Integrating First Nations and Metis Content and Perspective

Grade Four

Métis Origins and Contributions to Saskatchewan’s Community

**Please note: this document is not a unit but a list of resources.

Name of Teacher: Janet EnnsRegier
Name of School: Stobart Elementary Community School
School Division: Prairie School Division No. 246
Address of School: 616 Front Street Duck Lake SK. S0K 1J0
Rationale:
Many people of Saskatchewan have origins in the Métis community. This number is continuing to grow. It is important for all of our province’s citizens to learn as much as we can about the various cultural groups that make up our province. The Métis perspective combines the First Nations and European cultures in a unique way. As all citizens of our province interact other cultures are being combined as well. The Métis story is an example of the combination of cultures and the birth of a totally new culture as a result. This doesn’t always happen when two cultures interact. This cultural group should be studied as the somewhat unique situation that it is. The possibility that the combining of cultures will continue to create more new cultures in our world is very real. Learning about the vibrancy and emerging self-respect of the Métis community can be very encouraging for the future of our world.
Incorporating Medicine Wheel Philosophy

See Appendix 7

Spiritual

In learning about the culture of others we are naturally encouraged to consider our own traditions and beliefs. In the spiritual section of the Medicine Wheel we are encouraged to attend to the needs of our inner self. Learning to understand and respect other cultures encourages a sense of pride and respect for the things that make up our own culture. Understanding that most people come from a tradition and value that tradition, helps us to see the importance of cultural practices for the health of people everywhere. Developing an understanding for other peoples’ cultures and our own can only lead to a more respectful and harmonious world. The Medicine Wheel is a circle and one of the important teachings of this is that all people are equal within that circle. It represents interconnectedness with all of creation. We immediately think of our connections with the natural world. It is vitally important, though, to consider our connections with the diverse groups within our own species as well.

Physical

Becoming physically involved in the traditions of a culture help us to feel something of what the people of that culture might feel as they take part in their traditions. Singing the songs, dancing the dances, cooking and eating the foods, creating the artwork and dramatizing the important moments in history are ways to get involved. We honour those traditions when we take part in a respectful way. When we honour our physical bodies by taking part in a respectful way we honour the intent of the Medicine Wheel teachings. When we do these activities in a circle no one is more or less prominent than the next person. It creates a sense of balance within our selves and within our classroom.

Emotional

We have an emotional response to ideas and ways that are different from our own. Sometimes we feel threatened and sometimes we feel excited by the unfamiliar. If we can gain an understanding of how and why people in cultures other than our own do the things that they do, we will feel more comfortable with them. Our own emotional health is aggravated by negative feelings. If we can strive to learn about unfamiliar ideas and practices we will probably have a more positive attitude towards people who are different from us and thus be healthier ourselves. We will have achieved a sense of the relationship we have with other people and that knowledge will provide balance in our lives.

Mental

Learning about other cultures at a young age may have the effect of instilling a life-long desire to know more about other groups of people. Knowledge promotes understanding and understanding promotes more peaceful attitudes. Acquiring knowledge gives us the capability to pass on knowledge to those we come in contact with. Constructive/optimistic knowledge can only help our province and our world. Our thoughts can influence our feelings and actions. With positive knowledge about other cultures we can feel and act in a respectful, healthy way to the many people around u
Deeper Understanding Questions

Following is a list of some of the bigger questions that could be explored throughout this unit. These questions are based on the understandings which originate from the Tipi Teachings and universal values that First Nations peoples deem imperative. For further understanding of Tipi Teachings go to “Four Directions Teachings” and select Cree Teachings by Elder Mary Lee. For further information on Universal Values go to Office of Treaty Commissioners website and look for Treaty Essentials Learnings We Are All Treaty People from the Teaching Treaties Kits.

Respect - all things are created equally
Humility – humans are not above other things in creation
Happiness – the world is an interesting and beautiful place
Love – humans need to be encouraged to appreciate all things in the natural world
Kinship – we are related to and affected by all things in nature and by changes experienced by any parts of nature
Thankfulness – we are fortunate to live in such an interesting and beautiful place and we are privileged to be able to use things like rocks and minerals for our own use.

Why is learning about the Métis culture so important in Saskatchewan?

Why is it important to learn about cultures other than our own?

How can learning about another culture affect our lives in a positive way?

How can this learning affect our whole society in a positive way? Our world?

How does learning about a culture other than our own, change the way we look at people from other cultures?

How does it help us to get to know another culture and its ways by doing the dances, singing the songs and creating the art of that culture?

How can learning about someone else’s culture help us appreciate our own?

Do we have a responsibility to learn about other cultures?

How does it feel when someone shows interest in your culture?

Do we have a responsibility to share about our culture?
Suggested Resources


Curriculum Unit Outcomes

IN4.1 Analyze how First Nations and Métis people have shaped and continue to shape Saskatchewan.

IN4.2 Describe the origins of the cultural diversity in Saskatchewan communities.

*The Métis story is an important part of the history of the province of Saskatchewan. The following resources are helpful for providing an overview of this history.

- [www.saskstories.ca](http://www.saskstories.ca) – The Fur Trade
- Riel’s People – How the Métis Lived (Campbell, 1978)
- Annette’s People (Rempel, 1987)
- Marie of the Métis (Common, 1982)
- A Pictorial History of the Métis and Non-Status Indian in Saskatchewan (Ruest, 1976)
- The Métis Alphabet Book (Fauchon, 2007)
- The Flower Beadwork People (Racette, 1991)
- Beaver, Beads and Pemmican – Canada’s Fur Traders (Farnham, 2007)
- The Métis– People of Canada: A History (Associations, 1978)
- Alberta’s Métis– People of the Western Prairie (Schreiber, 1988)
- The North-West Resistance of 1885 (Pelletier, 1985)
- Flags of the Métis (Racette C.)
- Métis Development and the Canadian West – Books 1-5 (Racette C., 1985)
- Achimoona ((introduction), 1985)
- [www.metismuseum.ca](http://www.metismuseum.ca)

*Sharing stories is a part of most cultures and the Métis culture is no exception. The experience of laughing and crying together over the antics or tragedy of a story can pull a group together in a special way. See Appendix Eight and Nine

The following is a list of possible read aloud stories that might be difficult for most grade four students to read independently but would be good to share as a group.

- Battle Cry (Bayle, 2000)
- Belle of Batoche (Guest, 2004)
- The ‘Tobanz (Desjarlais, 2003)

These books would be appropriate for many grade four students to read independently. Our Canadian Girl series by Cora Taylor (Taylor, Buffalo Hunt)

- Book One: Buffalo Hunt
- Book Three: Autumn Alone (Taylor, Autumn Alone, 2005)
- Book Four: Angel in the Snow
* Curriculum Unit Outcomes

IN4.1 Analyze how First Nations and Métis people have shaped and continue to shape Saskatchewan.

IN4.2 Describe the origins of the cultural diversity in Saskatchewan communities.

*Elders are an important part of most traditional cultures. The Métis community celebrates and respects its elders. See Appendix Nine. Following is a list of stories about children’s relationships with their elders:

- **Fiddle Dancer** (Burton, 2007)
- **Dancing in My Bones** (Patton, 2009)
- **Jenneli’s Dance** (Denny, 2008)
- **Granny’s Giant Bannock** (Wastasecoot, 2008)
- **Black Bear Pastry and Other Delights** (Coleclough, 2008)
- **The Secret of Your Name** (Bouchard, 2010)
- **The Métis Alphabet Book** (Fauchon, 2007)
- **The Bannock Book** (Ducharme, 2007)
- **Voices of Métis Elders- DVD** (Council, 1993)

*“Bannock is a traditional food for Métis. When many of our people still lived off the land, bannock provided the essential energy our bodies needed, especially during times of hunting and gathering, or during the months when the food supply was limited. The flour and lard (animal fat) originally used to make bannock are very high in energy, meaning they contain a lot of calories. Now that we tend to live a less active lifestyle, our bodies do not require such high-calorie foods.”*

**Métis Cookbook and Guide to Healthy Living**, pg. 52, National Aboriginal Health Organization (2008)

The following books all make a connection to the importance of bannock in the Métis culture.

- **A Name for a Métis**, (Delaronde, 1999)
- **I Can’t Have Bannock But the Beaver Has a Dam** (Wheeler, 1984)
- **Black Bear Pastry and Other Delights**, (Coleclough, 2008)
- **Storm at Batoche**, recipe in back of book, (Trottier, 2000)
Curriculum Unit Outcomes

IN4.1 Analyze how First Nations and Métis people have shaped and continue to shape Saskatchewan.

IN4.2 Describe the origins of the cultural diversity in Saskatchewan communities.

*The Métis are traditionally a generous people. Their history dictated that they had to work together sometimes in order to survive (buffalo hunts and the resistance of 1885 are two examples). Stories of sharing when resources were low abound in their history. The following resources are examples of this attitude:

- **The Beavers’ Big House** (Panas, Whitford, 2004)
- **Little Métis and the Métis Sash** (Delaronde, 2000)
- **A Name for a Métis** (Delaronde, 1999)

*“Métis jigger originated in the Red River area (now southern Manitoba and northern North Dakota). It is a combination of First Nations step dancing and Scottish and French-Canadian reel, fig, and quadrille steps. Some of the more popular jigs are the “Red River Jig”, the “Rabbit Dance”, the “Broom Dance”, and the “Sash Dance”.*

The Métis are well known for their celebrations. At every one of these celebrations you will always hear fiddle music, and you will see people jiggging. There are often competitions held to see who is the best jigger. These events allow people to have fun and to visit with family and friends. Each performer has developed unique steps. Over time, a person’s steps change from watching other jiggers, or by simply inventing them. To be a good jigger, your upper body has to remain straight while you move your feet to create steps. Some people can even tell where a person is from based on their steps. Each community and some families have unique jiggering styles.”  

**The Métis Alphabet Book** Study Card ‘J is for Jig’  
- **Fiddle Dancer** by Anne Patton and Wilfred Burton includes a C.D. with fiddle music (Burton, 2007)
- **The Story of the Rabbit Dance** (Pelletier, 2007)
- **Dancing in My Bones** (Patton, Burton 2009)
- **Jenneli’s Dance** (Denny, Jenneli’s Dance, 2008)
- See Appendix One
- **The Métis Alphabet Book** (Fauchon, 2007)
**Curriculum Unit Outcomes**

IN4.1 Analyze how First Nations and Métis people have shaped and continue to shape Saskatchewan.

IN4.2 Describe the origins of the cultural diversity in Saskatchewan communities.

*The Métis people have a unique language. Michif is a combination of French and Cree. See Appendix Five.* Stories that include a Michif version are listed below:

- **Tumaas ekwa li Michif Sharey – Thomas and the Métis Cart**, (Murray, 2008)
- **Li paviyon di michif**, (Murray, 2003)
- **The Métis Alphabet Book**, (Fauchon, 2007)
- **Better That Way** (Bouvier, 2007)
- **The Story of the Rabbit Dance**, (Pelletier, 2007)

*“The Infinity Flag symbolizes Métis pride and identity. It is the oldest patriotic flag in Canada. The Infinity Flag is one of the most recognizable symbols of the Métis people. It is the oldest flag native to Canada. In Michif, the Infinity Flag is known as “li paviyon dii ichif”. The first Métis flag originally was a white infinity symbol on a red background. The Oral Tradition maintains that the Métis themselves developed the flag. Some historical documents show that Alexander MacDonnell, a North West Company (NWC) employee, first gave the Métis this flag in 1812. The NWC was a Scottish fur-trade company based out of Montreal. Most Métis in what is now Western Canada were either NWC employees or supplied the company with pemmican. The Infinity Flag signifies the coming together of First Nations and Europeans to create a new people. Throughout history, the Métis have used many different flags. The Infinity Flag has outlasted them all. Today, it is the official flag of the Métis Nation. In Saskatchewan, most Infinity Flags are blue and white, although the original red and white flag is used in other provinces.”*

  **The Métis Alphabet Book, Study Print, I is for Infinity Flag** (Fauchon, 2007)

- **Li paviyon di michif** (Murray, 2003)
- **Flags of the Métis** (Racette, 1987)
Curriculum Unit Outcomes
IN4.1 Analyze how First Nations and Métis people have shaped and continue to shape Saskatchewan.

IN4.2 Describe the origins of the cultural diversity in Saskatchewan communities.

*The Red River Cart has become a well known symbol of the Métis culture. “Red River Carts were used by the Métis on buffalo hunts and for freighting. Made entirely from wood, they were very loud and could be heard over many kilometres.”

The Métis Alphabet Book, Study Card R, (Fauchon, 2007). See Appendix Six

- Riel’s People – How the Métis Lived, pp. 38, 39, (Campbell, 1978)
- Tumaas ekwa li Michif Sharey – Thomas and the Métis Cart (Murray, 2008)
- The Flower Beadwork People, pg. 21, (Racette, 1991)
- www.info.co.clay.mn.us/History/cart_squeak.htm

*The buffalo hunt was an integral part of the Métis life. The Métis people are of course a combination of the Cree and European peoples. These two groups brought many of their own traditions to the combination that created the Métis. The tradition of the buffalo hunt was a First Nations tradition that became part of the Métis tradition.

“The buffalo hunt was integral part of the Métis life. The Métis people are of course a combination of the Cree and European peoples. These two groups brought many of their own traditions to the combination that created the Métis. The tradition of the buffalo hunt was a First Nations tradition that became part of the Métis tradition. “First Nations peoples had great respect for the buffalo, for it supplied many things they needed to survive. The buffalo provided shelter, food, clothing and tools needed for daily living. The buffalo shared every part of its being. First Nations peoples used every part of the buffalo; nothing was wasted. First Nations peoples believed they had a special relationship with the buffalo and they have many stories to tell about this relationship. The buffalo remains an important part of First Nations spiritual ceremonies to this day.”

Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 1, pg. 30

See Appendix Two
Riel’s People – How the Métis Lived, pp. 15-18, (Campbell, 1978)

- The Métis Alphabet Book (Fauchon, 2007)
- The Disappearance & Resurgence of the Buffalo (Cooper, 1991)
- The Buffalo Hunt (Pelletier, 1985) Available online at www.metismuseum.ca
Curriculum Unit Outcomes

IN4.1 Analyze how First Nations and Métis people have shaped and continue to shape Saskatchewan.

IN4.2 Describe the origins of the cultural diversity in Saskatchewan communities.

*The Métis sash is an enduring symbol of the Métis people. There are many stories about the origin and significance of the sash.* (Delaronde D., 1999)

- *Little Métis and the Métis Sash* (Delaronde, 2000)
- *Fiddle Dancer* (Paton, Burton, 2007)
- *The Métis Alphabet Book* (Fauchon, 2007)
- *The Flower Beadwork People* (Racette, 1991)

*Louis Riel is a prominent historical figure in the history of the Métis.* See Appendix Three for a brief history describing Riel’s influence on the Métis people. Other books that tell some of the story of Louis Riel follow:

- *Storm at Batoche* (Maxine Trottier, 2000)
- *Louis Riel -The Canadians* (Neering, 1999)
- *The North-West Resistance of 1885* (Pelletier, 1985)
- *Louis Riel* (Pelletier, 1985)

*Gabriel Dumont - “Gabriel Dumont was known as the Lord of the Plains and Captain of the Buffalo Hunt. Dumont is one of the principal characters in Métis history having served as Louis Riel’s top strategist and lieutenant during the Resistance of 1885.”*  
Pg 33, *The Secret of Your Name* (Bouchard, 2010)

See Appendix Four for more information about Gabriel Dumont.

- *Gabriel Dumont -The Canadians* (Neering, 1999)
- *Gabriel Dumont* (Pelletier, 1985)
Appendices Table of Contents

Appendix One – The Métis Jig
Appendix Two – The Buffalo
Appendix Three – Louis Riel
Appendix Four – Gabriel Dumont
Appendix Five – Michif
Appendix Six – The Red River Cart
Appendix Seven – Medicine Wheel
Appendix Eight – Characteristics of Oral Tradition
Appendix Nine – Oral Tradition and Elders
Appendix One

Métis Jig

“The traditional dance of the Metis include the Waltz Quadrille, the Square dance, Drops of Brandy, the Duck dance, La Double Gigue and the Red River Jig which is the dance most widely known. To play the Red River Jig, the Fiddle is tuned differently, the bottom string is raised from a G up to A. The Red River Jig is a special piece of fiddle music that is played and danced in two sections. When the fiddle plays the high section, the dancer does a fancy jig step. Many Metis jiggers could perform up to fifty fancy steps.”

Retrieved from: http://www.metisresourcecentre.mb.ca/history/music.htm
Accessed on December 9, 2009

The Red River Jig

The most famous Métis dance is the Red River Jig or as it is known in Michif, “oayache mannin”. The accompanying fiddle tune is considered an unofficial Métis anthem. The tune was very popular in the mid 1800s and was known from Alaska to James Bay. The dance is a combination of Plains First Nations footwork with Scottish, Irish and French-Canadian dance forms. The basic jig step is danced in most Métis communities. However, dancers often add their own “fancy” dance steps during certain segments of the tune. Some dancers use fancy steps to identify their home community. There are three theories of the Red River Jig’s origin. The first states that it was brought over from Lower Canada (now Québec) with the French-Canadian voyageurs and was originally called “La gigue du Bas Canada”, or “La grande gigue simple”. Métis fiddle player Fredrick Genthon said that he learned the jig from his father who had learned it in 1842 from a French Canadian named Lauterelle. The second theory has its origins in the Red River Settlement. The theory states that the Scottish lived on one side of the river (either the Seine, Red or Assiniboine Rivers), and the French Canadians and Métis lived on the other. The Scots played bagpipes on the one side of the river, while the people on the other side listened. Then one night a man decided to imitate the bagpipes with his fiddle and played a sad tune, but then started playing a rollicking beat that made everyone want to dance. The final theory states that the tune originated at a Métis wedding in 1860 when Mr.
Macdallas composed a new fiddle tune for the celebration, which Father Boucher, the wedding’s officiating priest, dubbed the “Red River Jig”.

The following is a sequence of the “Red River Jig” steps:
1. Back step four times.
2. Front step four times. Double.
4. Triple tap four times.
5. Triple tap four times, accented right.
6. Triple tap four times, accented left.
7. Triple tap four times, accented right and left.
8. Triple tap four times, accented double.
10. Cross over handclasp with triple tap.
11. Right tap turn.
12. Triple tap four times.
13. Double tap four times.
15. Heel-toe step four times, left foot.
16. Heel-toe step four times, double.
17. Triple tap, four times, half circle facing each other, crossover, handclasp to places.

References:
Paquin, Todd, Préfontaine, Darren, and Young, Patrick. “Traditional Métis Socialization and Entertainment”.
http://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/00724

www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/.../proof_en_the_red_river_jig.pdf
Accessed on December 9, 2009
Other Resources:
Accessed on December 9, 2009 www.youtube.com Search “Red River Jig” to find examples of footwork and songs to use while practicing the jig.

Accessed on December 9, 2009 http://wwwmetisresourcecentre.mb.ca/history/music.htm At the bottom of this website is an example a song used to do the jig.

Accessed on December 9, 2009 http://www.mn-s.ca/index.php?id=batoche

Accessed on December 9, 2009 http://www.ohwejagehka.com/songs.htm This website provides a variety of different dances, along with music from the Iroquois First Nations.
Appendix Two

The Buffalo

First Nations peoples had great respect for the buffalo, for it supplied many things they needed to survive. The buffalo provided shelter, food, clothing and tools needed for daily living. The buffalo shared every part of its being. First Nations peoples used every part of the buffalo; nothing was wasted. First Nations peoples believed they had a special relationship with the buffalo and they have many stories to tell about this relationship. The buffalo remains an important part of First Nations spiritual ceremonies to this day.

*Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 1*, pg. 30


http://www.sd4history.com/Unit3/buffalouses.htm accessed on 01/13/10

For more information see
http://www.sd4history.com/Unit3/buffalouses.htm
http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/firstnations/bison.html “the bison hunt”
http://americanhistory.si.edu/kids/buffalo/ “tracking the buffalo”
  • Activities for teachers and Background information
  • Role of buffalo

“The Red River Métis lived by the buffalo hunt. The buffalo was the staple of Métis life. During the 1870s, hunts consisted of hundreds of hunters accompanied by their families on a uniquely versatile cart known as the Red River cart. It was only when American hunters, in their attempt to weaken the Aboriginal people, brutally slaughtered the buffalo until the buffalo disappeared. Along with the buffalo, the Métis way of life also disappeared.” page 32, *The Secret of Your Name* by David Bouchard.
Image retrieved from:
http://www.sd4history.com/Unit3/buffalouses.htm
Appendix Three

Louis Riel

“No one better represents or defines the rights of the Métis than Louis Riel, Jr. Riel directed both the Red River Rebellion in 1860 and the North West Rebellion in 1885. Sir John A. Macdonalds’ government tried and executed Riel in 1885 on the grounds that he was a rebel and a traitor. He has since been pardoned and is now recognized as the Father of Manitoba.”

The Secret of Your Name, page 33, by David Bouchard.

L is for Louis Riel -

On October 22, 1844 Louis Riel was born in St. Boniface, Red River (now Winnipeg, Manitoba). His parents were Julie (nee Lagimodiere) Riel and Louis Riel Sr. His childhood was filled with religion. At fourteen, he was chosen to go to the College de Montreal in order to become a priest. In 1865, he left school after his father died. Louis Riel then went to work at a Montreal law firm. He returned to Red River in 1868.

During the Red River Resistance (1869-70), Louis Riel led those Métis who were upset about the Hudson’s Bay Company’s sale of Rupert’s Land to Canada in 1869. This sale happened without the input of the Métis and First Nations. The Métis wanted their land and way of life protected by the Canadian government before the transfer took place. When the negotiations failed, the Métis formed a Provisional Government because there was no government in place in the territory. They then drew up a List of Rights. These were a set of laws to protect the Métis’ rights to the land and their way of life. The passage of these laws led to the creation of Manitoba in 1870, and secured Louis Riel’s place as the founder of Manitoba.

Ontario was unhappy with Louis Riel for leading the resistance. He fled to the United States, but not before being twice elected to Parliament. He was not able to take his seat in Parliament because a bounty, or a capturing fee, was placed upon him. In the 1880s, he taught school in what is now Montana, married Marguerite Monette dite Bellehumeur, and had two children: Jean-Louis and Marie-Angelique. Another child died as an infant. Jean-Louis and Marie-Angelique both died before reaching adulthood.

In 1884, Louis Riel returned to Canada to aid the Batoche Métis in their negotiations with the federal government. They were worried that Ottawa was not dealing with their desire to gain title to their lands. Negotiations failed, and another Provisional Government was formed. Prime Minister John A. Macdonald then sent troops out west. The Métis defended themselves during the 1885 Resistance and won a few battles, but they lost the war at the Battle of Batoche (May 9-12, 1885). Louis Riel surrendered on May 15, 1885. He was soon tried for treason and was hung in Regina on November 16, 1885. The Métis honour his memory on Louis Riel Day, which is held every November 16.

The Métis Alphabet Book Study Print, L is for Louis Riel, (Fauchon, 2007)
“Our people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awaken, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back.”

Appendix Four
Gabriel Dumont

“Gabriel Dumont was known as the Lord of the Plains and Captain of the Buffalo Hunt. Dumont is one of the principal characters in Métis history having served as Louis Riel’s top strategist and lieutenant during the Resistance of 1885.”

The Secret of Your Name, page 33, by David Bouchard.

“Gabriel Dumont was the general of the Métis resistance in 1885 and was a great buffalo hunter. Gabriel Dumont was born in St. Boniface (now Winnipeg, Manitoba) in 1837. His father, Isadore, was a framer and trader. He was the fifth of eleven children. Although Gabriel never attended school, he was extremely wise about how to use the land and its resources. When he was eleven, Gabriel received his first gun, which he named “le petit” or the “little one”. In 1851, Gabriel took part in the Battle of Grand Coteau in what is now North Dakota. During the battle, the Métis defeated the Dakota (Sioux) with only one casualty. Gabriel then became the leader of the Métis bison hunt in the St. Laurent area (near present-day Batoche, Saskatchewan) when he was twenty-five. He then met and married Madeleine Wilkie, the daughter of a well-known Métis trader. He soon became a farmer and provided a ferry service for the Batoche area. The ferry helped people cross the river and operated at a place that has become known as “Gabriel’s Crossing”.

In 1884, the Métis began negotiations with the federal government to obtain title to their land. Gabriel and three others set out for St. Peter’s Mission, in present-day Montana, to convince Louis Riel to return to Canada to aid the Batoche Métis. After the negotiations failed, the government sent troops to the Prairies. Gabriel then led the Métis resistance. After the Métis’ defeat at Batoche, Gabriel went to the United States to avoid being imprisoned. Madeleine soon died. Gabriel and Madeleine did not have any children. At this time, Gabriel became a performer in Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show. He returned to Batoche in 1890 and applied for title to his land. He received this title in 1902. Gabriel lived out the rest of his life fishing, hunting, and trapping until his death on May 19, 1906. He is buried in the Batoche cemetery.”

The Métis Alphabet Book Study Print D is for Dumont, (Fauchon, 2007)
Appendix Five
Michif

M is for Michif!

Michif is the heritage language of the Métis. Michif is made from Cree, Saulteaux, French, and English. The Métis’ ancestors were First Nations, Europeans, and Euro-Canadians. The Métis developed a unique culture based on First Nations, French Canadian, and Scottish traditions. During the fur trade, the Métis were often used as language translators. They could do this because they knew how to speak First Nations languages like Cree (Nehiyawewin/ Nihithawiniwin/ Nehinawewin), Sioux (Dakota) or Saulteaux (Anishinabe), as well as French, English, and Scots-Gaelic. From the Métis’ ability to speak several languages, Michif emerged around 1770-1800.

Michif is very distinct. It consists mostly of Cree verbs and French nouns. There are two other languages that the Métis also call “Michif.” The first is spoken in Ile-a-la Crosse and other communities in northwest Saskatchewan. It is made up almost entirely of Cree with some French words. The second is a dialect of French with a few Cree and Saulteaux words. It is spoken in St. Laurent, Manitoba and around Batoche, Saskatchewan. Métis people sometimes call themselves “Michif.” The word “Michif” is a form of the French word “Métis,” which means people of mixed race.

Until recently, non-Aboriginal people made fun of the Métis for speaking Michif in the school system and in the community. This teasing led many Métis to be ashamed of their identity. Moving to cities also meant that most Métis lost their Michif language and culture. Today, passing on the Michif language to young people is a concern for many Métis. Michif speakers and Métis institutions are producing Michif-language books, music, and websites.”

The Métis Alphabet Book Study Print ‘M is for Michif’, (Fauchon, 2007)
Appendix Six

The Red River Cart

“The Red river Cart was the Métis’ main source of inland transportation. Michif words for Red River Carts include “aen wagon” and “aen charet”. From the 1820s until the 1880s, thousands of Red River Carts travelled along trails throughout the North American Great Plains. Often, many carts would be tied together to form trains, or long lines of carts. These cart trails linked settlements together and opened up Western Canada to commerce before the coming of the railway. Pulled by oxen, Red River Carts could carry hundreds of kilograms of cargo and could travel up to 80 kilometres in a day.

Red River Carts were made entirely of wood, which made them easy to repair. If a cart broke down, any local wood from trees such as poplar, elm, willow, or Manitoba oak could be used to make quick repairs. While trees are not plentiful in some parts of the prairies, they can be found in coulees and along river and creek banks. Wood was also used for another reason. If a cart came to a river, the wheels could be removed and attached to the underside of the cart. The cart would then float across the water like a raft. Being made of wood, the Red River Carts were noisy when moving. *The wheels could not be greased because the grease would mix with dust and would harden. The wooden wheels would sometimes become very rigid, which made any movement impossible. First Nations groups called the Métis “the half-wagon men” because they were always seen riding in Red River Carts!*

*The Métis Alphabet Book, Study Print R is for Red River Cart, (Fauchon, 2007)*
Appendix Seven

The Medicine Wheel
The First Nations peoples’ common worldviews are formulated by interrelated components such as spirituality, values, knowledge, culture, oral traditions, language, technology, and the natural world. These influential components comprise social, economic, and belief systems.

Treaty Essential Leanings We Are All Treaty People (Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008)

Purpose:
The four directions of the medicine wheel are gifts given by the Creator. It represents change, equality, unity and interconnectedness with all creation. The medicine wheel is a circle of hope and of healing. It contains many stories and many teachings. We will never see in our lifetime all the wisdom that comes from these doorways. Every entity is considered a life form as it is essential for survival and balance. Every life form has a spirit, from the tiniest insect to the largest rock. The medicine wheel helps people balance and heal themselves and use it to provide a sense of direction and guidance to their lives. It helps people achieve a greater understanding of themselves in relation to all of creation.

Shape:
The spiral within the wheel represents change and moving toward another level of growth and development. The life force of all existence moves in a clockwise circular manner, representing wholeness and continuity. All of life forms within the circle will go through these cycles. The wheel is an important tool because of its constant movement. When the earth completes a full cycle of the four seasons, we also mature and grow as we complete a full circle. The circle is a sacred symbol used by most aboriginal people. There is no beginning and no end. When sitting in a circle all are equal; no one is greater than anyone else. We can see all who is in the circle and know what strengths the circle holds.

The circle shape also keeps us in mind of the many circles found within Creation. It remind us of the sun and the moon. Not only is their shape a circle, but so also is their journey. The natural cycles of life move in a circle. Think of the four seasons.

Examples of Gifts from Creator within the Quadrants

- Four Direction: east, south, west, north
- Four seasons: spring, summer, fall, winter
- Four original races: Caucasian, Firs Nations, African, Asian
- Four principles of life: love, honesty, unselfishness, purity
- Four stages of life: child, adolescent, adult, elder
- Four parts of self: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual
- Four medicines: sage, tobacco, sweetgrass, cedar
- Four types of animals: winged ones, two legged, four legged, flyers, swimmers
- Four elements: sun, water, air, earth
Understanding the 4 Parts of Self – Making personal connections within your medicine wheel?
Physical: What are you putting in your body that makes it weak?
Mental: What is causing stress in your life?
Emotional: Share a story that relates to your feelings.
Spiritual: When was the last time you participated in a ceremony?

Empowering the Spirit II, pg. 3, (Elliot, 2004) and Empowering the Learner 2, pg.5, (Hawker, 2005)

For other traditional teachings go to:

www.fourdirectionsteachings.com (accessed 19/04/08)

Native beliefs stress that it is important to maintain a balance among all things in nature. The people believe that plants, animals, and minerals have spirits that must be respected. If people take too much from nature, they upset the balance of nature and disrespect the spirits. Once the balance is disrupted, people may experience sickness, hunger, or other types of suffering.

To maintain the balance, people must treat one another, plants, animals, and the land with respect. Native people show respect by offering thanks for the gifts that they receive from nature. People show thanks with prayers, songs, dances, and offerings.

Native North American Wisdom and Gifts (Kalman, 2006)
Appendix Eight

Characteristics of Oral Tradition

Taken from: Treaty Essential Learnings We Are All Treaty People by The Office of the Treaty Commissioner (2008)

Oral tradition transmits the First Nations’ worldviews, including the values, beliefs and the “essence” of the nations.

Oral tradition requires the ability to listen and understand.

Oral traditions are repetitious so teachings can be understood and will not be lost.

Oral traditions encompass values, customs, beliefs, traditions, songs, ceremonies, history and information about events.

Oral traditions are still practised today by Elders who pass on important wisdom and knowledge that are invaluable to the culture, language and spirituality of their people.

Elders acknowledge the source of oral history.

Oral traditions were shared only if they imparted accurate information.

Oral traditions follow strict laws of respect.

Treaty Essential Learnings We Are All Treaty People (Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008)
Appendix Nine

Oral Tradition and Elders

Oral history is a way to store knowledge and pass it along by word of mouth. Legends and stories are part of the oral history of First Nations peoples. These stories have many themes: the creation, trickster and animal stories that teach about the beliefs and values of these cultures. They are entertaining, humorous and easy to understand. They tell about the world of animals, plants, the sky and the universe. Stories differ from nation to nation but have similarities, too. First Nations cultures have their own languages, traditions and customs that are learned through storytelling and ceremonies.

The Elders in First Nation cultures are usually the ones who tell these stories. Elders are very important in First Nation cultures because they are wise and knowledgeable about their traditional teachings and spiritual ceremonies. They taught children how to live in balance and harmony with the environment. The Elders told stories to the children so they could learn the beliefs and values of their cultures. Many First Nations Elders continue to pass on these teachings and ceremonies today.


Within First Nations societies, storytelling is an important developmental and educational tool, and is a central characteristic of their rich oral traditions. Legends, stories and teachings, which remained intact, were passed down from generation to generation over thousands of years. Storytelling was not only used as an important instructive tool, it was also a means of entertainment during the long winter season.

The stories include prayers, songs and dances, which also have a type of story in them. Some stories provide practical instruction on traditional living, such as food preparation, child rearing, friendship, love, hunting routes, bird migrations, family lineage, and prophecies that describe major ecological and spiritual events.

First Nations peoples give great honour to their ancestors because without them, there is no gift of life. One of the most important and common themes is creation stories, which explain how life began on Earth and how each First Nation came to be. Each story is part of a greater whole, providing the particulars on spiritual, emotional, mental and physical teachings – in particular the “natural laws” that remain inherent in traditional teachings and tell how to live in balance with creation.

Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 1, pg. 31
Among Native North American cultures there were certain stories that were usually told at specific times of the year. North eastern Indians told stories during the long cold season between the first and last frosts. Although you may not be able to restrict your use of these stories to this period of time, it is good to point out to children the traditional storytelling seasons.

*Keepers of the Animals*, pg. 10, (Caduto, Bruchac, 1991)

Drums are often used to tell stories, many elders that use a drum with first light some sweetgrass and with the smoke they will smudge the four directions, the drum and himself. Smudging will enable the storyteller to give good, honourable stories. Legends and stories are traditionally told in the cool months as Mother Earth prepares for the long sleep of rest and rejuvenation and as the animals prepare for hibernation and migration.

*Grandfather Drum* (Plain, 1994)

“*Of Science and Indian Myths*” from *Keepers of the Earth* (Bruchac, 1988) is a legend that explains the origin of storytelling.