



Education for Reconciliation JUNE Update

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools is enacting *Education for Reconciliation* through two committees: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Advisory Committee **and** First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Leadership Committee. **The Leadership Committee** is focused on: developing community and inter-agency partnerships to advocate for Indigenous Education; and sharing with parents what our Board is doing to enact *Education for Reconciliation*. **The Advisory Committee** is focused on: engaging in teacher education about Indigenous Education; and developing and exploring classroom resources in Indigenous Education.

June Update. Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools celebrated our first National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, 2017, in a District Pipe Ceremony held at The St. Albert Grotto. Ella Arcand, one of our elders from Alexander, stated, “The District Pipe Ceremony brought us together.” She explained that it represented a “coming together of our two communities— Treaty 6 Alexander First Nation Kipohtakaw as led by Dan Arcand and Gary Gagnon, Escapio, and the non-Indigenous and Indigenous children, youth, parents, and staff from Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools. Now, we need to move forward and we meet again to celebrate our being together.” Archbishop Emeritus Sylvain is leading our District and our elders in an Inculturated Mass—a Mass to honour our relationship and to emphasize that “We are ALL Treaty 6 peoples.” We are celebrating our Cree elders, Edna and Ella Arcand in the upcoming Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, 2018 at The St. Albert Grotto:

Figure 1.0: Picture of the St. Albert Grotto



The St. Albert Grotto was built by Oblate brothers in 1920 as a replica of the Grotto of Lourdes in France.

National Indigenous Peoples Day Inculturated Mass

When: June 21, 2018 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Where: The Grotto (outside), and if the weather is poor, we will move into the Chapel in Star of the North.

What: Come join us for an inculturated mass, which connects our Catholic faith traditions with indigenous rituals, symbols, and traditions.

Who: We suggest that you come to this mass with a few students, your leadership team, and representatives from your school council or community members.

This is a day for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The Canadian Constitution recognizes these three groups as Aboriginal peoples, also known as Indigenous peoples. Although these groups share many similarities, they each have their own distinct heritage, language, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. In cooperation with Indigenous organizations, the Government of Canada chose June 21, the summer solstice, for National Aboriginal Day, now known as National Indigenous Peoples Day. For generations, many Indigenous peoples and communities have celebrated their culture and heritage on or near this day due to the significance of the summer solstice as the longest day of the year.

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National Indigenous Peoples Day Seven Grandfathers Activity

Designed by Edna and Ella Arcand

Overview. Edna and Ella Arcand shared their teachings of the importance of the Seven Grandfathers as their values that defined who they are in their families and in their Cree communities in Alexander. In two separate lessons, each about 60-75 minutes, you will share these teachings and then create a “gift” to celebrate one teaching in lesson one. In lesson two, you will prepare to offer that teaching to another as a “gift.”

Lesson One Materials:

- blank paper and pencils, pencil crayons, and fine-tipped felt pens
- medium-sized rocks that would fit in a child’s hand- one per student
- paint (water colour or acrylic)
- paint brushes
- water
- a place to let the rocks dry
- permanent ink felt pens to write words and design on the rocks
- post the Seven Grandfathers (teachings)- you can enlarge these on a poster.

Lesson Two Materials:

- you need one picture book, either *Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message* by Chief Jake Swamp or *The Giving Tree: A Retelling of a Traditional Métis Story* by Leah Dorion
- post the Seven Grandfathers (teachings).
- pink or purple ribbon- you will need to cut a piece of ribbon for each child to tie around his/her rock to be able to give the rock to another person.

Lesson One: Learning about and Sharing the Seven Grandfathers (60-75 min)

Lesson introduction and purpose.

- National Indigenous Peoples Day is a day for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.
- The Canadian Constitution recognizes these three groups as Aboriginal peoples, also known as Indigenous peoples.
- Although these groups share many similarities, they each have their own distinct heritage, language, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. In cooperation with Indigenous organizations, the Government of Canada chose June 21, the summer solstice, for National Aboriginal Day, now known as National Indigenous Peoples Day.
- For generations, many Indigenous peoples and communities have celebrated their culture and heritage on or near this day due to the significance of the summer solstice as the longest day of the year.
- Share with students that we are called to learn about our local Indigenous communities and we are lucky to have two elders, Edna and Ella Arcand.
- Edna and Ella Arcand are elders because they are recognized within their local community of Alexander for their knowledges of their local histories and cultures of families who have lived in Alexander. Edna and Ella share their knowledge with us when we ask them to by giving them an “offering of tobacco.” This offering is to convey our sincerity of our purpose. They use this offering of tobacco, which comes from Mother Earth, to give back to Mother Earth in prayer and ceremony. We went to their home for tea and asked them what we should share with all students,

staff, trustees, and our parents and partners in the community on or around National Indigenous Peoples Day. The two lessons that follow are their gifts to be cherished by us.

Day One Lesson (60-75 min)

Lesson activity. Our elders shared that they grew up learning about the Seven Grandfathers as the teachings that they tried to live their lives by every day.

1. **The seven teaching define their Cree heritage and values (consider sharing these teachings by having volunteers read them aloud).**

Teaching 1: The first grandfather teaching is **RESPECT**. To respect another person is to learn who they are and to understand where that person is coming from without judging that person. *Place others before yourself in your life and don't look down on anyone.*

Teaching 2: The second grandfather teaching is **LOVE**. Love is to know God/Our Creator as giving us life and to love God/Our Creator for our lives and for who we are. *We have to love ourselves in order to love others as children of God/Our Creator.*

Teaching 3: The third teaching is **TRUTH**. Truth is to see each other for who we are, our good and bad sides. *It is to look at ourselves before judging another person's way of walking.*

Teaching 4: The fourth teaching is **COURAGE**. Life brings hardships. *We need to hold firm to what we believe and to be strong, even when we don't know what will happen next.*

Teaching 5: The fifth teaching is **WISDOM**. Life offers us experiences that teach us how to listen, to accept, and to respond well to others. *Wisdom enables us to speak well, to have the right words in a situation, and to respond well to others' ideas. Listen to and use the wisdom of elders.*

Teaching 6: The sixth teaching is **HONESTY**. This is the ability to be honest with yourself and to recognize and know who you are. *Walk with integrity, knowing who you are what you stand for.*

Teaching 7: The seventh teaching is **HUMILITY**. This is the ability to see others' gifts before our own. *Humble yourself by walking with others and celebrating their strengths and achievements.*

2. **Classroom discussion.** After sharing the teachings, have them posted for the students to see. Ask the students to think about a person in their lives who has modelled one of the teachings and really helped them to understand, see, hear, and learn that teaching.
3. **Individual reflection:** Have students draw, write, and reflect on who, in their lives, people have helped them to learn about and live these teachings. Give each student a piece of blank paper to each person. Ensure that each student has a pencil (You may want to have pencils, pencil crayons, fine-tipped felts available as well.)

Share with students:

- After hearing the teachings, write the names of one or more people who have helped you to learn about the teachings.
- List the names on a piece of paper.
- Make a note about what teaching each person helped you to learn.
- Choose one person and one teaching that this person helped you to learn.

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- Get ready to plan for how to design a rock that has the teaching on it and that will be designed for that person as a gift to give to them.
4. **Draw a rock shape on the other side of your paper.** Choose one person and one teaching (one word) to design. You will be giving this gift to that person. Consider the following:
- Choose one teaching (one word)-choose one teaching and draft that word on your rock.
 - Designs - what symbols will you draw on the rock? Do you want pictures on your rock that stand for your word?
 - Colours- what colours will you use to paint the rock? Why did you choose this/these colour(s)?
 - Painting and felts. Paint your rock and let it dry. Use a permanent ink felt pen to write the teaching (one word) on your rock.

Samples: See samples in the presentation.

Day Two Lesson (60 min)

Lesson Purpose. Last day we created a rock with a teaching on it and we designed it for a person who taught us this teaching in our lives. Today, we are going to listen to a story and think about what we are thankful for in our lives.

Before Reading Discussion

- What are we thankful for in our lives?
- Make a list of what students share on a chart or white board.
- Read the book.
- This book is a story written by a (specify the author and the indigenous community being honored). This author is sharing how this community is thankful for different things in their lives.

During Reading

- As you listen, look at our list that we made of what we are thankful for in our lives and think about what the characters in the story were thankful for and be ready to share any **new** ideas that you learn from this story to **add** to our list.

After Reading

- Review what the characters were thankful for in the book that we read.
- Add additional ideas that students share to the original list of what the class had said that they were thankful for before reading the book.
- Edna and Ella Arcand asked that each of us give away our rock to the person who most reminded us of the teaching designed on the rocks that we made.
- They explained that before we offer the rock to this person, tie it in a pink or purple ribbon, which symbolizes Mother Earth - By giving this rock, you are giving back to Mother Earth who gave you the rock to share.
- Therefore, by tying your rock in pink or purple, you are thanking Mother Earth for the rock.
- What will you say when you give your rock to this person? What will you say about why you are giving him/her the rock? What will you say that they taught you?