



Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén (The Words That Come Before All Else)

Organization:

Title: Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén (The Words that Come Before All Else)

Summary: Students learn the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén and reflect on how it positions humans in a rich, interdependent web of relationships with elements in the natural world. As an extension students journal in an outdoor *sit spot* about what they are grateful for in nature.

Big Idea: Big Idea A. Indigenous Knowledge is Contained in Language and Storytelling: *Indigenous ways of knowing can be taught through polysynthetic Indigenous languages and storytelling ie: Creation stories, the Thanksgiving Address, 3 Sisters etc.; Responsibilities to land are inherent in language and storytelling.*

Duration: 30-40 min

Learning Environment: Classroom, Outdoor

Season: All

Materials: Video clip embedded in the ten-minute video accompanying this Bundle of Kanyen'kehá:ka (Mohawk), Wolf Clan educator Liv Rondeau sharing and discussing the cultural significance of the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén.

Meta Data:

Content Type: Activity

Bundle: IK

Theme: Indigenous Knowledge Systems

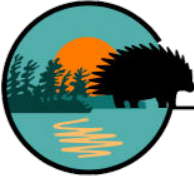
Subject Area: Biology, Environmental Education, Geography, Outdoor Education, Science, Social Studies

Curriculum Focus: 7-10

We recommend inviting and Indigenous community member into the learning space to help facilitate this Learning Activity.

The Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén

- Students listen to a song containing the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén (in language: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPztCBgXxio>).
- Students can also watch a video clip embedded on the QUILLS website of Kanyen'kehá:ka (Mohawk), Wolf Clan educator Liv Rondeau sharing the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén.
- Additionally, students can watch a video clip embedded in the ten-minute video accompanying this Bundle of Liv Rondeau sharing and discussing the cultural significance of the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwén.



- Teacher explains that this is a Haudenosaunee address. This would be a good opportunity to remind students that they are on shared territory and that throughout the Learning Bundles they will be learning about Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee land-based practices and cultural traditions.
- Teacher then leads a discussion with teachers regarding what it would mean if one thing was left out and how people fit into the address (ie: people are not any more important than the animals and plants that thanks are given to).
- Teacher explains to the teachers that the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwèn is meant to be interactive. For example, those who are listening are meant to express their agreement by saying (“toh”) or (“yo”) and that reciting the address helps individuals to start their day in a good way.
- Students can learn the song introduced above.

Extension: Cultivating Gratitude

- Teacher discusses with students the importance of cultivating gratitude for what they have in their lives, in addition to the importance of giving back to those things (ie: the establishment of reciprocal relationships).
- Students can take some time to choose a sit spot sit in nature, listen to their five senses, and reflect on what in the natural world they are grateful for <https://sierraclub.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Sit-spot-activity.pdf>
- Students then write a journal entry that expresses what they are grateful for in their lives and the ways in which they sustain reciprocity with these beings.
- This is a practice that students can do multiple times throughout the year in the same spot to deepen their relationship with the natural world.