

LESSON PLAN

Grade: 7

Subject: Cross Curricular
Social Studies, ELA, Art

Date: 2026

Topic: Whose Stories Does the Land Tell?

Inquiry Project (3–4 weeks)

Lesson Focus and Goals: How do the land, stories, and histories of local Indigenous Peoples shape our understanding of place, identity, and responsibility?

First Peoples Principle of Learning:

Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Students will explore how Indigenous Peoples' relationships with the land are reflected through stories, language, culture, and community knowledge. Learning will occur through inquiry, storytelling, reflection, community connections, land-based experiences, and collaborative discussion. Students will investigate how place shapes identity and how stories carry important teachings, histories, and responsibilities.

Materials Needed:

- Student Inquiry Handout
- Inquiry Journals
- Chromebooks/iPads
- Internet access
- Google Earth or ArcGIS StoryMaps
- Indigenous-authored books and articles
- Videos and podcasts
- Chart paper and markers
- Community resources and guest speakers (if available)

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to:
- Develop meaningful inquiry questions related to Indigenous perspectives and relationships to land.
- Gather information from multiple sources, including Indigenous-authored resources.
- Analyze connections between land, identity, culture, and community.
- Reflect on personal and collective responsibilities to place.
- Communicate learning through a digital or multimedia presentation.
- Demonstrate respect for Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing.
- Engage in collaborative discussion and reflection.

Assumed Prior Knowledge:

Students have previously explored Indigenous perspectives through storytelling, local Indigenous histories, land acknowledgements, and classroom discussions. Students have experience conducting basic research, participating in collaborative learning activities, and reflecting on personal connections to learning.

Big Ideas, Core Competencies and Curricular Competencies:

Big Idea:

English Language Arts 7

Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand ourselves and make connections to others and to the world.

Core Competencies:

Communicating

- **Profile 4 I communicate clearly and purposefully, using a variety of forms appropriately.**

Critical and Reflective Thinking

- **Profile 3 I can ask questions and consider options. I can use my observations, experience, and imagination to draw conclusions and make judgments.**

Social Awareness and Responsibility

- **Profile 3 I can interact with others and the environment respectfully and thoughtfully.**

Curricular Competencies:

Social Studies

- **Use inquiry processes and skills to ask questions, gather information, and draw conclusions.**
- **Assess the significance of people, places, and events.**
- **Make ethical judgments about actions and decisions.**

ELA

- **Recognize and appreciate the role of story, narrative, and oral tradition in expressing First Peoples perspectives, values, beliefs, and points of view**
- **Recognize the validity of First Peoples oral tradition for a range of purposes**
- **Transform ideas and information to create original texts**

Arts Education

- **Explore relationships between identity, place, culture, society, and belonging through the arts**

Lesson Day 1:

Introduction (20–25 minutes)

Hook

Display a photograph of a local landscape familiar to students.

Ask:

- What stories does this place hold?
- Who has lived here before us?
- How might different people understand this place differently?

Introduce the driving question:

How do the land, stories, and histories of local Indigenous Peoples shape our understanding of place, identity, and responsibility?

Discuss the First Peoples Principle of Learning:

Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Introduce the inquiry project and student handout.

Body (30–40 minutes)

Students participate in a Wonder Walk and Brainstorm.

In small groups:

- Examine maps, photographs, Indigenous stories, videos, and artifacts.
- Record observations and questions.
- Create a list of possible inquiry questions.

Teacher conferences with groups and supports question development.

Students select or draft an inquiry question.

Closure (10–15 minutes)

Sharing Circle:

Students share:

- One thing they are curious about.
- One inquiry question they are considering.

Teacher reviews next steps:

- Investigate
- Connect
- Create
- Share

Students complete an exit slip:

What is one question you are excited to explore?

Technology Integration

Technology will be used purposefully to:

- Access Indigenous voices and resources.
- Research inquiry questions.
- Create digital story maps, podcasts, presentations, websites, or documentaries.
- Share learning with authentic audiences.

Suggested platforms:

- Google Earth
- ArcGIS StoryMaps
- Canva
- Adobe Express
- Book Creator
- iMovie

Differentiation

Tier 2 / Tier 3 Supports

Students may:

- Work with partners or small groups
- Use graphic organizers
- Receive teacher conferencing support
- Complete modified research expectations
- Demonstrate learning through oral recordings, visual representations, or videos
- Access sentence starters and scaffolded inquiry questions

Extensions

Students may:

- Conduct interviews with community members
- Investigate multiple Indigenous perspectives
- Create additional multimedia components
- Explore contemporary Indigenous issues connected to their inquiry topic

Assessment:

Assessment will be ongoing, strengths-based, and focused on growth.

Teachers will observe:

- Participation in inquiry discussions
- Development of inquiry questions
- Research and information-gathering skills
- Respectful engagement with Indigenous perspectives
- Reflection and self-assessment
- Collaboration with peers

Evidence of learning includes:

- Inquiry journal entries
- Class discussions
- Observation and conferences
- At key points in the project, hold sharing circles. Teacher records observations on participation, understanding, and reflection.
- Student reflections
- Final inquiry project
- Self-assessment

Assessment methods:

- Observation
- Conversation
- Reflection
- Project product

Assessment Criteria

Demonstrates respect for Indigenous perspectives

- Emerging
- Developing
- Extending

Uses inquiry skills effectively

- Emerging
- Developing
- Extending

Makes connections between land, story, and identity

- Emerging
- Developing
- Extending

Uses sources responsibly

- Emerging
- Developing
- Extending

Communicates learning clearly

- Emerging
- Developing
- Extending

This assessment honours Indigenous principles of assessment by valuing relationships, observation, oral communication, reflection, community learning, and multiple ways of demonstrating understanding rather than relying solely on written products or grades.