?” After students have shared their ideas, explain that First Peoples lived on their territories from one generation to the next over thousands of years. Identify the traditional territory the school and/or community is located on. Brainstorm what types of things the First Peoples needed to know about the local land to survive on it for thousands of years. Indicate that this knowledge was passed down from generation to generation. That this knowledge does not stay the same, it changes, and grows over time.

Find resources that illustrate how First Peoples used to live on their traditional territories before European contact. Share them with the class. Create a class list of

the different types of things First Peoples learned about to survive on the land. Highlight Indigenous perspectives on taking care of the land, water, plants, and animals. Let students know that Indigenous knowledge also emphasizes a focus on the relationships between plants, animals, habitats, seasonal changes, and weather.

Read the following books to the class over several days or weeks.

- *A Day with Yayah* by Nicola Campbell
- *Lessons from Mother Earth* by Elaine McLeod
- *A Walk on the Shoreline* by Rebecca Hainnu
- *A Walk on the Tundra* by Rebecca Hainnu

During the readings, review the significance to First Peoples of connecting with land and place. In addition, highlight some of the examples of how the characters from the books showed respect for the land.

Share other resources with students that show examples of local First Peoples connections with place and the land. Consult with your district Indigenous contact for support in finding additional resources specific to the local First Peoples.

Create a class definition of “connecting with place and the land” to post in the classroom. Inform students that they will create a Seasons Booklet to record their learning throughout the unit.

### **Assessment**

Have students create a large Seasons Booklet. Ensure pages can be added to it throughout the unit. Title the booklet “The Seasons in \_\_\_\_ (community name).” Include a title page that has the name of the student, the name of the school, and the name(s) of the First Peoples whose traditional territory the school and community is on. The title page can also include a student drawing of themselves and their favourite season.

Add the class definition of connecting with place and the land in the student Seasons Booklets. The definition of connecting with place and the land can be cut and pasted on a page and students can add a drawing to go with it.

See the assessment tool, Seasons Booklet, provided at the end of this unit for sample assessment criteria.

### **Introducing the Seasons**

Begin by identifying the traditional territory the school is located on and the traditional place name for the school location and/or community location.

Traditional place names provide information about First Peoples and their relationship with the land. Traditional knowledge is often embedded in place names. Paying attention to the name of places in traditional territories can lead to a wealth of information about local ecosystems, land use or plant and animal behaviour. Many First Nations communities have documented the traditional place names of their traditional territories and they may be available as a classroom resource.

However, some place names may be considered private and to be used only by community members.

As a class, brainstorm favourite activities students like to do outside during the different seasons (e.g., fishing, berry-picking, hiking, biking, sledding, skiing, raking leaves, gardening, camping, snow-ball fights, picnicking, swimming). Brainstorm some First Peoples events, ceremonies, and/or activities that happen during different seasons of the year.

Ask students:

- What are some things we do outside in the summer but not in the winter? Why?
- What are some things we do outside in the winter but not in the summer? Why?
- What are some First Peoples events, ceremonies, and/or activities that happen in the summer?
- What are some First Peoples events, ceremonies, and/or activities that happen in the winter?

Create a class chart to show what activities students prefer to do and examples of First Peoples events, ceremonies, and/or activities in each season. Copy this chart to a poster board or other sturdy material, and keep it posted over the course of the year. Invite students to add words and pictures to the chart as new activities, events, and ceremonies are discovered and discussed.

Read the books, *Byron Through the Seasons* and *From the Mountains to the Sea: We Share the Seasons*. As you read, take note of additional seasonal activities that are mentioned. Ask students to think about their own community. Which First People live here and what kind of activities do you think they used to do in the past? What activities helped the First Peoples survive on the land and or connect with the land? Do you think they still do these activities now? How do seasons influence what we do?

### **Assessment**

Have students create a page or several pages to add to their Seasons Booklet showcasing what activities they prefer to do and examples of First Peoples events, ceremonies, and/or activities in each season. The page(s) could include drawings and 1-2 sentences. Optional: scribe the sentences for students that have difficulty with printing and writing.

See the assessment tool, Seasons Booklet, provided at the end of this unit for sample assessment criteria.

### **Nature Walk**

Take students to an outdoor setting that includes features that change with the seasons (e.g., a location that includes deciduous trees, flowers, berry-bearing bushes). Ensure school fieldtrip protocols are followed.

Prior to the visit, identify the traditional territory of the location and the place name for it. Use a map of the local area to identify the location of the outdoor setting in relation to the school. Tell students that as a class they will visit this place several

times throughout the school year. Ask students to think about the place, the place name, their background knowledge of it, and their predictions of what it will be like at the location. Ask students: Who has been to this place before? How did you get there? What is it like there? What do you think we will see there? Smell? Hear? Feel? What memories of the place do you have? Record this information on a chart paper and refer back to it after returning to the classroom.

Upon arrival at the fieldtrip location, do a land acknowledgment and remind students of the place name for the location. Most school districts have land acknowledgment protocols. Have students identify the characteristics of the current season that they can see on the land. Ask students to suggest what might be different about this location if they were to come back in another season. What changes will they see? How has the weather changed? How have the local plants changed? What kind of resources could be harvested? Do you see things that could be eaten? Things to make shelter or tools from? What do you smell, hear, and feel while on the land?

Have students lie down on the ground and look up to the sky. (Ensure they are not looking directly at the sun.) Ask students to identify characteristics of the current season they see in the sky. Have students share what they see, hear, feel, and smell. What memories do you have of the place from your last visit? What connections did you make to the land then? Have you made any new connections to the land now?

Revisit the same location at various points during the year. Have students sketch or take photographs of the location in order to record the seasonal changes they see and the connections they made to the land during their visits. Include 1-2 descriptive sentences. Optional: scribe the sentences for students that have difficulty printing and writing.

### **Assessment**

Add all student drawings and/or photographs to their student Seasons Booklet.

See the assessment tool, Seasons Booklet, provided at the end of this unit for sample assessment criteria.

### **Optional Activity**

To extend the activity, show a time-lapse photo montage depicting the same location over the course of a year (for example, “One Year in 40 Seconds” – [www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmIFXIXQQ\\_E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmIFXIXQQ_E)). Ask students:

- What do you see that shows the seasons changing?
- What do you hear?
- How is this like the location we visited on our nature walk? How is it different?

Unit 4 in this resource guide, Stories from the Sky, contains information about traditional First Peoples calendars based on the 13 Moons concept.

Additional activities relating to seasonal rounds could be included. The Race Rocks website ([www.racerocks.ca/the-13-moons-of-the-wsanec/](http://www.racerocks.ca/the-13-moons-of-the-wsanec/)) shares the 13 moons of the Wsanec (Saanich people).

## **Salmonids in the Classroom**

This activity requires coordination with your local salmon hatchery and/or First Peoples salmon enhancement program, and may not be practical in all locations. If this is the case, there are other activities in this section that can still be used for this unit.

Begin by assessing students' prior knowledge. Show an image or several images of salmon to the class. Ask students: What do you see? Where do salmon live (habitats)? Who has eaten salmon before? Who likes to eat salmon? Whose family likes to cook salmon? Who has seen salmon for sale in a grocery store? Who has gone fishing for salmon with their family? Where did you go fishing and how did you catch the salmon? Is salmon a healthy food to eat?

Review the importance of food for human survival. Discuss how salmon is a healthy food to eat. Talk about how many people throughout the world eat salmon. Then explain to students that salmon were and continue to be an important food for many First Peoples in BC.

Discuss how human activity (e.g., population increase, over-fishing, pollution) have harmed many salmon habitats and how this has caused the number of salmon to decrease or get smaller (population decrease). Define "habitats" to the class. Explore why it is important to protect the habitats or homes of salmon so that their numbers get larger or continue to grow. Tell the students that one way to help the survival of the salmon is to grow them in a protected environment and then release them into the wild. Let students know that by protecting salmon they are showing respect for salmon. This is the same for water.

Next, engage students in one or more activities such as the following that expand on the importance of salmon:

- Invite an Elder or knowledgeable community member to the class to speak about the importance of salmon culturally and economically. Discuss local First Peoples events, ceremonies, or activities that relate to salmon and/or revolve around the salmon life cycle. Refer to *What protocols should I follow when inviting First Peoples guest speakers into the classroom?* on page 18.
- If available, visit a local stream or river during spawning time, or a salmon hatchery.
- Read local First Peoples stories or other texts that focus on salmon and/or make connections between seasonal cycles and salmon life cycles.
- Research local First Peoples salmon recipes and share them with the class. Ask students to share and compare their family salmon recipes with the salmon recipes from the local First Peoples.
- Research the stories, songs, and art of First Peoples throughout BC that focus on salmon. Share them with the class and compare them with local First Peoples stories, songs, and art.
- Connect with the school district's Indigenous contact or local First Nation(s) to find out if there are any First Peoples events, ceremonies, or activities relating to salmon that the students can attend. Ensure permission to attend and/or participate in the event, ceremony, or activity is provided by the First People hosting it.



Afterwards, obtain salmon eggs from the hatchery or enhancement program. Work with students to

- check temperature daily
- change the water in the tanks, getting fresh water from a river or creek (explain to students that using tap water won't work – the water must have the same characteristics of the salmon's regular habitat)
- chart the growth of the fry
- draw or take photographs of the salmon eggs throughout the different stages of their growth-link to seasonal cycles (add them to the student Seasons Booklet)

Release the salmon into the river on Earth Day. Invite members of the local First Peoples community to participate in a salmon release ceremony.

Ask students to share how they felt taking care of the salmon eggs and when they released them into the river. Discuss why it is important to respect and protect salmon and the water they live in. Have students record their responses using drawings and/or photographs along with 1-2 sentences. Ensure students include information on what season it was when they released the salmon. Add the student observations to their Seasons Booklet.

Resources to support salmonids in the classroom are available from Fisheries and Oceans Canada ([www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/education/resources-ressources-eng.html](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/education/resources-ressources-eng.html)).

### **Assessment**

Throughout the activities, have students document what they learned and/or did using drawings, photographs, or artwork that includes 1-2 sentences describing the images. Include them in the student Seasons Booklet.

See the assessment tool, Seasons Booklet, provided at the end of this unit for sample assessment criteria.

### **Fall**

Introduce the book *Neekna and Chemai*. Explain that this book is about two girls growing up in the Okanagan area of the province. Each chapter talks about their traditional practices they participate in during the various seasons. You will be revisiting this book over the course of the year.

Read and discuss the “Fall” chapter from *Neekna and Chemai*:

- What activities do Neekna and Chemai do in the fall?
- What activities do you do in the fall?
- What pictures from the book show that fall is coming?
- What do we see in our community that shows fall is coming?



## Winter

Read and discuss the “Winter” chapter from *Neekna and Chemai*:

- What activities do Neekna and Chemai do in the winter?
- Many of the activities the community does during winter are done inside. Why might that be?
- What activities do you do in the winter?
- What pictures from the book show that winter is coming?
- What do we see in our community that shows winter is coming?
- Why is it necessary to dress appropriately for the weather when winter comes?

## Spring

Read and discuss the “Spring” chapter from *Neekna and Chemai*:

- What activities do Neekna and Chemai do in the spring?
- What activities do you do in the spring?
- What pictures from the book show that spring is coming?
- What do we see in our community that shows spring is coming?
- What did Neekna and Chemai learn that helped them connect with place and the land?

## Summer

Read and discuss the “Summer” chapter from *Neekna and Chemai*:

- What activities do Neekna and Chemai do in the summer?
- What activities do you do in the summer?
- What pictures from the book show that summer is coming?
- What do we see in our community that shows summer is coming?
- What precautions should we take when we spend time outside in the summer? (e.g., sun hats, sun screen, insect repellent)
- What activities do the local First Peoples do in the summer?
- What did Neekna and Chemai learn that helped them connect with place and the land?

## Berry Picking

Note: depending on when particular berries are ready for harvest in your area, this activity may be appropriate for fall instead of summer. Ensure school fieldtrip protocols are followed.

Invite a guest from the local First Peoples community to talk about traditional berry harvesting and preservation practices. Ask the Elder or knowledge-keeper to talk about why berries were an important food source and to talk about sustainable practices for harvesting from the land. Invite the guest to share their connections to place and land, specific to the fieldtrip location and/or community.

Prior to the visit, discuss the outdoor location and the traditional territory it is on. Use a map of the local area to identify the location of the outdoor setting in relation to the school. Ask students to think about the place, their background knowledge of

it, and their predictions of what it will be like at the location. Questions can include: Who has been to this place before? How did you get there? What is it like there? What do you think we will see there? Smell? Hear? Feel? What memories do you have of the place? Record this information on a chart paper and refer back to after returning to the classroom.

Inform students that they are going to pick berries so that they can make jam with them afterwards. Let students know that they cannot pick or taste any berries without permission during the trip. Discuss the importance of respecting nature: pick only what you need without damaging the natural resource and the surrounding area.

Take students on an outing to pick berries. Upon arrival do a land acknowledgment. Most school districts have land acknowledgement protocols. Have students identify the characteristics of the current season that they can see on the land. Ask students to suggest what might be different about this location if they were to come back in another season. Ask students to share with the class what they see, hear, feel, and smell.

Then have students lie down on the ground and look up to the sky. (Ensure they are not looking directly at the sun.) Ask students to identify characteristics of the current season they see in the sky. Have students share what they see, hear, feel, and smell.

Review respectful harvesting practices and ensure students follow them while they pick the berries. Remind students not to pick or taste any berries without permission. As a class harvest the berries.

Before, during, and after picking the berries integrate measurement language and concepts. Place measurement labels on the containers used to collect the berries that relate to what was taught before the berry picking fieldtrip.

Students can draw and label pictures of the berries they are going to harvest. Either before or after picking the berries, have students draw or take pictures of what they see in the area including what season it is.

After the outing, with the support of parents, high school Food Studies or Culinary Arts teachers, or others, facilitate making jam from the berries at the school. Go over some of the simple measurements required to make the jam with the students prior, during, and after the activity. Have students draw and label their drawings of the ingredients they need to make jam. Students can also draw pictures that include 1-2 descriptive sentences highlighting their jam making experiences. Optional: scribe sentences for students that have difficulty printing or writing.

Invite guests from the First Peoples community to share in a class “jam feast.” Alternatively, jars of jam can be given in a traditional gift-giving ceremony. A visit to a local Elders group would be appropriate. Students could share their Seasons Book and gift the jam to the Elders. Elders could teach students some of the local words for various berries and share their connections with the local place and land.

### **Assessment**

Add the student pictures that include 1-2 sentences from the above activities to their Seasons Booklet.

See the assessment tool, Seasons Booklet, provided at the end of this unit for sample assessment criteria.

### **Berry Painting**

#### **Materials and Resources**

- berries (gathered by students or purchased), crushed in bowls
- twigs of different thicknesses and textures
- large roll of mural-sized paper, divided into four sections (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer)

#### **Procedure**

Explain to students that many First Peoples used berries as paint for many purposes, including to create images and to decorate functional items such as clothing and baskets.

Roll out the paper on the floor or a long table, and distribute the twigs and bowls of crushed berries. Explain to students that they are going to paint a mural that depicts the seasons in their community. Remind students of the various characteristics of each season that they have learned about over the course of the year. As they paint the mural, they should consider:

- physical characteristics of each season (e.g., weather, changes in plant and animal life)
- seasonal activities done by First Peoples
- their own favourite activities for each season

Allow time for students to move around and contribute images to each season.

### **Assessment**

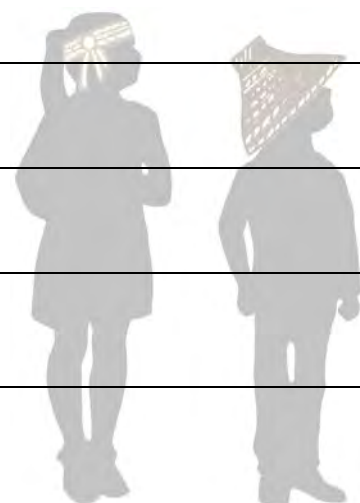
See the assessment tool, Berry Painting (provided at the end of this unit).



# Seasons Booklet

**Proficiency Scale:** 1: Emerging 2: Developing 3: Proficient 4: Extending

Rating (1-4)	Criteria – To what extent do students’ booklets:	Comments
	Depict activities that pertain to daily and seasonal changes (e.g., swimming in the summer, sledding in the winter)	
	Illustrate the student’s favourite season(s) and seasonal activities	
	Depict observable changes that occur throughout the seasons (e.g., flowers blooming, snow melting, leaves falling, lakes freezing, berries growing)	
	Depict First Peoples events, ceremonies, and/or activities for each season	
	Illustrate student understanding of connecting with place and the land	
	Illustrate student understanding of the need for respect for the land and/or the environment	
	Illustrate student understanding of the importance of seasons and seasonal cycles to First Peoples	
	Illustrate student understanding of the importance of salmon to First Peoples	
	Illustrates student understanding of how salmon and seasonal cycles are connected	
	Illustrate what the student saw, felt, and heard during the nature walks	
	Illustrate seasonal patterns and weather in the sky that the student observed during the nature walks	
	Accurately depict the activities the student participated in throughout all four seasons	
Date:	Name:	



# Berry Painting

**Proficiency Scale:** 1: Emerging 2: Developing 3: Proficient 4: Extending

Name																		
Works co-operatively with others by offering encouragement and support																		
Creates images that depict the characteristics of each season in their local environment																		
Creates images that depict seasonal activities done by First Peoples																		
Uses colour, shape, line, and pattern for particular effects																		
Uses materials and technologies appropriately																		
Correctly names depicted local plants, animals, and seasonal characteristics																		
Date:																		
Comments:																		

