

**Integrating First Nations and Metis Content and Perspective**

**Grade 6**

**Life Science: Diversity of Living Things**

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## **Rationale:**

Students will explore many ways to classify living things. There are many factors in which living things depend on for survival. Students will become aware of different cultural perspectives. They will begin to understand the relationship and different ways in which First Nations peoples understand the environment and living things that enable us to survive. Students will consider new ways of identifying things living with spirits. It is important for people to understand and accept there are many ways of thinking and understanding the world we live in and to make connections between these differences in understandings.

## **Incorporating Medicine Wheel Philosophy**

### **Spiritual**

Students will become aware of their place within the world and discover ways in which they connect and affect the environment and living factors.

### **Physical**

Students will become actively engaged in activities that will lead them to discovering new and old ways of classifying the diversity of living things based on Western Science and First Nations ways of knowing.

### **Emotional**

Students will share and contribute their thoughts with others through small and large group work. Students will support each other by validating our ways of understanding life diversity and learning from each other. We will become conscious as to how our actions affect the diversity of life both negatively and positively.

### **Mental**

Students will research and present their understanding of different living organisms and articulate ways to incorporate their learning into their everyday life. They will interpret our learning into a way of demonstrating positive healthy ways in which to live and interact with the natural environment.

## **Deeper Understanding Questions**

How can we show respect towards people, living things, the four elements, and the environment as we spend time here on Earth?

What factors are in our lives that make it difficult to appreciate the environment and the diversity among living things? How can we improve our behaviour?

In what ways can we apply and share our knowledge and beliefs with others about the importance of our environment and its' diversity?

Do you think that all parts of an ecosystem are living, or do you think that we can make a distinction between living and non-living parts?

Do we treat all living things the same? How do we treat things differently if we think of them as living and non-living?

Are the elements, in which we need for survival, living? How can we provide proof that they are living with spirits?

## Unit Outcomes

[DL6.1](#) Recognize, describe, and appreciate the diversity of living things in local and other ecosystems, and explore related careers.

[DL6.2](#) Examine how humans organize understanding of the diversity of living things.

[DL6.3](#) Analyze the characteristics and behaviours of vertebrates (i.e., mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish) and invertebrates.

[DL6.4](#) Examine and describe structures and behaviours that help:

- individual living organisms survive in their environments in the short term
- species of living organisms adapt to their environments in the long term.

[DL6.5](#) Assess effects of micro-organisms on past and present society, and contributions of science and technology to human understanding of micro-organisms.

## Suggested Resources

- The Learning Circle Classroom Activities on First Nations in Canada Ages 12-14 pg. 17-27 **HUNTING AND TRAPPING**, Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Ottawa, 2006)
- The Learning Circle Classroom Activities on First Nations in Canada Ages 8-11 pg. 29 **First nations and the Environment**, Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Ottawa, 2006)
- Teaching the Treaties by Office of Treaty Commissioners (2008) Guides Grade 1, 2, 3, and Kindergarten
- Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 1 (pp. 26-27). Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008.
- Treaty Essential Learnings We Are All Treaty People ,Treaty Essential Learning #4 (pp. 26-46). Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008.
- Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac, (1991)
- Keepers of Life by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac, (1994)
- Keepers of the Earth by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac (1989)
- People of the Buffalo by Maria Campbell, (1976)
- Dances of the Northern Plains by Pat Deiter McArthur (1987)
- Medicines to Help Us Traditional Metis Plant Use by Christi Belcourt (2007)
- How We Saw the World by C.J Taylor (1993)
- Nanabosho Dances by Joe McLellan (1991)
- The Mud Pony by Caron Lee Cohen (1988)
- The Sacred Tree Reflections on Native American Spirituality Produced by Phil Lane (1984)
- The Old Man with the Otter Medicine Told by John Blondin (2007)
- Buffalo Woman by Paul Goble (1984)
- Wesakejack and the Flood by Bill Ballantyne (1994)
- Nanabosho Steals Fire by Joseph McLellan (1990)
- How Two-Feather was saved from loneliness by C.J. Taylor (1990)
- The Yesterday Stone by Peter Eyvindson (1992)
- Empowering the Learner II Native Literacy Curriculum by Brian Hawker (2005)
- Empowering the Spirit II by Mary Elliott (2004)
- Little Water and the gift of the animals by C.J. Taylor (1992)
- The Fire Stealer by Elizabeth Cleaver (1979)
- The Great Race of the Birds and Animals by Paul Goble (1995)
- Nanabush and the Bulrushes by Linda Pelly (n.d.)
- Nanabosho and the Cranberries by Joe McLellan (1998)
- How the Mouse Got Brown Teeth by Freda Ahenakew (1988)
- How the Loon Lost Her Voice by Anne Cameron (1985)
- Nanabosho: How the Turtle got its Shell by Joe McLellan (1994)
- Nanabosho, Soaring Eagle and the Great Sturgeon by Joe McLellan (1993)
- How the Robin Got its Red Breast by Charles Craigan (1993)
- The Bear's Long Tail (2005) and How the Eagle got his White Head (2002) by Jane Chartrand
- How the Fox Got His Crossed Legs by Virginia Football (1972)
- People of the Buffalo by Maria Campbell

## Suggested Websites

- <http://pcchu.peterborough.on.ca/TUP/TUP-traditional.html> “traditional tobacco use” accessed on 01/13/10
- [http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL\\_Learning\\_Model\\_FN.pdf](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL_Learning_Model_FN.pdf) “First Nations Holistic Model”
- [http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL\\_Learning\\_Model\\_MET.pdf](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL_Learning_Model_MET.pdf) “Metis Holistic Model”
- [www.fourdirectionsteachings.com](http://www.fourdirectionsteachings.com) (accessed 19/04/08)
- [www.otc.ca](http://www.otc.ca)
- <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”
- <http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/firstnations/sund.html>
- [http://dance.lovetoknow.com/Native\\_American\\_Rain\\_Dances](http://dance.lovetoknow.com/Native_American_Rain_Dances)

## Engaging Activities

- Use a variety of calendar pictures and have students identify ways of categorizing. Categorizing groups must contain a definition of characteristics.
- Identify many ways of categorizing people, plants, animals, buildings within the local community by going for a walk or completing a scavenger hunt assignment.
- Watch and extract information from [Planet Earth](#) videos.
- Create a web using yarn how the diversity of living things within an ecosystem are interrelated and dependent on each other for survival.
- Investigate local ecosystem for the diversity of living things.
- Habitat Matchup games – lists of shelters, foods, animals, and sources of water and oxygen supplies (Keepers of the Animals pg. 71)
- Create matching games of animals and their physical characteristics, such as a variety of birds, beaks and claws. Have students decide and define reasons to support which physical characteristics belong with which animal

## Outcome

### DL6.1 Recognize, describe, and appreciate the diversity of living things in local and other ecosystems, and explore related careers.

- Analyze how First Nations and Metis worldviews value all living things.
  - First Nations Holistic Model
    - [http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL\\_Learning\\_Model\\_FN.pdf](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL_Learning_Model_FN.pdf)
  - Metis Holistic Lifelong Model
    - [http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL\\_Learning\\_Model\\_MET.pdf](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/RedefiningSuccess/CCL_Learning_Model_MET.pdf)
  - Inuit Holistic Lifelong Model
    - [http://www.ccl-cca.ca/NR/ronlyres/5234E9B9-6B88-4BEC-AE02-4DE74DAD863F/0/CCL\\_Inuit\\_Holistic\\_Learning\\_Model\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/NR/ronlyres/5234E9B9-6B88-4BEC-AE02-4DE74DAD863F/0/CCL_Inuit_Holistic_Learning_Model_EN.pdf)
  - Medicine Wheel to describe worldview (Appendix 1)
  - Relationship with the land (Appendix 2 & 11)
  - First Nations Traditional Teachings emphasize their respect and love for each other and the Earth (Appendix 13)
  - Read the legend The Circle of Life and the Clambake from Keepers of Life (Caduto & Bruchac, 1994) everything in life is a circle. Legends are a sacred part of Aboriginal culture and understanding the world. (Appendix 3 & 12)
- <http://www.literacycommunity.com/grade3/firstnations/environment.htm> Lesson Plans
- Read legends that explain the **creation of the world** and its need for diversity. Within the legends explore what the concept of Earth as our home and what it provides for survival. (Appendix 2, 3, & 12)
  - The Mud Pony by Caron Lee Cohen
  - The Gift of the Whale from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac explains the creation of good things and the relationship between the Inuit, Creator, and the land.
  - Four Worlds: The Dine story of Creation from Keepers of the Earth by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - The Earth on Turtle's Back from Keepers of the Earth by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - How Grandmother Spider Named the Clans and How the Spider Symbol came to the People from Keepers of Life by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac explain culture and wildlife values but also describe ways in which animals were classified.
  - The Sky Tree and How Kishelemukong made the People and the Seasons from Keepers of Life
- Document and observe the ways in which an **ecosystem works together** and is affected by the variety of the living things. Use legends to recognize the relationships between plants, animals and their environments. (Appendix 1)
  - Turtle Races with Beaver from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - Explore the questions in Keepers of Life pg. 36 and infer why First Nations Worldviews identify why plants, earth, rock, soil, and animals are living with spirits (they are all needed for the survival of each other, without one there is no life).
  - Wesakejack and the Flood by Bill Ballantyne





## Outcome Continued

**DL6.1 Recognize, describe, and appreciate the diversity of living things in local and other ecosystems, and explore related careers.**

### Recognizing and Appreciating Diversity Continued

- Read a variety of legends that focus on the **importance of giving thanks** to the Earth and what it provides. Identify First Nation protocol of *offering* to the Earth before and after embarking on investigation and/or gathering from the Earth. (Appendix 2, 11, &12)
  - Nanabosho Dances by Joe McLellan
  - The Thanks to the Tree from Keepers of Life by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - The White Buffalo Calf Woman and the Sacred Pipe from Keepers of Life by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - The Rabbit Dance from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - The Deer Dance from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - The Alligator and the Hunter from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
- Taking only what was needed for survival is an important practice valued by First Nations people. Read a variety of legends that teach the concepts of self-control, appreciation, and stewardship of the Earth and its' resources. Use the teachings to help understand and compare the practices related to endangerment and extinction. (Appendix 2, 3, 11, & 12)
  - Awi Usdi, the Little Deer from Keepers of the Earth by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - Manabozho and the Maple Tree from Keepers of the Earth by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - Gluscabi and the Game Animals from Keepers of the Earth by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - Journey to the Star Bear from Keepers of the Night by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
  - Salmon Boy from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac
  - The Passing of the Buffalo from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac
  - How We Saw the World by C.J. Taylor identifies how the world may end and the need for balance.
  - The Origin of Death from Keepers of the Earth pg. 181 by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac
  - The Corn Spirit Keepers of Life pg. 3 by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac
  - The Old Man with the Otter Medicine Told by John Blondin
- Identify the different ceremonies First Nations groups practice to show their appreciation for the Earth and all of its' resources.
  - The Deer Dance, The Rabbit Dance, The Circle Dance pg. 44-45 from Keepers of the Animals
  - Significance of the Pipe and smoking tobacco Buffalo Woman by Paul Goble (Appendix 4)
  - Pow Wow Dancing and Outfits
  - Thanksgiving ceremonies that celebrate the season, and acknowledge different animals and plants. See Keepers of Life pg. 47
  - Ceremony for hunting the buffalo. (Appendix 5)
  - Nanabosho Steals Fire by Joseph McLellan
  - How Two-Feather was saved from Loneliness by C.J. Taylor
  - The Yesterday Stone by Peter Eyvindson
  - Tunka-shila, Grandfather Rock from Keepers of the Earth pg. 57 by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.

## Related Careers

- Explore ways in which First Nation and Metis cultures use(d) the diversity of living things in their daily lives for food, utensils, medicines, clothing, etc. (Appendix 4,5,& 6)
- **Conservation** (Appendix 7)
  - Many sections in Keepers of the Animals contain information about the conservation of specific groups of animals; insects (pg. 88), fish (pg. 100), amphibians (pg. 112), reptiles (pg. 129) birds (pg. 146), urban wildlife (pg. 181), wildlife management (pg. 227)
- **Zoos and Endangered Species**
  - Zoos and Endangered Species Keepers of the Animals pg. 182
  - Helping Species Keepers of the Animals pg. 236
- **Stewardship**
  - Aquatic Environments Keepers of Life pg. 64

## Outcome

### DL6.2 Examine how humans organize understanding of the diversity of living things.

#### Categorizing

- Learn how the **Medicine Wheel** organizes the diversity of living things. The philosophy of the medicine wheel is easily understood as a giant food web as in Western Science organizational method, where each entity is dependent on each other. (Appendix 1)
  - Teachings of the Medicine Wheel pg. 3 from [Empowering the Spirit II Native Literacy Curriculum](#)
  - Suggested Resource for Understanding the Medicine Wheel [The Sacred Tree Reflections on Native American Spirituality](#) Produced by Phil Lane
- Recognize that the **four basic elements** that sustain life are living entities with spirits within First Nation Cultures. (Appendix 8) Use Western Science characteristics to analyze if the four elements can be regarded as living entities.
- Identify different ceremonies and practices using one or all of the four elements such as, the Sun dance and Rain dance (Appendix 9). The following are some legends that explain the importance of the elements.
  - Read *Loo-Wit, The Fire-Keepers* from [Keepers of Life](#) by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac explains the need for energy from the sun and fire.
  - Legends *The Hero Twin and the Swallower of Clouds* and *Koluscap and the Water Monster* from [Keepers of the Earth](#) by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac explain the importance of water. Legends are from two different Aboriginal cultures and environments but share the same emphasis.
  - Legend *Gluscabi and the Wind Eagle* from [Keepers of the Earth](#) by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac explain the importance of wind and weather.
  - [The Fire Stealer](#) by Elizabeth Cleaver
  - [Nanabosho Steals Fire](#) by Joe McLellan
  - [Wesakejack and the Flood](#) by Bill Ballantyne
- Read creation legends of the origins of animals. (Appendix 3 & 12)
  - [Keepers of the Animals](#) have many legends on the origin of different animal structures and behaviours and how they came to be.
  - [The Great Race of the Birds and Animals](#) by Paul Goble
- Read creation legends of the origins of plants. (Appendix 3 & 12)
  - [Nanabush and the Bulrushes](#) by Linda Pelly
  - [Nanabosho and the Cranberries](#) by Joe McLellan
  - [Keepers of the Plants](#) by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac
- Clan systems were a way of organizing the people created by the Creator.
  - The Clan System pg. 95 from [Empowering the Spirit II Native Literacy Curriculum](#)
  - How Grandmother Spider Named the Clans [Keepers of Life](#) by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac

## Outcome

### **DL6.3 Analyze the characteristics and behaviours of vertebrates (i.e., mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish) and invertebrates.**

- Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac has legends about all the types of animals and ways of categorizing these animals. The legends are followed by information that teaches the anatomy, adaptations, communications, reproduction and conservation of the animal grouping. (Appendix 3 & 12)
  - Octopus and Raven focuses on invertebrate animals of the Seashore.
  - How the Butterflies Came to Be focuses on insects.
  - Salmon Boy focuses on fish. This legend teaches the importance of appreciating what is used and the teachings of the spirit world of salmon.
  - The Woman Who Married a Frog focuses on amphibians.
  - How Poison Came Into the World and The Boy and Rattlesnake focuses on reptiles
  - The First Flute and Manabozho and the Woodpecker focuses on birds
  - Why Coyote Has Yellow Eyes and The Dogs Who Saved Their Master focuses on mammals.

## Outcome

### DL6.4 Examine and describe structures and behaviours that help:

- individual living organisms survive in their environments in the short term
- species of living organisms adapt to their environments in the long term.

### Interdependence

- Read the legends Manabozho and the Maple Tree and Gluscabi and the Game Animals from Keepers of Earth by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac. These legends focus on trees and their function as well as the concepts of predator, prey and stewardship. Identify ways in which the forest provided for the people. What message is the legend trying to pass on? (Appendix 3 & 12)
- Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac pg. 195 explains the concept of Interrelationship.
  - The Circle of Life and the Clambake from Keepers of Life
  - Little Water and the gift of the animals by C.J. Taylor
  - Awi Usdi, the Little Deer from Keepers of the Earth pg. 173 by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac

### Survival Structures and Behaviours

- Investigate animal structures and behaviours that help organisms survive in their environments and read legends that investigate and explain these structures and behaviours within First Nations legends. (Appendix 3 & 12)
  - How the Fawn Got Its Spots from Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac
  - Turtle Races With Beaver from Keepers of the Animals explores dormancy and other adaptations to the seasons pg. 65
  - How the Mouse Got Brown Teeth by Freda Ahenakew
  - How the Loon Lost Her Voice by Anne Cameron
  - Nanabosho: How the Turtle got its Shell by Joe McLellan
  - Nanabosho, Soaring Eagle and the Great Sturgeon by Joe McLellan
  - How the Robin Got its Red Breast by Charles Craigan
  - The Bear's Long Tail and How the Eagle got his White Head by Jane Chartrand
  - How We Saw the World by C.J Taylor
  - Sedna, the Woman Under the Sea from Keepers of the Earth by Joseph Bruchac and Michael J. Caduto
  - Kuluscap and the Water Monster from Keepers of the Earth by Joseph Bruchac and Michael J. Caduto and many other creation stories for Keepers of the Earth
  - How The Turtle Got Its Shell by Joe McLellan
  - How the Fox Got His Crossed Legs by Virginia Football

## Outcome

**DL6.5 Assess effects of micro-organisms on past and present society, and contributions of science and technology to human understanding of micro-organisms.**

- The legend The Circle of Life and the Clambake from Keepers of Life pg. 57 explains the meaning of the circle and the medicine wheel. The chapter contains information about micro-organisms such as algae and activities about micro-organisms.

## **Appendices Table of Contents**

1. Understanding the Medicine Wheel and the Circle of Life
2. First Nations and the Land
3. Understanding Legends; Oral Tradition and Elders
4. Tobacco, and Peace Pipe
5. Hunting for Buffalo and Buffalo and its' Uses
6. The Metis and Traditional Medicines
7. Conservation
8. The Elements and Their Spirits
9. Circle of Life Hierarchy
10. Ceremonies for the Elements
  - a. Sun Dance
  - b. Rain Dance
11. Protocol of Offerings
12. Understanding Legends; Different Types
13. Traditional First Nations Teachings

## **Appendix 1 -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 Learnings We Are All Treaty People* (Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008)

Information below quoted from:

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

### **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 reminds 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, First 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:**

“Traditional First Nations Spirituality presented by Lamarr Oksasikewiyin” (accessed on 02/14/11)

[http://naicam.nesd.ca/~currcorner/files//u6/TradFNSpirit\(2\).ppt](http://naicam.nesd.ca/~currcorner/files//u6/TradFNSpirit(2).ppt)

[www.fourdirectionsteachings.com](http://www.fourdirectionsteachings.com) (accessed 19/04/08)

*Teaching Treaties in the Classroom , A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 1*, pp. 26-27, (Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008)

*Treaty Essential Learnings We Are All Treaty People*, Treaty Essential Learning #4, pp. 26-46, (Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008)

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)

The First Nations were well adapted to the natural environment: they were knowledgeable about the geography of the land; they were experts at hunting, trapping and gathering food; they knew how to survive the harsh winters; they had a special relationship with the land and they respected all living things. As natural conservationists, they used only what was necessary for survival and did not abuse the land, nature or the environment.

First Nations peoples used plants, animals and other resources carefully so that their children and grandchildren would be able to use them as well. They cared for these resources as a way of respecting the land which they believed the Creator gave them; therefore, they treated the resources and took what it had to offer as gifts. First Nations peoples realized their relationship to the land gave them the big responsibility of caring for the natural resources.

*Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 3*

Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008

### **Traditional Tobacco Use**

Tobacco is often smoked in a sacred pipe during certain ceremonies. Tobacco acts as a communication link between the people and the Creator. Thus when tobacco is smoked from a pipe or burned as an offering, all thoughts, feelings, and prayers are carried in the tobacco smoke directly to the Creator.

Tobacco is not always burned. It is also used as a means of giving thanks. Before and after killing an animal such as a deer, a hunter will often say a prayer while holding the tobacco in his left hand (the one closest to his heart) to give thanks to the Creator and to the animal for giving up its life so that the hunter can feed his family. First Nations people will also place tobacco on the ground and say a prayer as an offering when picking medicines to give thanks to Mother Earth.

**Peterborough County-City Health Unit, 03/05.2010. Retrieved on 01/13/10 from:**

<http://pcchu.peterborough.on.ca/TUP/TUP-traditional.html> "traditional tobacco use"

## Appendix 3

### 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.

Office of the Treaty Commissioner, accessed 11/04/09. Retrieved From:  
[http://www.otc.ca/TEACHERS/TTIC\\_K6\\_and\\_TELS/](http://www.otc.ca/TEACHERS/TTIC_K6_and_TELS/)

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*, p. 31

Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008

Among Native North American cultures there were certain stories that were usually told at specific times of the year. Northeastern 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 sweet grass and with the smoke they will smudge the four directions, the drum and him. Smudging will enable to 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)

Appendix 4

**Tobacco and Pipe**

Many nations have their own practices of sealing agreements, and ensuring truthfulness and honesty in discussing matters based on their cultural customs and practices. Some cultures require an oath and/or handshake to guarantee that a person will tell the truth of a matter. Other cultures require swearing on an object to prompt the act of truthfulness. First Nations peoples, since time immemorial, have utilized the smoking of the pipe as a means to discuss important agreements or decisions that will be made between the people involved and the Creator.

*Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 2*, p. 26  
Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008

The pipe is sacred to First Nations peoples because of its connections with all Creation.

<b>Parts of the Pipe</b>	<b>Connection to all Creation</b>
Bowl	Mother Earth
Stem	Plant life, small life forms, two and four legged animals
Buffalo Fur	Two and Four legged animals
Mallard Duck Feathers	The Water and Sky Life Forms
Four Coloured Ribbons	The Elements Used in Ceremonies
Tobacco	Spiritual Plant including sage, cedar, and sweetgrass.

*Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade 2*, p. 27  
Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008

Tobacco smoking was a spiritual ritual, not a habit. One early smoking mixture was made from red willow bark; later, tobacco was obtained from the Indians to the east. For the smoking ceremony, the participants sit in a circle. A pipe is filled and lit by the holder, who points to the north and upwards to show respect for the Great Spirit (the creator), then to the four directions, of the compass: east, south, west and north again. The pipe is passed clockwise around the circle.

People of the Buffalo, pp. 14-15,(Campbell , 1983,)

Pointing the pipe in all directions represents including all the spirits from the four quadrants of the medicine wheel.

## Appendix 5

## Hunting for Buffalo

When a herd was sighted, the medicine man of the tribe would call all the people together to dance to the Buffalo Spirit for a successful hunt. After the ceremony the hunting party would set out....When the hunt was over, a ceremonial feast was held, with the choicest meats given to the aged, widows and orphans. Tobacco would be offered to the Buffalo Spirit for giving itself to the people. The scent bag, the buffalo's scrotum, would be returned to the earth as a gesture of respect and thanksgiving.

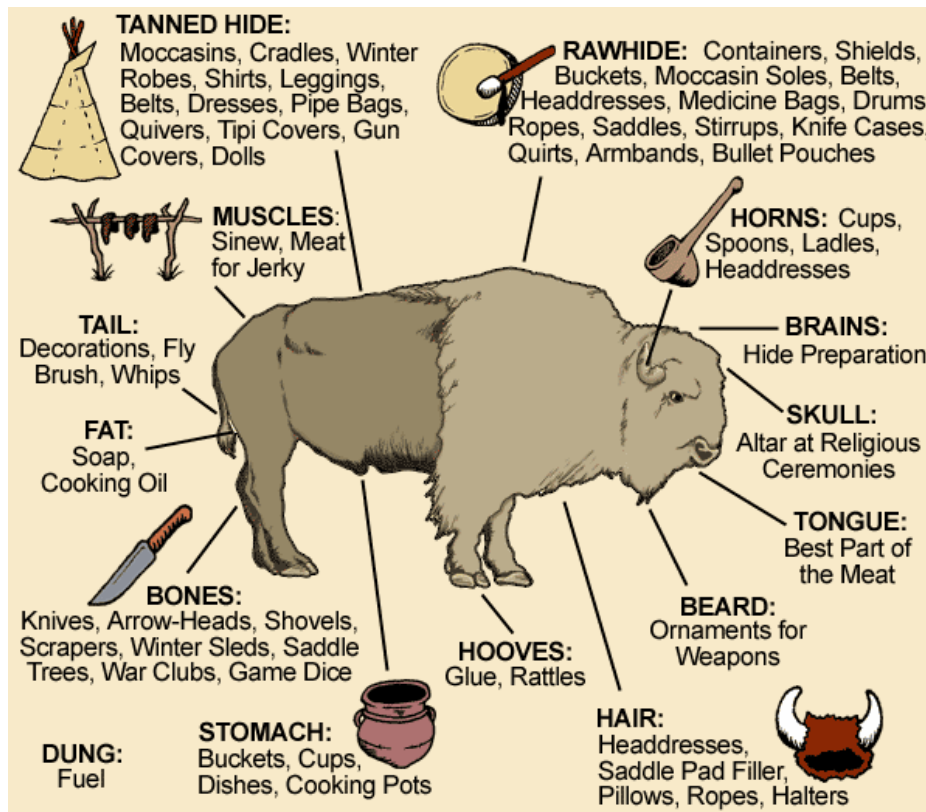
*People of the Buffalo*, pp. 26-27, by Maria Campbell (1983)

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*, p. 30

Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008

Explore the ways in which all of the buffalo was used in order to show respect and give thanks for the life taken.



South Dakota State Historical Society. Retrieved on 01/03/10 from:

<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"

People of the Buffalo by Maria Campbell (1983)

## Appendix 6

### **The Metis and Traditional Medicines**

When the Metis speak about using “traditional medicines,” you will often hear people recalling how their “kokums” used plants in a variety of ways for health and healing. Plants were used as medicines, as food, and for making objects for survival. As medicines, plants were used in teas, washes, poultices, were smoked or inhaled, or were used in other ways. For millennia, Aboriginal people gained an understanding of how to use plants for food and medicine through keen observation of the animal world, through storytelling, dreams, from visions, and from the plants themselves. Information on how plants could be used was passed down through succeeding generations of family units, or was shared as teachings from Elders to youth in an apprentice type of relationship. ....

Traditional helpers work differently with each person they help. They use plants, ceremonies, and their abilities in ways that best fit the healing needs of each individual. Healing might involve using plants or animals, sweat lodges, talking circles, ceremonies, fasting, or through other means. Each Elder uses his or her own techniques as they were taught by their Elders or shown by the Spirit World, the end goal is always to help the person heal him or herself by strengthening the immune system in order to heal the whole person.

Beadwork of common plants used by Metis are beaded or embroidered onto clothing by women to share the knowledge and stories of these plants.

Medicines to Help Us Traditional Metis Plant Use by Christi Belcourt (2007)



## Appendix 7

### **Conservation**

Aboriginal people, traditionally, were conscious as to how their activities would affect all life forms as they understood their existence depended on the quality of mother earth. It was understood that if you alter the life form of one, you alter the life form of all. Aboriginal people never altered their environment to suit their needs. They adjusted to their environment and lived with the natural forces.

Traditional conservation was based on respect for plant and animal life and taking only what one needed and being thankful. The beliefs and practices were not an attempt to manage animal or plant life but to live in harmony and balance among them. The needs of animal and plant life came first and were respected as they were created first and depended on for human survival.

The Sacred Tree Reflections on Native American Spirituality Produced by Phil Lane (1989)

### **Appendix 8 Earth, Water, Air, Sun/Fire and Rocks as Living Factors in an Ecosystem**

*Many Aboriginal cultures recognize four basic elements which sustain life: air, water, earth, and fire. The ancient Greeks also identified these four basic elements of life. These elements often have a spiritual significance. Each may be represented by a special colour and a particular direction. These vary among different people.*

Page 7, *Boreal Forests*. (Miller-Schroeder, 2005).....

It is because of the belief of their spiritual significance that the elements are considered living factors. Aboriginal People have ceremonies that celebrate the elements. These celebrations/ceremonies are believed to help with the survival of their nation. For example, the sundance, raindance and other songs like the 'stone spirit song' were opportunities for First Nations People to communicate with the spirits and ask for guidance and seek prayer. Within a sweat ceremony rocks and their spirit are used to help the spiritual journeys of members in attendance. A rock that has not been used in sweat is strong and firm unbreakable to human strength. The same rock will be used in many sweats until the spirit has left. Spirits have left when the rock is able to be broken by human strength with little force. A rock song can be sung at the end of a sweat as way of communicating thanks to the rock for giving heat and giving up its spirit.

*In this view, there is no distinction between living and non-living (biotic and abiotic) factors in an ecosystem. All four elements and their countless organizations into life forms are part of life. For example, a rock is sometimes thought to be abiotic(non-living). But, as the rock breaks down, particles and minerals are absorbed by plants or animals. The rock becomes part of the plant or animal and contributes to the health and life of the organism.*

Page 8, *Boreal Forests*. (Miller-Schroeder, 2005).....

All elements of Mother Earth and all life forms (trees, plants, rivers, animals, sun, wind, water, food) are believed to have a spirit similar to that of humans and are interrelated. The hierarchy of existence on this planet: Creator, Mother Earth, Plants, Animals, Man. Man is totally dependent.

#### **The elements**

It is good that you never forget about the Creator, Grandfather Moon, who watches over us from above and Mother Earth, who we all survive from. Everyday the Father Sun watches over us as he travels around this earth. The wind also protects us. Everything that is not good is blown away. This is what is going to take us a long ways. A person should not dislike the wind; he is there to protect us, that is his work. Each new day, Father Sun watches over us as we walk along Mother Earth's surface. At night Grandfather Moon comes out, he looks after us the whole night.

By Sheena taken from Voice of the Elders Compiled by Marlene Millar (2006)

“For example, a rock is sometimes thought to be non-living. But, as the rock breaks down, particles and minerals are absorbed by plants or animals. The rock becomes part of the plant or animal and contributes to the health and life of the organism (Exploring the Boreal Forest, Glaze & Wilson, 1997).” A rock therefore can be considered living because it has a relationship with a living organism and without that relationship it would not exist.

### **Significance of Rocks to First Nations**

In First Nation culture, it is believed that every thing has a spirit, such as plants, trees, animals, even stones. In our culture you can tell the difference between a stone that has its’ spirit and one that doesn’t. A stone that has a spirit is heavy, solid, and not easy to break. A stone that has no spirit is light, and very easy to break apart.

The reason these rocks have no spirit is because the rock sacrificed its’ spirit to help people. How it does this is that the rock was used for a sweat lodge ceremony an its heated up till it glows red and is brought into the sweat lodge for use inside.

Some cultures have a “stone spirit” song that is sung to give thanks and honour the spirit of the stone/rock.

Rocks can be used as weapons; whole or carved into spears or arrowheads, knives.

Rocks can also be used for tools such as hammers, knives, skinning tools.

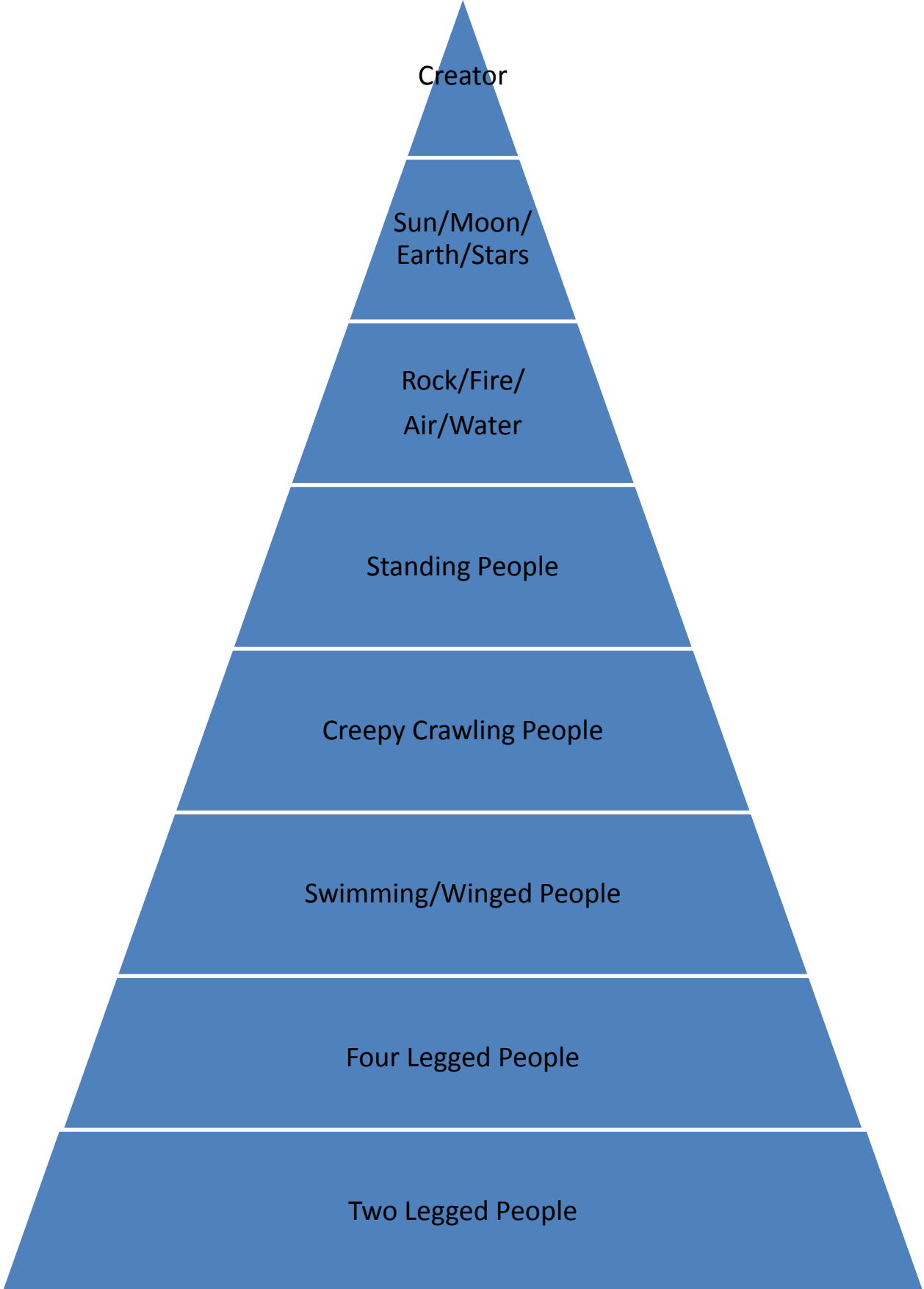
### **by Herb Seesequasis Jr. Beardy’s Okemaysim**

The Grade 6 class at Stobart Elementary had a discussion and brainstorming session in which some students provided evidence that the elements are living things. The students used what Western Science uses to classify living things; living things are made of cells, living things obtain and use energy, living things grow and develop, living things reproduce, living things respond to the environment, living things adapt to their environment. This is a summary of what they had concluded;

“We know that living things such as humans, animals, and plants move. Wind, water, sun, and fire all move as well. The wind moves sometimes only a breeze but sometimes as strong as a gust of wind. The sun moves from one side of the sky to the other. The water moves; waves, streams, currents and fire moves.”

“All the elements use and obtain energy. Most of the elements use each others energy in order to ‘grow and develop’. By this it was explained that waves can be small or big, depending on the energy provided by the wind. Water temperatures change with the use of the sun and therefore the amount of living plants and animals change as well. Fire ‘grows and develops’ at the speed of the wind and the oxygen and living things it consumes.”

“Water reproduces! From it s largest bodies of water it is reforms into fog, mist, rain, hail, and snow. Fire provides opportunity for rejuvenation and new life; birth. “



Creator

Sun/Moon/  
Earth/Stars

Rock/Fire/  
Air/Water

Standing People

Creepy Crawling People

Swimming/Winged People

Four Legged People

Two Legged People

## Appendix 10 – Ceremonies and the Four Elements

### THE PLAINS INDIANS: THE SUN DANCE

#### THE BLACKFOOT SUN DANCE

The Sun Dance lodge was built by erecting a central pole hung with offerings to the Great Spirit. This was surrounded with a circle of 10 more poles. Leafy branches covered the top. The dancers consisted of a few men who fasted and have prayed. Sharp skewers (thin sticks) pierce the skin of the dancers' back and chest. Ropes were tied from the skewers to the center pole. They danced in the sacred circle around the center pole . The dancers try to break away from the center pole to end the dance.

#### ANOTHER VERSION OF THE SUN DANCE

The camp was set up in a circle of teepees. A tree was cut and set up in the center of the space to be used for the dance. Colored cloth offerings were fastened to the top of the pole to represent the prayers of the people. People danced around in a circle to the beating of drums, gazed up at the sun and blew bone whistles. Men tied ropes to sticks which were stuck through the skin of their chests or backs. As they danced, they kept pulling back until the sticks tore through their skin. It was considered a great honor to be a part of this dance.

Retrieved from: <http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/firstnations/sund.html>

To Learn More about North American Rain Dance follow the link below:

[http://dance.lovetoknow.com/Native\\_American\\_Rain\\_Dances](http://dance.lovetoknow.com/Native_American_Rain_Dances)

## Appendix 11 – Protocol of Offerings

Traditional tobacco has been used by many Aboriginal people in ceremonies, rituals and prayer for thousands of years. Using tobacco in non-traditional ways like smoking cigarettes or chewing tobacco or snuff is abuse of its traditional purpose.

*"Traditional tobacco is our SACRED connection to our Creator."*

- Pauline Shirt  
Elder, Cree Nation

**For more information about Traditional Tobacco Use follow the link below:**

<http://www.tobaccowise.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=44644&pageId=46570> "tobaccowise" accessed on 01/13/10

### **Traditional Tobacco Use**

Tobacco is often smoked in a sacred pipe during certain ceremonies. Tobacco acts as a communication link between the people and the Creator. Thus when tobacco is smoked from a pipe or burned as an offering, all thoughts, feelings, and prayers are carried in the tobacco smoke directly to the Creator.

Tobacco is not always burned. It is also used as a means of giving thanks. Before and after killing an animal such as a deer, a hunter will often say a prayer while holding the tobacco in his left hand (the one closest to his heart) to give thanks to the Creator and to the animal for giving up its life so that the hunter can feed his family. First Nations people will also place tobacco on the ground and say a prayer as an offering when picking medicines to give thanks to Mother Earth.

Peterborough County-City Health Region, 2010-03-05. Accessed on 01/13/10. Retrieved from:

<http://pcchu.peterborough.on.ca/TUP/TUP-traditional.html> "traditional tobacco use"

See People of the Buffalo by Maria Campbell (1983) last paragraph of pg. 14

## **Appendix 12 Types of Myths and Legends**

Myths were told to help explain phenomenon's about the world such as:  
Why do people get sick? Why do the seasons change? How was the world created?

For information about First Nations Mythology and suggested resources follow the link below:

<http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/resources/firstnationsliterature/examine-folklore.html#5>

## Appendix 13

## Traditional First Nations Teachings

Traditional First Nations peoples lived and practised the values of love, caring, respect and kinship. Children were taught these traditional beliefs and values through storytelling, ceremonies and other oral traditions. Children were taught the values of the community through stories with moral messages that were intertwined with their spiritual beliefs.

Children developed a healthy sense of self-worth, which built their self-confidence and self-esteem. Children grew up to be independent and self-sufficient. One of the most important and underlying traditional values was respect; respect for self, respect for others and respect for creation. Young children were taught to take responsibility for their actions. They were allowed to make mistakes and learn through experiences. They were given freedom to explore the world around them. They were protected yet they were also given opportunities to learn on their own. This type of education gave them the confidence they would need later on in life.

Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Kindergarten

Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008

The Creator provided them with “natural laws” to live by. Every living entity lived in balance and harmony with others. These natural laws ensured the continuation of all living beings and entities. Mother Earth provided all that First Nations peoples needed to survive.

Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Kindergarten, p. 28

Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008

First Nations peoples believed that the Creator provided them with everything they needed to survive. In return, they were to live in balance and harmony with nature. In their worldview, all things had spirits and were intimately connected with the Creator. They prayed and gave thanks to the Creator every day. The First Nations Historical Worldview (Appendix B) explains the relationships each entity has with each other and the Creator. The spiritual plants and elements of the earth are used in First Nations spiritual ceremonies.

First Nations peoples believe they were given natural laws from the Creator. These laws are not man-made and provide ways to live in harmony and balance with all of creation. They are very strict laws to be respected and honoured.

Teaching Treaties in the Classroom, A Treaty Resource Guide for Grade Two, p. 26

Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008