



Getting to Know Our Plant Relatives

Organization:

Title: Getting to know our Plant Relatives

Summary: Students take steps to form a more meaningful relationship with plants.

Inquiry Question: Inquiry Question 1. How Does the Biodiversity of a Place Impact the Culture of the People Who Live in It?

Duration: 1 hour - Over multiple periods

Learning Environment: Indoor and Outdoor

Season: Summer, Spring, Fall

Materials:

- Writing tools
- Indigenous and WS Plant Knowledge.pdf
- Steps to Make a Scientific Drawing.pdf
- Scientific Drawings of Plants.pdf
- Video of *Ohontsá:ke Sha'kontón:ni ne Ken'niyohontésha'* (When Strawberries Came to Be) read in Kanyen'kéha by the late Joe Brown.
- Books highlighting the Indigenous relationship to local plant species.

Examples:

- Medicines to Help Us:
<https://gdins.org/product/medicines-to-help-us-book-only/>
- Indian Use of Wild Plants:
<https://goodminds.com/products/091964516x>
- More books on plants from Indigenous authors can be found here:
<https://goodminds.com/>

Curriculum Links:

Science and Technology: A1.1, A1.2, A1.5, A3.3, B1.2, B1.3, B2.2

Meta Data:

Content Type: Activity

Bundle: Gifts of the Earth, IK

Theme: Biodiversity Crisis

Subject Area: Biology, Environmental Education, Language Arts, Music, Science

Curriculum Focus: 7

Instructions:

Students will focus on learning about the plant they chose to develop a relationship with, in Activity One *Language Scavenger Hunt*. Teachers can choose to do one or more of the following activities with their students:



a. Students think creatively to record Western scientific knowledge of the plant (name, habitat, description, etc.), the history of the plant's use in settler culture, and Indigenous uses for the plant (ie: medicinal, spiritual, utilitarian, food etc.) To learn more students can check out the **Indigenous and WS Plant Knowledge.pdf**.

b. Students find a story from an Indigenous perspective about their chosen plant. If possible, teachers should have books on hand for students to explore.

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Teacher can also show students the video *Ohontsá:ke Sha'kontón:ni ne Ken'niyohontésha'* (*When Strawberries Came to Be*) read in Kanyen'kéha by the late Joe Brown.

Joe Brown is a Kanyen'kehá:ka, Turtle Clan Knowledge Keeper from Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory who contributed to the creation of the QUILLS Learning Bundles and passed away on February 9th, 2022.

The video is accessible on the QUILLS website. In this Haudenosaunee story, a young Kanyen'kehá:ka girl gifts her brother with strawberries after they get into a fight. This story explains why the Haudenosaunee give the gift of strawberries when repairing relationships.

Kanyen'kéha:

Kí oká:ra ken'nityakoyón:'a Kanyen'kehá:ka wahón:yon ne yatate'kénha ne ken'niyohontésha' shahyateriyóhsi. Kí oká:ra ne wathró:ris oh nontyé:ren ne Haudenosaunee shakonahyanón:tens ne ken'niyohontésha' aonsahatirihwakwatá:ko tsi na'tehón:tere akohréshon.

This story was originally shared to accompany interpretive signs at Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre (ELEEC). Signs can be accessed on the ELEEC trail app.

<https://elbowlakecentre.ca/app/>

c. Students learn to do a proper sketch of their plant for classification purposes using the **Steps to Make a Scientific Drawing** and **Scientific Drawings of Plants worksheets**.



Students walk their neighbourhood to find their plant, reflect on their relationship to the plant, record their observations of the plant and its environment, and sketch the plant in their notebooks.

d. Students create a poem/short story/song about their plant. Students find the plant in the natural world and read their creation to it privately.

e. If at the Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre students can also practice creating a herbarium specimen.

Optional Extension Activity:

Students can choose a creative way to share what they have discovered about their plant with the rest of the class.

Please note that the learning represented in these activities reflects Big Idea B. in the Indigenous Knowledge Learning Bundle: “Indigenous Knowledge is Place-Based”. To help your students learn more about this Big Idea check out the Learning Activities titled: *Land-Based Meditation*, *Land Acknowledgement Workshop*, *Ceremony Ensures Right Relations with the Land*, *The Clan System*, and *The 13 Moons* found in the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being with the Natural World* Learning Bundle (Grades 7-10). Learning Activities also reflect Big Idea C. in the Indigenous Knowledge Learning Bundle: “Reciprocity, Interdependence, and Holism are at the Heart of Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being”. To help your students learn more about these concepts, foundational to Indigenous ways of knowing and being, check out the Learning Activities titled: *Holism*, *The Honorable Harvest*, and *Our Responsibilities* found in the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being with the Natural World* Learning Bundle (Grades 7-10).