



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

### Organizational Info:

**Title:** Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen (The Words That Come Before All Else)

**Summary:** Students review the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen (The Words That Come Before All Else) and consider the centrality of water to Haudenosaunee and other local Indigenous groups.

**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: According to local Indigenous groups, what is water, where did it come from, and why is it important?

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Learning Environment:** Classroom, online, outdoor

**Season:** Summer, Spring, Fall, Winter, All

### Materials:

- Short video segment embedded in the ten-minute video accompanying the Indigenous Knowledge Bundle depicting Kanyen'kehá:ka (Akwesasne Mohawk Territory), Wolf Clan educator Liv Rondeau speaking about the significance of the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen
- Short clip embedded on the QUILLS website of Liv Rondeau reciting the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen
- Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen (The Words That Come Before All Else): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJH\\_5TXzCjw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJH_5TXzCjw)
- Haudenosaunee Creation Story (Onondaga Historical Society): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDuO3IPHpP0>
- Anishinaabe Creation story- The Great Flood: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RYByws56TQ>
- Anishinaabe The Great Flood.pdf
- Haudenosaunee Sky Woman Falling.pdf

### Meta Data:

**Content Type:** Language learning, storytelling

**Bundle:** Water, Tools, Food, Gifts of the Earth, IK

**Theme:** Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Contaminants in the Environment

**Subject Area:** Art, Biology, Chemistry, Drama, Environmental Education, Geography, Health, History, Language Arts, Mathematics, Music, Outdoor Education, Physical Education, Physics, Science, Social Studies

**Curriculum Focus:** 7, 8, 9, 10

### Curriculum Links:

Science and Technology: A3.3, E1.2



We recommend inviting an Indigenous community member into the learning environment when discussing creation stories with students.

- Review the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen (The Words That Come Before All Else):  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJH\\_5TXzCjw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJH_5TXzCjw)
- To do this teachers can also play short video segment embedded in the ten-minute video accompanying the Indigenous Knowledge Bundle depicting Kanyen'kehá:ka (Akwasasne Mohawk Territory), Wolf Clan educator Liv Rondeau speaking about the significance of the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen. Additionally, teachers can play a short clip embedded on the QUILLS website of Liv Rondeau reciting the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen.
- Ask students why they think the Haudenosaunee give thanks to the water in addition to the land.

## Creation Stories

- Review Creation Stories.
  - Haudenosaunee Creation Story (Onondaga Historical Society):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDuO3IPHpP0>
  - Anishinaabe Creation story- The Great Flood:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RYByws56TQ>
  - Stories can also be accessed in **Anishinaabe The Great Flood.pdf** and **Haudenosaunee Sky Woman Falling.pdf**
  - Teachers discuss with students how in both Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee cultures water is central to the creation story. Without water there is no life. Water is a gift from the creator.