

Topic: Traditional plants used in Métis culture

Subject Integration: Social Studies, Science, English Language Arts, Art, Health & Foods (CTS-career technology studies)

Activity suggestions:

1. Watch videos and take notes on the variety of plants (Day 1 & 2). Resources for these activities are videos, group brainstorms and a template to fill out the variety of plants covered. During day 1 & 2, please go through the slideshow with students.
2. Go for a nature walk and complete the template provided (Day 3).
3. Begin to explore some of the school led activities to get the school involved (Day 4 & 5).
4. Begin student led activities and templates included. Offer choices for students to choose the type of activities they would like to engage in (Day 6 & 7).
5. Complete assessment throughout and at the end. Optional review, tasks and assessment tools provided.

*Activities are very open ended to allow the teacher to adapt to their learners, subjects and grades. Grade specific tips are included under “differentiation” and within the curricular objectives. Teachers can do these activities over multiple days, the timeline is approximate.

Topic: Traditional plants used in Métis culture	Lesson: Multiple	Date:
Subjects: Social Studies, Science, English Language Arts, Art, Health & Foods	Time: 1 week	Grades: K-6

Intents/Objectives/Purpose

Social Studies (Current Alberta curriculum 2023):

Kindergarten: K.1.4: Explore how we demonstrate respect for ourselves and others by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions for inquiry: How can we show interest and sensitivity toward social, physical, cultural and linguistic diversity in the school, groups and communities?

Grade 1: 1.1: Value self and others as unique individuals in relation to their world: Appreciate multiple points of view, languages, cultures and experiences within their groups and communities.

Grade 2: 1.1: Appreciate the physical and human geography of the communities studied: Appreciate the diversity and vastness of Canada's land and peoples, value oral history and stories as ways to learn about the land & demonstrate care and concern for the environment.

Grade 3: 1.1: Appreciate similarities and differences among people and communities: Demonstrate an awareness of and interest in the beliefs, traditions and customs of groups and communities other than their own.

Grade 4: 2.1: Appreciate how an understanding of Alberta's history, peoples and stories contributes to their own sense of belonging and identity: Recognize how stories of people and events provide multiple perspectives on past and present events, recognize oral traditions, narratives and stories as valid sources of knowledge about the land, culture and history & recognize the presence and influence of diverse Aboriginal peoples as inherent to Alberta's culture and identity.

Grade 5: 1.1: Value Canada's physical geography and natural environment: Appreciate how the land sustains communities and the diverse ways that people have of living with the land & demonstrate care and concern for the environment through their choices and actions.

Grade 6: 1.6: Analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues: How do associations such as the Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta (ACFA), the Métis Nation of Alberta Association (MNAA) and the First Nations Authorities (FNA) provide their members with a voice, at local and provincial levels, exercising historical and constitutional rights?

Science (new Alberta curriculum):

Earth Systems: Understandings of the living world, Earth, and space are deepened by investigating natural systems and their interactions (K-4 & 6)

Kindergarten: Children examine and describe surrounding environments.

Grade 1: Students analyze environments and investigate interactions and changes.

Grade 2: Students investigate the growth and development of plants and animals and consider their relationship to humans.

Grade 3: Students analyze and describe how plants and animals interact with each other and within environments.

Grade 4: Make connections between human activity and Earth’s systems.

Grade 5: Living Systems: Understandings of the living world, Earth, and space are deepened by investigating natural systems and their interactions. Examine the transport systems of plants and describe their functions.

Grade 6: Personal actions that can help address human causes of global climate change include: reducing personal consumption and waste, planting a garden or buying local produce & using clean, affordable, and reliable energy sources responsibly.

English Language Arts (new Alberta curriculum):

K-6: Text Forms and Structures: Identifying and applying text forms and structures improves understanding of content, literary style, and our rich language traditions.

K:6: Oral Language: Listening and speaking form the foundation for literacy development and improve communication, collaboration, and respectful mutual understanding.

Art (new Alberta curriculum):

K-6: Appreciation: Recognizing beauty, goodness, and truth in visual arts can be developed by understanding the complexity and richness of great artworks, the artists who create them, and the historical and cultural contexts from which they originate.

Health (new Alberta curriculum):

K-6: Healthy Eating: A lifetime of optimal well-being and physical wellness is supported by prioritizing nutrition and healthy eating.

Food Education: (Current Alberta curriculum 2023) (The Career and Technology Studies (CTS) program): Foods can be incorporated at any grade level. FNMI students often have a holistic view of learning—they look for connections through experiential learning. Such connections can be made within the real-world, experiential CTS program.

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Displays/ Resources</i>
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1. Introduction/Set/Advanced Organizers

Teacher Led Ideas

(organization, topic introduction, group learning)

Objective: To learn about plants that are traditionally used in Métis culture in Alberta.

1. Ask students the following question: “What do you know about traditional plants that grow in Alberta?” Give students 5 minutes to draw/write any plants that they can think of on a piece of paper or in their writing journals.

5 min

<https://wwf.ca/stories/celebrating-albertas-native-plants/>

2. As a group, come together and brainstorm some traditional plants that can be found in your area. Have students come and write some of their findings on the board. The WWF (World Wildlife Foundation) [Celebrating Alberta’s hardy native plants - WWF.CA](https://www.wwf.ca/celebrating-albertas-hardy-native-plants) website has more information about plants native to Alberta. Teachers can also see the Kainai Plant Index [Plant Index](#) and Naapi’s Playground [Naapi’s Garden: A guide to culturally important Blackfoot Plants — Buffalo Treaty](#) for extra resources.

10 min

<https://galileo.org/kainai/plant-index/>

3. In groups of 2-3, assign students one plant from the board. Have them brainstorm what they could use this plant for. Have them write down all the uses. This is a quick brainstorm.

5 min

<https://www.buffalotreaty.com/flux/naapi-garden-a-guide-to-culturally-important-blackfoot-plants>

4. Have each group share their findings with the class. Discuss if the plants students found are native to Alberta.

10 min

5. Watch the video about how traditional plants are used in Métis culture. Ensure students are taking notes, or pause periodically to discuss. (Here are the plants covered in this video: Stinging nettle, Rose hips, Plantain, Spruce Tree).

5:22 min

<https://youtu.be/lo870h1Muns?si=7F5ifbd8PKQ6a-FC>

6. Learn all about camomile flowers, marshmallow root, beeswax, white & black poplar, birch tree, tree gum, pine pitch in this video. Have students brainstorm a recipe they could create using wild ingredients. Let them know to use a little of their intuition to figure out what they need to make. Ask students: How can you find a plant that can help you? **For example:** what plant can you use to seal a hole in your bucket? These recipes can be edible or non-edible. Have them create this recipe in their journals or on a sheet of paper.

3:50 min
(video)
Activity
time
determined
by teacher

<https://m.facebook.com/ABMetisYouth/videos/traditional-plant-knowledge-is-an-important-aspect-of-the-m%C3%A9tis-way-of-life->

<p>7. Before beginning the next section, go through the slideshow provided with the students. This could go 1-2 lessons depending on classroom discussions.</p>	<p>2 lessons</p>	<p>and- /3198588363 76725/ Slides</p>
<p>8. Go for a nature walk. Students can use the template provided to document what they see. Alternatively, they can take a camera or art sketchbook to capture what they see. *Remember we show gratitude for the gifts Mother Earth has provided us.</p>	<p>Time determined by teacher</p>	<p>Nature Walk pdf</p>
<p>9. Make some rose hip jelly or tea! Rose hips are the fruit from the official plant of Alberta, the wild rose! This recipe is from the Edmonton & Area Land Trust and is used by many Indigenous communities in Alberta. *Fall is the best time to harvest rose hips. It is very important to only take what we need. We must be mindful to give back to the land that so generously gives to us. Reciprocity: We give back to the land what we have taken.</p>	<p>Time determined by teacher</p>	<p>Rose Hip Jelly or Tea pdf</p>
<p>2. Clarifying/Creating -Understanding/Concept-Development</p> <p style="text-align: center;">School Led/Group Ideas (Collaboration, we do)</p> <p>1. Make a collaborative traditional plant bulletin board in your school for students to refer to. Have students from a variety of grades add to the board.</p> <p>2. Have students lead school announcements by creating fun facts about traditional plants to share with students as a “fun fact of the day”. Students can create their own, or use the template provided.</p> <p>3. Each class can create their own Métis traditional plants booklet and they can be kept in the library (learning commons) or classroom library for checkout/sharing. Teachers can have students create their own or follow the template included.</p> <p>4. Teachers can invite a Métis Elder to either present traditional plants and their uses to individual classes or to the whole school in an assembly. One great way is to see if students have any Métis grandparents who would like to share with the class.*Remember to follow proper protocol when asking an elder to join the class. Indigenous Education Cultural Protocols</p>	<p>Time determined by teacher</p>	<p>https://alberta.metis.com/app/uploads/2021/09/Youth-Department-Traditional-Plant-Flashcards.pdf</p> <p>Fun Facts pdf</p> <p>My Booklet of Traditional Métis Plants</p> <p>Reach out to members of the community or classroom families.</p> <p>https://cbe.ab.ca/programs/supports-for-</p>

		students/Documents/Indigenous-Education-Cultural-Protocols.pdf
<p>3. Coached/Guided-Practice/Seatwork</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Student Led (Individual initiatives, independent exploration)</p> <p>1. Herb Garden Design: Have students research traditional Métis plants and their uses, then design their own herb garden layout which incorporates these plants. They can draw their design on paper or use online tools if available. Encourage them to consider factors like sunlight, water needs, and companion planting. A template has been provided for basic plant care if needed. Students can also use these sheets as they watch the videos.</p> <hr/> <p>2. Plant Storytelling: Ask students to choose one traditional Métis plant and research its cultural significance and traditional uses. Then, encourage them to write a short story or create a comic strip. They can share their stories with classmates or family members. Writing templates included if needed.</p> <hr/> <p>3. Artistic Representation: Encourage students to create artwork inspired by traditional Métis plants, such as paintings, collages, or sculptures. They can experiment with different mediums and techniques to represent the colors, textures, and shapes of the plants. It would be beneficial for students to read the links provided about the artists and find inspiration from their art as an added activity. Templates are included for students to try dot art. Students can use a variety of items found outdoors to use to create patterns on the page. See references for links to the artists.</p> <hr/> <p>4. Plant Journaling: Have students start a plant journal where they document their observations of traditional Métis plants over time. They can note changes in appearance, growth patterns, and any wildlife interactions they observe. This activity encourages peace and connection with nature.</p>	Time determined by teacher	<p>All about Plants pdf</p> <p>Creative Writing Template pdf</p> <p>Traditional Métis Art pdf</p>

4. Review/Assessment

1. Checklist: track students' progress on specific skills or behaviors over time. Teachers can create a checklist based on the outcomes/grade they would like to assess or based on activities.

2. Exit Tickets: Brief questions or prompts given at the end of a lesson to assess understanding. Students can answer a variety of questions the teacher provides based on the lesson or the teacher can use the optional questions provided.

3. Reflection Journals: Students write reflections of their learning, identifying what they understood well and what they still need to work on. This can be done in their writing journals, or as a separate activity.

4. Project Based Learning: Students demonstrate their understanding of a topic through a project of their choice. This can be a slideshow about their favourite traditional plant, an information booklet, an indoor garden documented over a period of time or a 3D model. Create a digital menu or choice board of students ideas of possible projects they can engage in that will empower students to take ownership of their learning. Template provided if the class needs a starting point.

5. Peer Feedback: Students provide constructive feedback to their peers on their work. This can be a student or a teacher created activity. Templates provided for ease.

6. Presentations: Students give presentations to demonstrate their understanding of a topic. This can be student led based on choice or in a small group.

Exit Ticket pdf

Metis Plants
Choice Board
pdf

5. Differentiation with specific groups/students

K-3: Planting video for young learners. Students can plant seeds today and watch them grow. When they are ready, students can make a recipe using their new plants.

https://youtu.be/9rcZLv_SCQ0?si=K4PytYWwtpibLevE

Gr. 4-8: The importance of native plants to our region. Learn about ecological diversity.

<https://youtu.be/trJKZDEFvrc?si=KgUHVkflPe3KjvhY>

Gr. 4-8: The importance of the garden in Métis culture. What do we mean by holistic gardens?

<https://youtu.be/Yyellz7uXtQ?si=6L1qyhb39PEoZoQk>

Writing templates: A few examples included to be adapted to a variety of grades.

Art: Templates adapted for beginner to advanced dot art. Students can paint dots right on the template.

Recipes: Rose hip tea can be made for beginners and jelly for more advanced learners.

All about plants: A variety of templates included to meet the curricular needs of the grade/class.

Slideshow: Teachers can use the slideshow with images and videos in its entirety or certain sections depending on the developmental level of the group.

ATA “Walking Together” is another great resource to use throughout this unit: FIRST NATIONS TRADITIONAL PLANTS AND USES

(<https://legacy.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/For%20Members/ProfessionalDevelopment/Walking%20Together/PD-WT-16i%20-%209%20First%20Nations%20Traditional%20Plants%20and%20Uses-2019%2001%2028.pdf>)

Plants at Fish Creek Park video (Background for teachers):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wPPA1RhG5jB47tKD218DY7AiYA0j63Sc/view>

Extra Time Considerations/Early/Late Finishers

Refer to the student led section and have students choose an activity to complete either independently or in a small group.

Extra notes:

*If you gather anything from the land as you are exploring, give thanks to the land for providing you with these gifts. Never take more than you need. Older students can research reciprocity in Métis culture as an extension.

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