



Creation Stories and Language

Organization:

Title: Creation Stories and Language

Summary: Students listen to the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee creation stories and reflect on how these stories have shaped Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee culture. Students learn about how Indigenous ways of knowing and being are contained in Indigenous languages and the impact of colonization on language loss.

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.*

Inquiry Question: Inquiry Question 1. How is Indigenous knowledge contained in language and storytelling?

Duration: One class period

Learning Environment: Classroom, online, outdoor

Season: Summer, Spring, Fall, Winter, All

Materials:

- Anishinaabe Great Flood.pdf
- Haudenosaunee Sky Woman.pdf
- Storytelling.pdf
- Indigenous Languages.pdf
- Nature of Indigenous Languages.pdf
- Nature Needs a New Pronoun.pdf
- Water Place Names.pdf
- Indigenous Place Names.pdf
- Disappearance of Indigenous Languages.pdf
- Language Extension Activity.pdf

Meta Data:

Content Type: Activity, language learning, storytelling

Bundle: IK

Theme: Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Subject Area: Biology, Language Arts, Social Studies, History, Science, Geography

Curriculum Focus: 7-10

We recommend inviting an Indigenous community member into the classroom to tell the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Creation stories and talk about the significance of Indigenous languages.



Storytelling:

- Teacher reads students the Anishinaabe creation story found in the **Anishinaabe Great Flood.pdf** and Haudenosaunee creation story found in the **Haudenosaunee Sky Woman.pdf**.
- Teacher asks students to identify lessons from the stories.
- Teacher leads a discussion with students regarding how the Creation Story for each culture shapes the way that that group interacts with the land and thinks about the natural world.
- To learn more about the importance of storytelling to local Indigenous groups teachers can read the **Storytelling.pdf**.

Language and Language Revitalization:

- Facilitator discusses with teachers how the Indigenous worldview is contained in language. For instance, Indigenous languages are important vessel containing and transmitting Indigenous knowledges. This is because Indigenous Knowledge is structured through language. This can be understood by examining some of the fundamental differences between English and Indigenous languages.
- Teacher introduces these differences in discussion using the **Indigenous Languages.pdf**, **Nature of Indigenous Languages.pdf** and **Nature Needs a New Pronound.pdf**.
- Students in pairs can look at **Indigenous Place Names Answers.pdf** to learn more about how Indigenous place name reflect the strong relationship Indigenous groups have to the land.

Extension:

- Teacher leads a discussion with students regarding how Indigenous languages are rapidly disappearing and how this connects to colonization and residential schools. Information included in **Disappearance of Indigenous Languages.pdf**.
- Teachers choose a language from a list and research whether it has already disappeared, is projected to disappear, or is projected to survive. Extension activity made available as a handout in the **Language Extension Activity.pdf**.
- Teachers check out resources on the [Kingston Indigenous Language Nest: https://kingstonindigenouslanguage.ca](https://kingstonindigenouslanguage.ca) website and [Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na \(TTO\): https://tto-kenhteke.org](https://tto-kenhteke.org) website as to see examples of local language revitalization work.