

<b>Topic: Indigenous Veterans</b>	<b>Lesson: 1</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Subject: Military Studies 15</b>	<b>Time: 1-3 periods</b>	<b>Grade: N/A</b>
<p><b><i>Intents/Objectives/Purpose</i></b></p> <p><i>Curricular Connection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Examine the concepts of war and peace from historical and contemporary contexts</li> <li>● Inquire into the social, political, environmental and economic factors that influence military activity</li> <li>● Encounter multiple perspectives on war and peace through personal and collective stories and how these memories influence understanding of identity and community</li> </ul>		
<b><i>Activities</i></b>	<b><i>Time</i></b>	<b><i>Displays/Resources</i></b>
<p><b>1. Introduction/Set/Advanced Organizers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Once students are seated, begin with a land acknowledgement. Although there are ones already crafted, I invite you to create your own. <i>For an example of a personal land acknowledgement, please see the end of the lesson plan.</i></li> <li>● Next, ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b><i>“Although we should always be mindful of the land we are on, why do you think it’s important to recognize whose land we are on before talking about war and service?”</i></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Accept student answers without correcting or offering feedback.</li> <li>■ If students do not respond, or if their answers are not moving toward recognizing Indigenous Peoples’ roles in the war, use the</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10 mins	<p>-Land acknowledgment resource on what it means and how to create your own:  <a href="https://climbingcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CEC-Land-Acknowledgement-Template.pdf">https://climbingcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CEC-Land-Acknowledgement-Template.pdf</a></p> <p>-University of Calgary Land acknowledgement resource:  <a href="https://www.ucalgary.ca/indigenous/cultural-teachings/territorial-land-acknowledgement">https://www.ucalgary.ca/indigenous/cultural-teachings/territorial-land-acknowledgement</a></p> <p>-Land acknowledgement personal example: at end of document</p>

<p>following <b>probing questions</b> to guide them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The questions are listed in a hierarchical order, but feel free to ask them as you would like:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What does the word “service” mean to you when we talk about war?</li> <li>2. What kind of image do you have of the soldiers who provide this service?</li> <li>3. What might be some reasons that someone would want to fight for their country?</li> <li>4. Do you think everyone should be allowed to serve in the military, or do you think the government should be allowed to place limits on who can serve?</li> <li>5. After someone comes back from serving, how do you think they should be treated? By the government? By their community?</li> </ol> </li> <li>● After the discussion, let students know that you would like them to keep their answers in mind as you move through the rest of the lesson.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>2. Clarifying/Creating - Understanding/Concept-Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work through the Indigenous Veterans (Path 1) Slides.</li> <li>● A few notes:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Slide 2:</b> The slides start with a discussion question. If students have already answered it during the previous discussion, feel free to skip to the next slide.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1-1.5 hours</p>	<p>-Indigenous Veterans Path 1 Slides: See slides</p> <p>-An explanation of <b>Indigenous terminology</b>:  <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/library-archives/collection/research-help/indigenous-history/indigenous-terminology.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/library-archives/collection/research-help/indigenous-history/indigenous-terminology.html</a></p>

- **After the video on Slide 3**, invite students to share some thoughts/reflections
- **Slide 7:**
  - Note the difference between First Nations and the other Indigenous groups. Also note the use of **Status** First Nations. If students are not familiar with the distinctions, please explain. [\*The distinctions are outlined in the Indigenous terminology link.\*](#)
  - **Ask:** what might be some reasons why elders discouraged their men from enlisting?
- **Slide 8:** If students are not familiar with the *Indian Act*, please give a brief summary ([\*listed in terminology link\*](#)):
  - “A Canadian legislation that sets out specific federal government obligations and regulates the management of Indian reserve lands, Indian monies and other resources. It has been around since 1876 and has been amended multiple times”.
- **Slide 9:** The photo is of Edith Monture.
- **Slide 12:** Conscription is mandatory enlistment
- **Slide 13:** Note that now, women were allowed on the front lines alongside those who served homefront duties.

-To learn more about the significance of hair:  
<https://witnessblanket.ca/story/braids?s=a>

- The image is of Mary Greyeyes Reid: the first Indigenous woman to join Canada's armed forces as a member of the Canadian Women's Army Corps during WWII.

○ **Slide 15:**

- **“Snatch patrol”**: when a small group of soldiers travel into enemy territory and launch sneak attacks before retreating.
- Features an overview of Tommy Smith. You may tell them that they will learn more about him in the activity.

○ **Slide 17:**

- The requirement was until 1942 (RCAF) and 1943(RCN).
- Indigenous Peoples did not receive the citizenship rights that they were fighting for.
- Talk about the **significance of hair** to Indigenous communities: Hair is valued as spiritually and emotionally important. Additionally, to some Indigenous peoples, hair is a symbol of strength and courage.
- In many First Nation groups, hair is cut only when mourning the death of a family member.
- To help with understanding, compare hair to their name:
  - Say: *“Think about your name for a second. It is*

*one of the first things people know about you. It connects you to your family, your culture, and your identity. Now, imagine if someone took your name away and forced you to be called something else.*

*Something you did not want to be called.*

*Something opposite of who you are. You'd still be you on the inside, but it would feel like they stripped away a big part of who you are. That's what hair can mean for many people. It's tied to their identity, so being forced to cut it is like having a part of themselves taken away.*

- *Say: So, to join the war, they weren't just asked to fight for a country that disrespected them. They were asked to erase who they were to do it.*

- **Slide 19:**

- **Say:** *"Prejudice was still rampant at home. Although their fellow soldiers had treated them as equals, back in Canada, they were met with discrimination instead of respect."*
- Highlight that they just fought for the country, and when they got back, they were still treated like an enemy.
- **Soldiers Settlement Acts (1917 & 1919):** government initiatives that attempted to look after veterans by providing them access to land and low-interest rate loans for

farming implements/  
improvements.

- Many lived on reserves so accessing programs in the cities was not always feasible.
- Had a harder time reestablishing because of trauma, injuries, lack of access to important care (if care was necessary, then they also had to deal with relocation and isolation from their communities), racism & marginalization, etc.
- Non-Indigenous veterans received grants giving them ownership of Indigenous land for farming. Indigenous veterans did not receive land, but instead, a certificate to use the land, even though it had belonged to Indigenous communities.
  - An analogy may help understanding here
- **Sun Dances:** celebratory dances by some Indigenous groups. Part of the “hero’s” welcome for the returning Indigenous veterans.

○ **Slide 22:**

- Monument unveiled in 2001
- Navy ship image is of the HMCS Iroquois
- Ask: “*Why do you think Indigenous Veterans have their own day of remembrance?*”
  - You can have a quick discussion about this question.
  - The discussion should sum with an understanding that it is a specific day to focus on not just the sacrifices of Indigenous veterans but to acknowledge the

historical injustices that these veterans faced during and after their service. It also serves to create space for Indigenous veterans to receive their long, over-due recognition.		
<b>3. Coached/Guided-Practice/Seatwork</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give article assignment:</li> </ul>	1-1.5 hours	See Article Assignment
<b>4. Differentiation with specific groups/students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Article assignments can be completed using chromebooks/computers instead of the printed articles. The links are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Article 1:</b> Tommy Prince Article: Bonikowsky, L. (2023). Tommy Prince. In The Canadian Encyclopedia. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/tommy-prince">https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/tommy-prince</a></li> <li><b>Article 2:</b> Indigenous Veterans: Indigenous veterans. Government of Canada. (2025, June 25). <a href="https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/people-and-stories/indigenous-veterans">https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/people-and-stories/indigenous-veterans</a></li> <li><b>Article 3:</b> Indigenous War Heroes - More Than A Few Good Men: Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. (2020, November 2). Indigenous war heroes - more than a few good men. Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. <a href="https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-war-heroes-good-men">https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-war-heroes-good-men</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>5A. Extension Idea 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite students to craft their own personal land acknowledgement that recognizes the contributions of Indigenous veterans.</li> </ul>		
<b>5B: Extension Idea 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If these lessons are occurring around Indigenous Veterans Day (November 8), task the students with planning and executing a celebration (could be school-wide, or at the classroom level) to commemorate these Indigenous veterans in the way that they truly deserve.</li> </ul>		

### Example of a personal land acknowledgement\*\*:

“I want to take a moment to acknowledge that I live and grow on the traditional lands of the peoples of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. Treaty 7 is the homeland of the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina

First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations). This land is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Districts 5 and 6.

Although I did not grow up learning about the true history of this land, I've made it a conscious effort to learn now and to keep learning. And, to me, part of that learning is understanding that this acknowledgment is only a small step. So, I strive to go beyond words where I also listen, unlearn, support Indigenous-led work, and ensure that the actions that I take and the work that I do actively honour Indigenous voices, and ways of knowing.

Living in Mohkinstsis, I'm reminded daily that this place holds deep histories, knowledge systems, and spiritual connections that have existed for generations. And because this place has given me so much, I carry a responsibility to honour that. And I encourage you to do the same: learn the history of the land you're on, listen to Indigenous voices and stories, and find ways to stand up for justice and reconciliation in your everyday life."

***\*\*This land acknowledgment was written by a member of the research team and is provided as an example. Please take inspiration from it, but create your own in a way that feels meaningful and authentic to you.***