

## Unit 4

# The Power of Names

### Overview

Names are closely tied with identity at many levels. We all have personal names that are used in different contexts, or may change over time. For many societies, including First Peoples, personal names contain a rich family and cultural history. As well, we all navigate our world by giving place names to physical locations and features that are significant in our societies.

For First Peoples, personal and place names have been passed down for countless generations. These traditional, ancestral, and spiritual names are a part not only of their personal identity, but also their relationships with the land, the ancestors, and family stories.

Multiple factors led to the loss of traditional names. Epidemics killed many people, resulting in some names being forgotten. The forces of colonization attempted to erase the Indigenous identity by replacing names, both personal and place names.

Today First Peoples are successfully reclaiming the power of their names on many fronts.

This unit provides students opportunities to examine

- the importance of names in First Peoples societies
- the impacts of colonial renaming processes on individuals and communities
- the ways in which First Peoples are reclaiming the power of their traditional personal and place names.

### *Essential Understandings*

- Traditional personal and place names are integral parts of First Peoples Oral Traditions.
- First Peoples names are interconnected with ancestors, history and the land.
- Colonization has resulted in the loss and replacement of First Peoples traditional names.
- First Peoples are taking action to reclaim and restore traditional personal and place names.

### *Guiding Questions*

- Who currently has the power and control to give or change a name?
- How can renaming contribute to Reconciliation?
- What are the systems regionally, provincially, and nationally that are guiding the reclaiming and renaming Indigenous place names process?

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### Learning Goals Focus

While many or all the First Peoples Principles of Learning and BC Learning Standards may be relevant, the following are suggested as a focus in this Theme Unit.

#### ***First Peoples Principles of Learning***

*Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.*

Traditional Names, both personal names and place names, are central to the identity of First Peoples. Learning about Traditional Names, their loss and their renewal, brings an understanding of well-being connected to the many dimensions of First Peoples lives and experiences.

#### ***BC Learning Standards***

Content Learning Standards

##### **BC First Peoples 12**

- Role of Oral Tradition for B.C. First Peoples
- Provincial and federal government policies and practices that have affected, and continue to affect, the responses of B.C. First Peoples to colonialism
- Resistance of B.C. First Peoples to colonialism

##### **English First Peoples 12**

- Reconciliation in Canada
- Oral Traditions: the relationship between oral tradition and land/place
- Protocols: situating oneself in relation to others and place

##### **Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12**

- Varied identities and worldviews of Indigenous peoples, and the importance of the interconnection of family, relationships, language, culture, and the land
- Factors that sustain and challenge the identities and worldviews of Indigenous peoples

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### Required Resources

This is an overview of the required resources for the activities in each Investigation. Additional optional sources are mentioned in the activities.

#### Investigation 1

- Line Master 4-1, page 152, *Traditional Names in First Nations Societies*
- Line Master 4-2, page 153 *Traditional Place Name Origins*
- Line Master 4-3, page 154, *Relationships Between Indigenous Peoples and Place Names* (Sample responses on Line Master 4-4)
- *Our Xwelmexw Names*. (2:55 min) at the Sq'ewlets Virtual Museum website, lined at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc707>
- *First Nations Studies Students Introductory Protocol at Vancouver Island University*. VI University, 2016. 1:14 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AW0zkBXpCBA>
- “The Relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Place Names,” Indigenous Corporate Training website. <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/the-relationship-between-indigenous-peoples-and-place-names>

#### Investigation 2

- Line Master 4-5, page 156, *Anonymous in the News*
- Line Master 9-5, page 309, *Victoria Conference, 1911 Delegates*
- The Indian Act Naming Policies. Indigenous Training, 2014. <https://www.ictinc.ca/indian-act-naming-policies>
- National Post, “Assault on residential school students’ identities began the moment they stepped inside.” <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc708>
- *They Call Me Number One* by Bev Sellars (Talon 2013)
- *My Name Is Kabentiiosta*. (NFB, 1995. 29 min). <https://tinyurl.com/as7cszdx>

#### Investigation 3

- BC Geographical Names Search. <http://apps.gov.bc.ca/pub/bcgnws/>
- *River of Salmon Peoples*, Theytus, 2015
- Map of Vancouver street name origins. [https://opendata.vancouver.ca/map/vancouver\\_streets](https://opendata.vancouver.ca/map/vancouver_streets)
- CBC website: <https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/streets>

#### Investigation 4

- Heritage Minutes: Jacques Cartier <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfKr-D5VDBU>
- “Place Names: No, Kootenay doesn’t mean ‘water people.’” *Castlegar News*, March 15, 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc709/>
- “A rose by any other name is a mihkokwaniy,” by âpihtawikosisân Chelsea Vowel, <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc710>.

#### Investigation 5

- Line Master 4-6, page 157, *The Right to Name*
- Line Master 4-7, page 158, *Claiming Names*
- “Claiming a Name” by Maija Kappler. Ryerson School of Journalism. <https://trc.journalism.ryerson.ca/claiming-a-name/>

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### Investigation 6

- Resources about renaming Sechelt Hospital
  - Coast Reporter article, <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc211>
  - Vancouver Coastal Health announcement: <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc210>
- “Cultural Journey increases nations’ visibility.” *The Squamish Chief*, 2010. <https://www.squamishchief.com/news/local-news/cultural-journey-increases-nations-visibility-1.1110437>.

### Overview of Investigations

These Investigations have more activities 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. The activities are intended to be adapted to fit the needs of your students and classroom.

The activities are intended to inspire ways that you can respectfully include relevant First Peoples’ knowledge and perspectives in your course.

For more information, see Using The BC First Peoples 12 Teacher Resource Guide, Using the BC First Peoples 12, page 6.

1. Names and Identity
  - a. Your Name, Your Identity
  - b. Significance of Traditional Names for First Peoples
  - c. The Giving of Names
  - d. Traditional First Nations Place Names
  - e. Place Names Relationships
2. Colonizing Personal Names
  - a. Impacts of the Loss of Traditional Names
  - b. Erasing Identities
  - c. Resisting Colonial Naming
3. Colonized Place Names
  - a. Renaming Rivers
  - b. Renaming Local Physical Features
  - c. Street Names
  - d. Creating New Names – Indigenous and Non-Indigenous
  - e. Retelling history?
4. Using Authentic Names
  - a. Lost in Translation
  - b. Respecting Preferred Names
  - c. Inappropriate Names
5. First Peoples’ Rights to Control Names
  - a. Acknowledging the Right to Name
  - b. Claiming a Name
  - c. Restoring and Reclaiming Personal Names
6. Naming and Reconciliation
  - a. Sechelt Hospital
  - b. Road Signs
  - c. Should We Rename British Columbia?
7. Give Back, Carry Forward
  - a. What Did You Learn?
  - b. Documenting Learning

## Unit 4 The Power of Names

### Investigation 1 Names and Identity

Students begin their investigation of the power of names by exploring significant aspects of traditional naming practices and protocols.

#### *Questions for Inquiry*

- How do names fit into the social systems of local First Nations?
- How are names connected to identity?


#### a. Your Name, Your Identity

- Ask students to think about their names and how they reflect their identity. Ask questions such as:
  - What are your names?
  - How does your name change in different situations?
  - What is important to you about your name?
  - Do you know the meaning of your names? What are their origins?
  - What connections does your name have to your culture or the history of your family?
- Ask students to reflect on the connections their name has to their identity, to who they are. This could be a personal reflection in written or graphic form, or they could discuss it in pairs or groups.

#### b. Significance of Traditional Names for First Peoples

Students build on their understandings of the importance of Traditional Names in First Peoples societies. Ask students to find evidence that shows the significance of Traditional Names for First Nations in one or more of these activities.

- If your school is in a First Nations community, or has a close association with one, students may be familiar with the importance of Traditional Names. Students can share their experiences with traditional naming, or examples of people in their families who have Traditional Names.
- Students can view the video *Our Xwelmexw Names*. A number of Stó:lo people of all ages explain their Traditional Names.
  - *Our Xwelmexw Names*. (2:55 min) at the Sq'ewlets Virtual Museum website, linked at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc707>. This link also includes a transcript of the video.
  - Students will notice that people have diverse terms for “Traditional Name,” such as Xwelmexw name, Indian name, Aboriginal name, Halkomelem name, Traditional Name. You may want to discuss how this reflects the diversity of First Nations’ experiences.
  - Ask students to identify some features that the names share. (For example, they have a source or origin; the people tell where their names come from; the names are rooted in culture and history.)
- Students can use Line Master 4-1, page 152, *Traditional Names in First Nations Societies*, to learn more about the significance of Traditional Names. Ask students to identify some important ways that names are linked to social systems of First Nations communities. Discuss how the use of traditional names may contribute to a person’s sense of identity.

 Line Master 4-1, page  
152, *Traditional Names  
in First Nations Societies*

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- Public introductions. A Protocol followed by many First Peoples when they introduce themselves at a gathering is to share the generations of names in their family or Clan.
  - Discuss with students why First Peoples follow this Protocol.
  - For examples, see *First Nations Studies Students Introductory Protocol at Vancouver Island University*. VI University, 2016. 1:14 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AW0zkBXpCBA>
- Have students write or share with the class one or two questions they have about Traditional Names in First Peoples societies.

### c. The Giving of Names

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Naming ceremonies for Indigenous Peoples take place in diverse settings depending on the Protocols of the group. They are often carried out at a feast, potlatch, or other gathering, with invited guests acting as witnesses to the naming.

- If appropriate, an Elder or Knowledge Keeper could be invited to the class to share local Protocols and practices for giving names.
- Students could share what they know about name-giving ceremonies.
- Discuss the role of the giving of names as part of First Nations governance. Students can find out the connections between hereditary names and the management of lands and resources.
  - See the quote by Gisdaywa on Line Master 4-1, page 152.
- There are a number of YouTube videos that show Indigenous groups conducting naming ceremonies. Search on keywords such as First Nation, naming ceremony.
  - Note that this search may include the giving of personal names and the names of physical locations such as buildings or bridges.

### d. Traditional First Nations Place Names


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Review or discuss with students what they know of traditional place names in your region.

- Students in a First Nations community may know many traditional place names. Often they are in common use, particularly when referring to resource harvesting locations. (However, don't expect students to necessarily know or be able to share the names.)
- Students in an urban community may have to do some research to find traditional place names, although many towns and cities have maps and other resources that identify traditional place names.
- Some examples of sources for traditional place names are:
  - Musqueam map: This interactive map gives a great deal of information about traditional place names around the Vancouver region, within Musqueam territory, including pronunciations. <https://www.musqueam.bc.ca/our-story/our-territory/place-names-map/>
  - Cstélen Place Names is an interactive website with Secwépemc place names around Adams River created by the Chief Atahm School. [http://www.chiefatahm.com/WebPages/cstelen\\_placenames.html](http://www.chiefatahm.com/WebPages/cstelen_placenames.html)
  - Local community books such as the *Sto:lo-Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (2001) and *Being Ts'elxwéyegw: First Peoples' Voices and History from the Chilliwack-Fraser Valley, British Columbia*. (2017)

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- Students can investigate the characteristics of some traditional place names in the local region names. They can find out what connections they have with the lives and experiences of First Nations. For example, are they related to navigating the land, the geographical forms, resources, the spiritual realm?
  - Connecting Place Names and Stories. If possible, find local narratives that connect with place names
    - For example, the Ts'msyen narrative: "Where Grizzly Bear Walks Along the Shore" in *Persistence and Change* (2005), page 14.
  - If resources are available, students can find out the connections or sources of some local First Nations place names. They can record their findings using Line Master 4-2, page 153, *Traditional Place Name Origins*.
- Students could create their own maps of traditional First Nations place names in your local area. A larger project would be to create an interactive map similar to that of the Musqueam noted above.
  - This could be coordinated with activities in Unit 7, Maps and Borders.


 Line Master 4-2, page 153 *Traditional Place Name Origins*

### e. Place Name Relationships

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Students build their understanding of the significance of names in Indigenous peoples lives, using the framework of four dimensions of human experience: Physical, Spiritual, Mental and Emotional

- Students can consider the four dimensions using Line Master 4-3, page 154, *Relationships Between Indigenous Peoples and Place Names*. Students can work individually or in small groups.
- Review with students the meanings of the Physical, Spiritual, Mental and Emotional categories. (Physical: body, health; Spiritual: beliefs, worldview, tradition; Mental: knowledge, understanding; Emotional: feelings, heart)
- Have students read the article "The Relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Place Names" at the Indigenous Corporate Training website.
  - Access the article here: <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/the-relationship-between-indigenous-peoples-and-place-names>
- Students can share their analyses. You could consolidate their thinking on a class chart, or individual students could share their understandings. Students should be able to explain their classification.
- Have students write a summarizing sentence based on their analysis. Students may benefit from the modelling of a sample summary sentence by the teacher.
- Ask students to consider questions such as:
  - How do Indigenous naming practices compare to those of settlers?
  - How do naming practices reflect worldview?
  - Based off chart analysis, what is the impact if these place names are lost? If these place names are officially restored?
- Discuss with students the notion of separate names. How can a place be known by a different name, by different groups of people? For example, Indigenous place names may exist on a separate map, or orally but not be recorded in an official capacity.

 Line Master 4-3, page 154, *Relationships Between Indigenous Peoples and Place Names*

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### Investigation 2 Colonizing Personal Names

Students can investigate the reasons, processes, and consequences of renaming of First Peoples through colonization.

#### *Questions for Inquiry*

- What were the motivations of colonizing authorities when they renamed First Peoples?
- How were Euro-Canadian names given?
- What are some of the consequences of the renaming experience?

#### a. Impacts of the Loss of Traditional Names

Students can investigate how Western names were given to First Peoples, and suggest some impacts of the names changes.

- How were Western names given? Discuss with students what they know about how First Peoples were assigned Western names during colonization, or how they think Western names came about.
- Discuss or explain the different processes through which people had their names changed. These include:
  - arbitrary missionary renaming
  - baptism and adopting new names at conversion to Christianity
  - Indian Agents assigning new names
  - Indian Residential Schools assigned new names to pupils
  - Other officials such as doctors. There are examples of doctors who would often name Indigenous babies when he delivered them.
  - Adoptions into non-Indigenous families, particularly during the Sixties Scoop.
- Ask: why did missionaries and government agents want to rename Indigenous people?
  - Here are some suggested resources students can refer to:
    - The Indian Act Naming Policies. Indigenous Training, 2014. <https://www.ictinc.ca/indian-act-naming-policies>
    - National Post, “Assault on residential school students’ identities began the moment they stepped inside.” <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc708>
    - *They Call Me Number One* by Bev Sellars (Talon 2013). See pages 13 and 32.
  - Sample response: They couldn’t spell or understand the traditional names; assimilation; Christian conversion. To the missionaries, traditional names were seen as heathen or pagan, and so to become Christian they needed Christian names. In some cases the First Nations people had some degree of autonomy. If they pledged to give up their “old ways” and become Christian, they would be baptized and given a new name.
- Students can explore prevalent family names (surnames) in the region, compared with other regions of the province. How do they reveal the origins of the “renaming” body or official.
  - For example, in some places the names are biblical, or names of clergymen. Others reflect the missionary or Indian Agent’s own



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history in Britain by giving British places names. In other locations, missionaries used the practice of giving the father's first name as a surname.


- Further research could reveal other forms of renaming, such as the use of numbers in Indian Residential Schools, and identification tattoos for some First Peoples.
- Students can work in groups to summarize different impacts of the loss of names and the renaming processes. Ask questions such as:
  - What are some short term and long term consequences?
  - What are the impacts on First Nations hereditary systems? How did they affect matrilineal and patrilineal societies differently?
  - How did they impact First Nations governance?

### b. Erasing Identities

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Students can investigate examples of bias in early media when it came to reporting names of First Peoples. While newspapers almost always identified non-Indigenous people in a news story, they often left Indigenous people nameless.

- Students can listen to, or read, some examples of early newspaper clippings found on Line Master 4-5, page 156, *Anonymous in the News*.
- Ask students to reflect on what messages such reporting communicates to the public.


 Line Master 4-5, page 156, *Anonymous in the News*

### c. Resisting Colonial Naming

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Students can find examples of how First Peoples resisted or adapted the use of their traditional names.

- How did First Peoples resist having their names changed? Students suggest some ways that people kept some form of their traditional name. (For example, using a traditional name as their last name or middle name, keeping them secret from officials.) If possible, work with students to find some local examples of people who retained their traditional names. Some students may be able to find examples in their families.
- Students can look at a sample of names of First Nations leaders from 1911 to analyse how their names had retained traditional names or were changed. Students can analyse the names of the First Nations leaders who met in Victoria in 1911. The delegates to the 1911 Conference are listed on Line Master 9-5, page 309, *Victoria Conference, 1911 Delegates*.
  - Have them survey the names to determine how many names:
    - include Traditional Names (e.g. Samuel Weeshakes)
    - have a single Euro-Canadian name (e.g. Chief Joe)
    - have a first and last Euro-Canadian name. (e.g. Ambrose Reid)
  - There are nearly 90 names, so students will need to plan how they will tally them efficiently and accurately.
  - Possible response of the tally: Include Traditional Names: 29; a single Euro-Canadian name: 20; first and last Euro-Canadian name: 39
  - Discuss the results. Ask, are they what you expected? Would the results be similar if you conducted a survey of names today?
  - Ask students to write a sentence or two to give their conclusions about personal names of First Nations leaders in 1911.

 Line Master 9-5, page 309, *Victoria Conference, 1911*

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- For a recent example of a person who resisted colonial naming, students can view the video *My Name Is Kahentiiosta*. (NFB, 1995. 29 min).  
<https://tinyurl.com/as7cszdx>
  - This documentary by Alanis Obomsawin tells the story of Kahentiiosta, a young Kahnawake Mohawk woman arrested after the Oka Crisis' 78-day armed standoff in 1990. She was detained 4 days longer than the other women. Her crime? The prosecutor representing the Quebec government did not accept her Indigenous name.

### Investigation 3 Colonized Place Names

Students investigate ways that colonialism impacted First Nations' traditional place names.

#### *Question for inquiry*

- To what extent does renaming retell or erase history?

#### a. Renaming Rivers

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Students can begin to investigate the renaming processes by focussing on the names of BC rivers.

- Have students work in groups to list as many BC rivers as they can in five or ten minutes. The groups can share their lists to compile a class list.
- Students use their background knowledge to make predictions about the origins of the names of the rivers. Have them classify the names of the rivers by the types of origins or sources of their names.
  - For example, some are anglicized versions of traditional First Nations names (Capilano, Nass, Nechako, Nimpkish, Skeena); some connected with the early fur traders (Columbia, Thompson, Fraser); some with connection to British people and history (Campbell, Harrison, Pitt).
- Students can refine their classification by researching the origins of the names they are unsure of. There are a number of sources to find sources of place names.
  - BC Geographical Names Search. This interactive BC government website has a database of all official and former non-Indigenous names in BC. They are shown on a map, and about half of them include information about the origins of the names. In some cases, they also give the original First Nations name.
    - Go to <http://apps.gov.bc.ca/pub/bcgnws/>
  - Akrigg, Helen B. and Akrigg, G.P.V; *1001 British Columbia Place Names*. Discovery Press, Vancouver. 1997.
  - Local history books that list origins of place names.
- Students can make a statistical analysis of the types of sources for names. Ask them to determine the distribution of names in different categories. For example, what percentage of river names have an Indigenous origin? What is the legacy of the fur traders?
- Discuss the diverse First Nations names for the Fraser River. It runs through many different First Nations' territories. Each Nation has its own name for the river. See *River of Salmon Peoples*, Theytus, 2015.

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### b. Renaming Local Physical Features

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Using a similar process, have students analyse the origins of the place names of physical features in your local region. These could include mountains, lakes, bays, channels and other features.

- Ask students to identify the origins or sources of contemporary place names in your local region.
- If possible, students can find out the original First Nations name and its meaning.
- They can classify the names according to the type of source. Ask how this distribution of origins compares with that of the rivers.
- Students can do a statistical analysis of the distribution of place name origins. Discuss questions such as:
  - Who and what is represented in the place names?
  - Who or what is missing?

### c. Street Names

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Students can do a similar analysis of street names in your local community. Street names are different from names of physical features in that they are usually newly created rather than renaming Traditional Names. Students can consider if and how the act of naming is different for street names.

- Vancouver Street names. Vancouver has 651 streets, and their origins have all been categorized by the city. Students can examine the origins on this map: [https://opendata.vancouver.ca/map/vancouver\\_streets](https://opendata.vancouver.ca/map/vancouver_streets)
  - Ask students to find how many street names have Indigenous connections. (11 are named for Indigenous people or terms; 10 others are within the Musqueam Park subdivision.)
  - Ask students to identify some of the larger categories, such as streets named for men, or streets with connections to the United Kingdom.
  - Students can further explore the distribution of names through a CBC website: <https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/streets>. It includes graphs that visually represent the distributions of the origins of names. It also includes a video that covers similar content.
    - Ask students to find the discussion of Indigenous names in Vancouver in the article. What can they conclude about Indigenous names in Vancouver?
- Ask students to survey their own municipality or community of choice for trends in street names. They can work together to do a similar analysis of the street names in your municipality.
  - Depending on resources available, they may be able to research the origins of the names, or they may need to make their best guesses as to the types of origins.
- Students in First Nations communities can research when and why street names were first given in the community. Many villages did not have or need street names until recently, when communities decided or were required to have street addresses. Other communities, such as those with a missionary presence, may have had street names in earlier times.

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- Students can create graphs or charts to represent their findings. What do they suggest about the naming trends in the municipality?
  - What or who is missing or left out?
  - Are the names of First Nations or Traditional Territories represented?
  - Are there anglicized spellings?
- Names in the news. Recently many cities have been changing some streets which were named after people who are seen to be agents of colonialism. Students can find examples and discuss the pros and cons of changing a street name.
- Students can learn about two Indigenous scholars who pasted new street names around Toronto in an effort to bring attention to the city's Indigenous heritage.
  - Access Online here: <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2015/06/02/toronto-street-signs-a-reminder-of-first-nations-heritage.html>
- Have students write a sentence or two explaining the differences between renaming physical features and naming streets in a town.
- Ask students to summarize their thoughts about street names. Ask questions such as:
  - Do the names of streets matter? Why or why not?
  - How can street names be examples of erasing history?
  - How can street names be examples of retelling history?
  - What street name suggestions would you make?

### d. Creating New Names – Indigenous and Non-Indigenous

First Peoples did not stop creating new place names following contact. New place names may document interactions and relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

- Share this example of a new Stó:lō name created during the Fraser gold rush.

Halq'emeylem place names from the area of the most intense mining activities between Hope and Yale also reflect aspects of the relationship between the Stó:lō and the Xwelitem (people of European ancestry) miners. Elders Susan Peters and Amelia Douglas explained that the Halq'emeylem name for one of the gold rush bars translates into English as "cleared away." This term describes the rocks that had been stripped of moss through the mining process.

Source: *You are Asked To Witness: The Sto:lo in Canada's Pacific Coast History*, pg.62

- Ask students what these Elder accounts reveal about the relationship between the Stó:lō and the Xwelitem at the time of the gold rush.
- How does this example of Indigenous place naming compare to the non-Indigenous naming you have learned? What is significant about this comparison?
- What is unique about this naming that differs from previous Indigenous naming practices you have learned? What does this reveal?

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### e. Retelling history?

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Students can summarize their learning and reflect on the impact of renaming First Nations' place names.

- Have students list as many reasons as they can that explains why First Nations place names were renamed. Ask, what purpose did renaming serve for non-Indigenous people?
- Discuss ways that Indigenous naming practices differ from non-Indigenous name practices
- Students can reflect on the impacts of renaming. Ask questions such as:
  - What are the short term and long term consequences of renaming?
  - What are the systems in Indigenous communities that kept the knowledge of place names through the colonization process intact?
  - What is the impact if these place names are lost? If these place names are officially restored?

#### Formative Assessment Strategy

Use student responses to these question to assess their growth in understanding of the power of names.

### Investigation 4 Using Authentic Names

Students explore ways that they can ensure they use authentic names when referring to First Peoples.

#### *Questions for Inquiry*

Why is it important for Canadians to find out and use the appropriate, authentic names for First Peoples?

### a. Lost in Translation

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Students can investigate examples of how Indigenous languages were misinterpreted, resulting in inaccurate or inauthentic place names.

- Ask students to suggest examples of place names that are anglicized versions of Indigenous words or names that students found in the previous classification and inquiry activities.
  - If possible, find out local examples of transformed names.
  - Students can look for local examples of how names of villages were transformed. For instance Kitkatla is really Gitxaala. The Haida village of Koonaa was named Skedans, a corruption of the chief's name.
- The explorer's first meeting with Iroquoian peoples provides one story of how Canada got its name. Heritage Minutes: Jacques Cartier <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfKr-D5VDBU>
- Track the misinterpretation of the term Kootenay through this article in the *Castlegar News*, March 15, 2020: "Place Names: No, Kootenay doesn't mean 'water people.'" Linked at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc709/>

### b. Respecting Preferred Names

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- Have students investigate, seek out and learn the context of the authentic spelling and preferred names of First Nations using one of these activities:
  - Use maps from different time periods, or other sources, to track the

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preferred spelling of Indigenous Nations. For example:

- Tsilhqot'in: Chilcotin,
- Tk'emlúpsəmc : Kamloops, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc: Secwépemc people;
- Snuneymuxw: Nanaimo
- Use individual First Nation websites. Each will be specific and clear about preferred names, spelling, and contexts for changes and reclaiming names.
- Ask local community members, family members or if possible Elders.
- What do these preferred spellings or name changes indicate about the historical documentation of Indigenous place names and/or names used to identify Indigenous nations?
- Give students an opportunity to learn and be able to pronounce names of First Nation(s) and names of places, buildings, etc.
  - This will probably need a discussion and study of the orthography used, and an understanding of sounds that English speakers don't use.
  - Remind students of the importance of respectful terminology, of using the correct or preferred Nation name (respectful terminology was addressed earlier in this unit. Revisit this notion with the added layer of anglicized, European dictated Nation names).
- The topic of preferred spelling is discussed in a 2012 blog by Métis writer âpihtawikosisân Chelsea Vowel. Titled "A rose by any other name is a mihkokwaniy," it addresses the preferred spelling as well as why preferred spellings and names for Indigenous Nations could continue to change. Students can read the blog and discuss it in groups.
  - Access online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc710>.
  - Additionally, Vowel's book *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis and Inuit Issues in Canada*, Chapter 1- Just Don't Call Us Later for Supper: Names for Indigenous Peoples elaborates on the original blog post.
- Model for students how to confirm respectful name usage. Okanagan is an example of an anglicized place name. The history of this term, and the importance of place names is explained in the words of the Okanagan Indian Band. Access this explanation and history here: <https://okib.ca/about-us/our-history>

### c. Inappropriate Names

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Students can examine the issues around sports team names.

- Begin by brainstorming a list of professional sports teams that appropriate Indigenous names or mascots. Be sure to include all sports (NFL, NHL, MLB, etc.)
- Next connect to regional or local sports programs (often they echo or copy professional clubs)
- Avoid creating a binary 'should or should not change name' question in this section, but instead have students seek to understand the damage of these portrayals using the following guiding questions:
  - What is the damage of these stereotypes/inappropriate names and mascot portrayals?
  - What are the short term consequences?
  - What are the long term consequences?

## Unit 4 The Power of Names

### Investigation 5 First Peoples' Rights to Control Names

In recent years, First Peoples' rights to control their names, and the power over acts of naming, have been acknowledged. However, the paths to change are not always easy.


#### *Questions for Inquiry*

In what ways are First Peoples taking control of their rights to name?

#### a. Acknowledging the Right to Name

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Students can explore two documents which advocate for the right to control names. Students can analyse clauses in UNDRIP and the TRC. The clauses are available on Line Master 4-6, page 157, *The Right to Name*.

 Line Master 4-6, page 157, *The Right to Name*

- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 13 of UNDRIP relates to naming: *Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.*
  - Ask students to paraphrase Article 13 of UNDRIP in their own words.
  - Discuss the distinctions of the words *designate* and *retain*.
  - Ask students to identify the intended purpose of Article 13.
  - Discuss why this clause is included in UNDRIP. (For example, language and Oral Traditions are central to Indigenous cultures; this includes the right to use and give traditional names.)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Ask students to consider TRC Call to Action 17: *We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school Survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five years for the name-change process and the revision of official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.*
  - Ask students to paraphrase TRC Call to Action 17.
  - Discuss why this clause is included in the TRC Calls to Action. (For example, it recognizes the economic impact for people wanting to officially reclaim their name. It also acknowledges the loss of names caused by the residential school policies.)

For more about UNDRIP, see Unit 5, Acknowledging Rights, Investigation 8, page 181.


#### b. Claiming a Name

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Students can explore a website with an article and interactive map that gives four examples of names that have been changed to acknowledge Indigenous relationships with the land.

- Explore this interactive reading “Claiming a Name” by Maija Kappler (Ryerson School of Journalism.) Access online here: <https://trc.journalism.ryerson.ca/claiming-a-name/>
- Read aloud with students, and pause to listen to pronunciations and explanations of naming using the links embedded in the article. This

## Unit 4 The Power of Names

 Line Master 4-7, page 158, *Claiming Names*

article makes explicit links to Call to Action 17.

- Assess the impact of four name changes that span across Canada, using the language of UNDRIP. At the bottom of “Claiming a Name” an interactive map can be found with hyperlinks that outline several name change initiatives in Canada. Students will explore four of these examples using Line Master 4-7, page 158, *Claiming Names*. This activity can be done by individual students or in groups.
- The nature of each name change interacts with UNDRIP, Article 13 differently. It is valuable for students to complete this activity with an understanding of the four examples to best draw conclusions on the purposeful implementation of UNDRIP Article 13. You may want to use the jigsaw strategy, or another method of sharing students’ learning.
- Ask students to explore how the names came to be changed using the questions on Line Master 4-7, page 158. Each item on the map has a link with background information. Encourage students to move beyond the single suggested links, if necessary, to gather more information or detail. It may be useful at this time to emphasize online source reliability and selection. The links provided on the site are:
  - Queen Charlottes to Haida Gwaii  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/queen-charlotte-islands-renamed-haida-gwaii-in-historic-deal-1.849161>
  - Southern Coast of BC to Salish Sea  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/b-c-waters-officially-renamed-salish-sea-1.909504>
  - Hobbema to Maskwacis  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/hobbema-to-change-name-in-new-year-1.2476653>
  - Port-la-Joye Fort Amherst to Skmaqn Port-la-Joye Fort Amherst  
<https://www.theguardian.pe.ca/news/local/update-mikmaq-name-added-to-peis-port-la-joye-fort-amherst-186807/>
- Discuss the idea that these names are new names, not restored Traditional Names. Why is that important to understand the right of First Peoples to control acts of naming?
- Review students’ responses to the question regarding the purpose of Article 13 of UNDRIP. Students can analyse the four examples of Claiming Names in terms of Article 13. Ask:
  - Which name change most fulfills this purpose?
  - Which name change falls short of this purpose?
- Have students to reflect on the processes of these four examples. Ask: Are there commonalities that thread all of these name changes together? What are they? Why is that significant?

### c. Restoring and Reclaiming Personal Names

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Students can explore ways that Indigenous people are reclaiming their Traditional Names today.

- Ask students where they might see or hear traditional First Peoples names today. For example, introductions at meetings, politicians; public speakers, authors and artists. Students can suggest people they are familiar with who use their Traditional Names.



## Unit 4 The Power of Names

- Explore names of people who include their Traditional Names, or go solely by their Traditional Names. (e.g Guujaaw, Laurence Paul Yuxweluptun).
- Students can look at an example where a First Nations leader used the laws of Canada to legally change his name to reclaim his Indigenous identity.
  - See “Lower Nicola Chief Reclaims Ancestral Name,” *Merritt Herald*, 2017. <https://www.merritherald.com/lower-nicola-chief-reclaims-ancestral-name/>
- Students can explore a number of sources to discover why it is important for Indigenous people to restore and reclaim Traditional Names.
  - “Giving my children Cree names is a powerful act of Reclamation.” Chelsea Vowel discusses writing in Cree on her children’s birth certificates. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/opinion-cree-names-reclamation-chelsea-vowel-1.4887604>
  - Interview: “Gordon Mohs Pop’qoles, Sxwoxwiyam, El:oliye,” discusses his three Traditional Names, their meanings and their usage. <https://www.ictinc.ca/gordon-mohs-popqoles-sxwoxwiyam-eloliye>
  - Woman Who Returns. Students can view a documentary about a woman who returns to Haida Gwaii to receive a Haida name. *Woman Who Returns*. CBC, 2017. 14:09 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=htNNK-eI77Y>
  - Students can read a personal essay on the traditional naming process. See Eden Robinson, *The Sasquatch at Home: Traditional Protocols & Modern Storytelling* pages 3-7.

### Investigation 6 Naming and Reconciliation

Students can explore ways that traditional names are being re-established, and how this contributes to Reconciliation.

#### *Question for Inquiry*

- What is the importance of public, displayed Indigenous place names? (highway signs, place names on official maps, official renaming etc.)
- How can restoring and renaming with Indigenous names contribute to Reconciliation?

#### a. Sechelt Hospital

Discuss the role of consultation and reconciliation in the renaming of a hospital in shíshálh (Sechelt) territory.

- shíshálh is a community that advocated for the name change of the hospital within their community and territory. The name of the hospital was St. Mary’s Hospital, a name that was shared with the Residential School in Mission, B.C. where many shíshálh were forced to attend. The hospital was renamed in 2015.
- Resources that discuss this name change:
  - Example of original coverage of potential renaming: Coast Reporter article, <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc211>
  - Vancouver Coastal Health announcement of the renaming: <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc210>

## Unit 4 The Power of Names

### b. Road Signs

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- Inquire if any students have seen road or highway signs with Indigenous languages in their communities or on their travels.
- The Squamish and Lil'wat negotiated the use of Traditional Names on Sea to Sky highway signs as part of a larger agreement. The transition from oral language to a written one is explored in an article, reflecting the complexity of renaming in Indigenous languages in current times.
  - See the article "Cultural Journey increases nations' visibility." *The Squamish Chief*, 2010. <https://www.squamishchief.com/news/local-news/cultural-journey-increases-nations-visibility-1.1110437>. It describes the process of having signs created and erected, as well as how various community members felt about the process.
  - Have students take note of the various opinions of the renaming, the transition from oral to written language, and the significance of this signage.
  - Students should note the purpose of this language on signage being a recognition of the First Peoples.
  - Explore the language, story and history of the Squamish and Lil'wat people through the map and audio links that are connected to the traditional language on the signage. <https://slcc.ca/experience/cultural-journey/>
- Have students investigate their locality for any buildings, schools, parks and other places that are being given new names in the local First Nation language.
  - Be sure to create a framework that ensures the topics being examined have Indigenous peoples involvement, consultation and approval.
  - Students can examine recent or current examples of civic name changes and debates that may develop around them. Be sure to set-up guidelines and debrief with students, particularly when renaming is a contentious topic within communities, as to ensure that the dialogue is respectful.

### c. Should We Rename British Columbia?

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Students can explore the #RenameBC movement.

- Discuss the idea of renaming our province. Ask students to explain the history of the name.
- Students can use the questions on Line Master 4-7, page 158, (where, when, rights holders, history of name, new name, path to change, connection to UNDRIP Article 13) to consider the question of changing the provinces name.
- Some resources to explore the idea are:
  - <https://globalnews.ca/news/2981868/would-you-re-name-b-c-first-nations-artist-wants-new-name-for-the-province/>
  - <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/rename-bc-first-nations-name-lawrence-paul-yuxweluptun-moa>

## Unit 4 The Power of Names

### Investigation 7 Give Back, Carry Forward

Students reflect on the important things they have learned in this unit, and consider how they can give back and carry their learning forward.

Refer to the Major Project outline, Major Project, page 51.

#### a. What Did You Learn?

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Students can consider these questions:

- What is one new thing you learned in this unit that you would consider a gift?
- What is one thing growing out of your learning that you can take action on?
- What are some new things you learned about where you live?
- What did you learn about yourself?

#### b. Documenting learning

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- Students can discuss or share ideas for documenting their learning.
  - Students can begin to come up with ways that they can showcase their learning in this course, while connecting to both “giving back” and “carry forward” what they have learned.

## Traditional Names in First Nations Societies

For First Nations, names are an integral part of family and cultural history. Both personal names and place names are important for identity.

Names play a key role in Oral Traditions. Personal names and place names are like baskets that hold a piece of history. They connect to ancient histories that often go back to the origin stories of the First Nation who holds them.

### Personal Names

Often people will have more than one name during their life time. They may hold more than one hereditary name at the same time. Names sometimes depend on the context they are used in.

In some cultures, people's names change over time, according to different stages in their lives. For example, they may be given a name when they are first born, then another name when they reach puberty or adolescence. Usually a special ceremony is held for each life stage. In many societies this involves a feast or potlatch, where invited guests witness and acknowledge the giving of the name.

Names are unique within a family, clan, or community. They usually keep a pool of names that are passed on through the generations. In some cultures, such as the Secwépemc, names are given in a cyclical pattern. Every two or three generations, a particular name is given again. This keeps the ancestors alive, and their stories passed on.

Names are important elements of governance. A Chief's name comes with a role and a

responsibility, often related to the stewardship of land and resources. The name is like a title, and stays the same. The person who takes the responsibility wears the name like a blanket.

In many First Nations, names are also given to material objects, such as canoes, houses and buildings. This illustrates the interconnectedness of all things.

### Place Names

The land we now call British Columbia was named by diverse First Nations who lived here long before contact. Traditional place names form oral maps that enable First Nations to travel their Territory and locate essential resources.

Place names may be connected with past events. They record ancient events going back to the creation of the world, and more recent events such as historic and heroic events or warfare.

Place names also record Traditional Knowledge about local resources, the environment or land forms. They can contain information about ecosystems and plants and animals living there.

While some place names may be lost, many are still remembered and used. Although they have frequently been erased in the general public by Euro-Canadian place names, there are many examples of the traditional place names being acknowledged and reclaimed.

Keeping Traditional Names alive keeps the past alive.

When House Chiefs take a name, they take on the responsibilities that go with a name. One of them is to make sure that, on the territory you have taken to protect, the people using it make sure there is no pollution, and that the area the animals are using and game trails and beaver dams and fishing sites are free from any obstructions, and you have to make sure that the people using it don't clear out the animals that are there for reproduction.

Testimony of Gisdaywa (Alfred Joseph), witness for the Wet'suwet'en Nation at the Delgamuukw trial.

# Traditional Place Names Origins

TRADITIONAL PLACE NAME	MEANING OR TRANSLATION	SOURCE OF NAME

**Examples of Name Sources**

Physical Feature  
Traditional Story

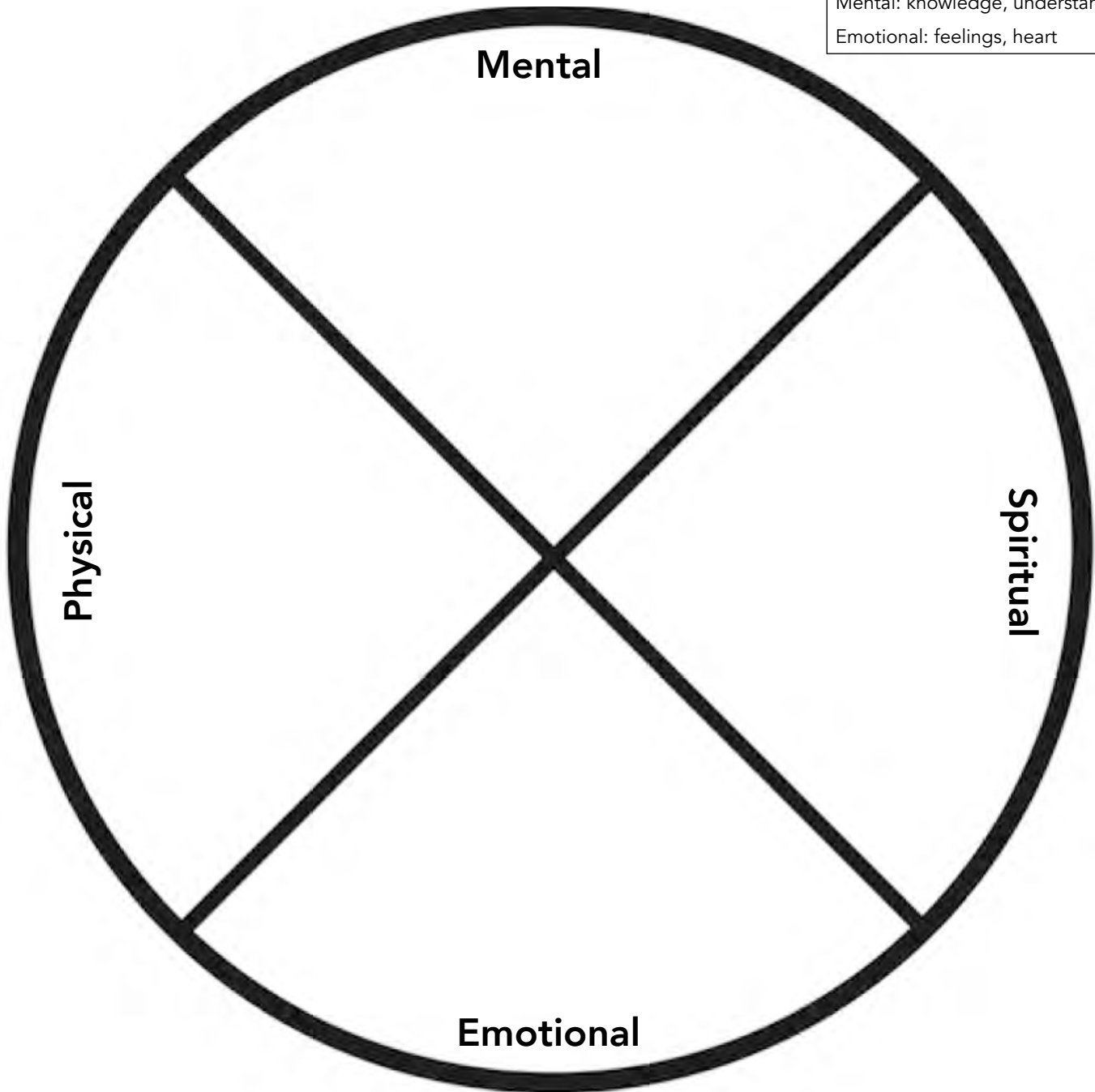
Historical Event  
Resources found there

Human activity  
Non-Indigenous interactions

## Relationship Between Indigenous Peoples and Place Names

Traditional Place Names for Indigenous people have varied, thoughtful and deep meanings. Think about how place names impact the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being of Indigenous people. In some cases, one detail may fit in several categories.

Physical: body, health
Spiritual: beliefs, worldview, tradition
Mental: knowledge, understanding
Emotional: feelings, heart

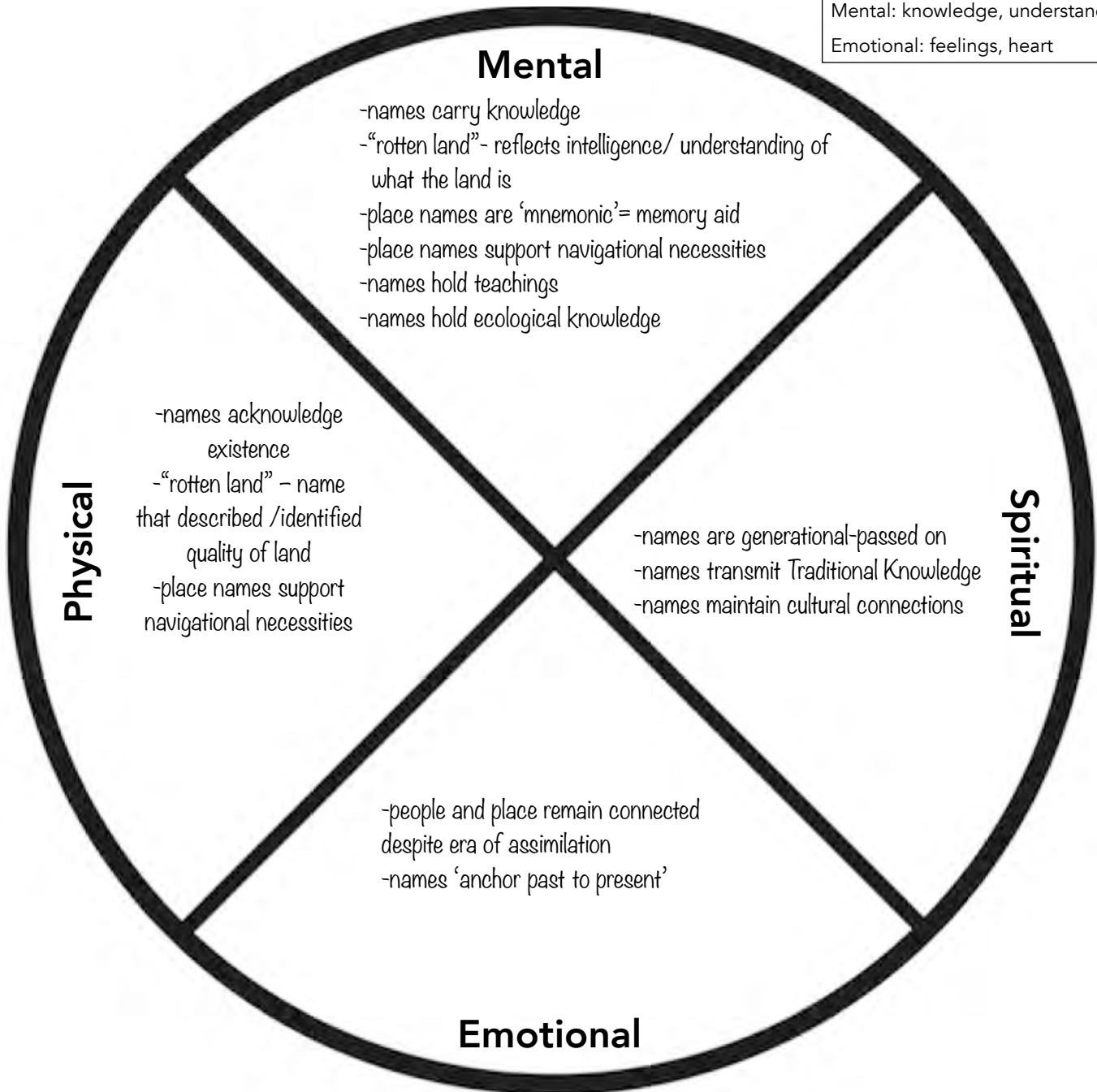


Based on your chart analysis of the relationship between place names and Indigenous peoples, summarize the relationship in a single sentence. This should be a complex sentence, synthesizing your understanding.

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## Anonymous in the News

**ASSIZES.**—A Court of Assize and general gaol delivery, will be held by His Honor Judge Begbie, at Richfield, on Mouday next. There are two criminal cases on the docket, namely, Barry, accused of the murder of Blessing, at Beaver Pass, and an Indian, accused of the murder of Morgan, near Soda Creek, in 1865. Several appeal cases will follow the criminal trials.

The Cariboo Sentinel. June 27, 1867, page 3

**The case against an Indian for stealing horses was tried before Judge Thompson this week and conviction obtained, the offender being sentenced to two years' imprisonment. The case was prosecuted by J. G. Spreull. The stolen horses were obtained here and taken to Brisco.**

Cranbrook Herald, April 14, 1927, page 2

### FIVE MEN DROWNED IN THE SKEENA

Word reached here on Thursday of the drowning of three white men and two Indians in Skeena River at Red Rock Rapids. A party of seven white men and three Indians left Hazelton on Wednesday in a canoe. At Red Rock rapids the canoe struck a rock and capsized. All clung to the canoe, and when it drifted near the bank, three men and two Indians attempted to reach the land, but failed and were drowned. The others clung to the canoe and after drifting for an hour were picked up by a canoe that happened along. The white men drowned were E. Williams, James Dibble, and James Munro. James Dibble was one of the owners of mining property in the Babine range that was bonded in July to James Cronin for \$40,000. No further particulars could be obtained at Prince Rupert, owing to the telegraph wires being down between Aberdeen and Hazelton. Had there been a steamboat on the Skeena these men would not have lost their lives. Canoe navigation is too dangerous with unexperienced travelers as passengers.

Prince Rupert Empire, September 21, 1907



## The Right To Name

What do these two statements have to say about the rights of Indigenous Peoples to use their Traditional Names?

*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

Article 13

Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

*Truth and Reconciliation Commission*

Call to Action 17

We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school Survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five years for the name-change process and the revision of official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.

# Claiming Names

	Queen Charlotte Islands to Haida Gwaii	South Coast of BC to Salish Sea	Hobbema to Maskwacis	Port-la-Joye Fort Amherst to Skmaqn Port-la-Joye Fort Amherst
When? Date of name change				
Where/What? What was being renamed? Where in Canada?				
Rights Holders First Nation(s)				
Context Why the change? Meaning of old name? Meaning of new name?				
Path to Change How did the change come to be? What was the avenue of change? (petition, treaty, etc.)				
Connection to UNDRIP Article 13 What aspect of Article 13 is being achieved in this name change? Use specific language from the Article.				