

ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' FEDERATION OF ONTARIO

2010 Year of the Métis

Junior



Elementary Teachers' Federation Of Ontario / Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario
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Celebrating the Year of the Métis Junior

"We are Métis, with roots and rights that extend 9,000 years into this continent. We are neither First Nations nor Inuit, nor are we European immigrants to this land. Instead, we are the middle-ground between camps; the compromise between differences and the dawn that separates night and day. We are not half-breeds, but the children born of a marriage between two very different worlds ... To be Métis is to be blessed with the best fruit of not one, but two family trees. We are not "half" of anything, but doubled. Being twice blessed, we are likewise proud, strong, and determined."

- Terry St. Amant, The Georgian Bay Métis Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario website

2010 - Year of the Métis Nation

On December 10, 2009, with unanimous support from all parties, the House of Commons passed a motion calling on the Government of Canada to celebrate the invaluable contributions of the Métis Nation. As a result, 2010 will be the Year of the Métis Nation in Canada. ETFO is proud to support teachers in Ontario with resources and materials to enrich their teaching practice.

The Year of the Métis Nation will commemorate the 125th Anniversary of The Northwest Resistance and the execution of Louis Riel. It will also celebrate the Métis people, their culture, heritage, and contributions to Canada.

The Métis Flag



Recognized merely as a horizontal figure eight by many settlers, the Métis flag was carried with pride. The figure in the centre of a blue field represents the joining of two cultures and as an infinity symbol, represents the immortality of a nation.

As the Métis were strongly associated with the North West Company (NWC), a fur trading entity in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), they often fought for NWC causes. As part of a gift giving ceremony in 1814, NWC partner Alexander MacDonnell presented the Métis with this flag, which would soon become a trademark for the nation. Today, the Métis flag is still used and carried as a symbol of continuity and pride.

Objectives

All of us have known a hero, role model, or an influential leader at some point in our lives.

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to a variety of Métis individuals who fit the description of being a positive leader, a hero, or a positive role model.

Expectations

Oral Communication

- 1.2** Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate listening behaviour by adapting active listening strategies to suit a range of situations, including work in groups.
- 1.5** Make inferences about oral texts using stated and implied ideas in the texts as evidence.
- 2.2** Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate speaking behaviour in a variety of situations, including paired sharing, dialogue, and small and large group discussions,

Reading

- 1.4** Demonstrate understanding of a variety of texts by summarizing important ideas and citing supporting details.
- 1.6** Extend understanding of texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge, experience, and insights, to other familiar texts, and to the world around them.

Writing

- 1.2** Generate ideas about a potential topic and identify those most appropriate for the purpose.
- 1.3** Gather information to support ideas for writing, using a variety of strategies and a range of print and electronic resources.
- 2.8** Produce revised, draft pieces of writing to meet identified criteria based on the expectations related to content, organization, style, and use of conventions.

Lesson Plan

This lesson has been designed to incorporate themes that can integrate into the primary, junior, and intermediate divisions. Each grade specific lesson plan may be used to encourage school wide initiatives that allow students to share their knowledge with their peers in other grade divisions.

Background information

QUICK FACTS

There are about 73,000 Métis people in Ontario - about 30 per cent of the total Aboriginal population in Ontario. The Métis are the fastest growing of any segment of the Ontario population today (2006 Census).

The Métis Nation of Ontario represents the majority of Métis in Ontario through a province-wide governance structure that includes Community Councils and the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

In November, 2008 the Ontario Government and the Métis Nation of Ontario signed a Framework Agreement which recognizes the unique history, identity, and rights of Métis communities in Ontario. It sets out a collaborative process for the parties to work together to build stronger Métis people, families, and communities.

(From: <http://www.news.ontario.ca/maa/en/2010/04/ontario-proclaims-2010-the-year-of-the-metis.html>)

What's in a name?

Canada's Native people are still referred to officially in three broad categories by government for administrative purposes, and in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms:

The First Nations were called "Indians" by Christopher Columbus when he landed in North America, because he thought he had reached India. Many now prefer to call themselves First Nations, though many still call themselves Indians in everyday conversation. He thought he had reached the East Indies, the islands off Southeast Asia. For Columbus, the First Nations people looked similar to the people of East Indies.

The Inuit are the people who originally lived in the Arctic. Their language is Inuktitut, but it has several dialects that differ considerably from place-to-place.

The Métis are a group of people who resulted from the relationships between European and Native men and women. The Métis developed a unique culture that included elements of both European and Native culture.

In the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canada's First Peoples are referred to Indians, Inuit, and Métis. The Charter recognizes the special Aboriginal Rights of Inuit, Indians, and Métis. Although the term, Indian, is still used in legal and historical documents, Aboriginal, First Nations, Inuit, and Metis are the most appropriate terms to use today.

(From: http://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp_groups/fp_groups_origins.html)

Métis Heroes and Role Models

Task 1

In small groups, students will identify the qualities of a good leader and share these ideas with the whole class. Students will then return to their small groups and define what a hero, leader, and role model looks like, sounds like, and behaves like. It is important that they realize there is a difference amongst the two terms. (Appendix 1)

Ask students to apply their knowledge of leadership by analyzing the leadership that exists in their lives. Questions may include:

- Who are the leaders who influence your life currently?
- Why is it important to have leaders? In what situations? Does every situation require a leader?
- In what ways are you a leader to: yourself, peers, family, school, community, or country?
- How can you acquire more leadership skills for use now and in the future?

For example: A **hero** is an individual who is idealized or admired for superior qualities, deeds, or actions of any kind. Words that may describe a hero are: determination, courage, honour, and excellence.

Within First Nations, Aboriginal, and Inuit communities, past and present, there are unique characteristics and priorities for leaders within these communities to encourage the ability to listen, find common ground, and build consensus in order to resolve conflict.

A **role model** is someone who is emulated because they have set an example for the behaviour of others – usually in a positive way.

A **leader** is a person who rules, or guides, or inspires others

Modifications/Accommodations

As an alternative to this exercise if you have young students who have difficulty reading is to print off a variety of the biographies and read them aloud to students and then have them verbalize if they feel that person is a role model, hero, or leader.

Traditional Leadership Styles

Task 2

In small groups have students discuss leadership styles they most have dealt with in school, their communities, or families – students may not know the ‘title’ of the style but can provide examples. Provide the following as three major leadership styles commonly used in our society.

1. Autocratic

In the autocratic style, the leader makes decisions without consulting with others. The decision is made without any form of consultation. In Lewin's experiments, he found that this caused the most level of discontent. An autocratic style works when there is no need for input on the decision, where the decision would not change as a result of input, and where the motivation of people to carry out subsequent actions would not be affected whether they were or were not involved in the decision-making.

2. Democratic

In the democratic style, the leader involves the people in the decision-making, although the process for the final decision may vary from the leader having the final say to them facilitating consensus in the group. Democratic decision-making is usually appreciated by the people, especially if they have been used to autocratic decisions with which they disagreed. It can be problematic when there are a wide range of opinions and there is no clear way of reaching an equitable final decision.

3. Laissez-Faire

The laissez-faire style is to minimize the leader's involvement in decision-making, and hence allowing people to make their own decisions, although they may still be responsible for the outcome. Laissez-faire works best when people are capable and motivated in making their own decisions, and where there is no requirement for a central coordination, for example in sharing resources across a range of different people and groups.

(From: <http://psychology.about.com/od/leadership/a/leadstyles.htm>)

4. The Consensus – Aboriginal Leadership

In the past consensus politics was an integral part of the Aboriginal political system. The successful leader would have to be an expert in diplomacy to maintain harmony with the community as a whole. The leader had to retain the support of the influential centres of the community - elders, clan mothers, best hunters, spiritual leaders, and warrior societies. Important decisions could be taken only after a consensus had been reached - often after days of discussions. Thus, the leader could not push his/her own agenda. The leader's main responsibility was to guide meetings toward a consensus while listening and considering all opinions. After consensus was reached, the leader worked out terms and a final deal would be followed by ceremonial gift giving and celebrations. Women played an important role in making key decisions. In many traditional Aboriginal societies, women were engaged in prominent leadership roles. They participated actively in political and cultural of the community, either publicly or behind the scenes. They had considerable influence on family affairs, especially as they grew older and were seen as women of wisdom.

(Material and content from: The Teaching Circle: Aboriginal Perspectives For Canadian Classrooms ETFO; <http://www.histori.ca/prodev/lp.do?id=13159>)

The Talking Circle

"When you put your knowledge in a circle, it's not yours anymore, it's shared by everyone."

- Douglas Cardinal, architect (Regina Leader Post, November 28, 1995)

The Talking Circle is used as a means to share leadership within a community or family. Aboriginal people use methods of reaching agreement or consensus that are in keeping with values fundamental to their world view and spirituality. The circle is not just a symbol, it is the model by which their society and thought are structured. A Talking Circle is both a forum to bring all parties together and a ceremony to remind us of the sacred.

The Talking Circle is called for a specific purpose whether it is to resolve a conflict, share ideas, or to celebrate an event. All participants come together for that purpose and have an opportunity to contribute to the resolution or consensus reached. However, it is a process whose purpose may change with the process of sharing.

Each circle is unique. Our gifts of Truth, Honesty, Respect, Compassion, Wisdom, Humility, and Love are the values inherent within the sacred circle process.

An object is passed around the circle to show who is speaking. Sacred objects that are traditionally used are; feather, rock, or talking stick. But teachers may use an object that best suits their classroom and students.

Scheduling the last period of the day to the talking circle provides students with a concrete event to look forward to. Asking a general question such as 'what had the most impact on what you heard today', 'share an experience whereby someone made you feel good today?', you can also ask their input on what other topics would they like to spend more time on, thus encouraging them and inviting them to have a say in their educational experience.

Topics to get you started:

- A success you recently had?
- Where you would live if you could live anywhere in the world?
- Something you would like to achieve in the next few years?
- Something you like about yourself?
- Something you wish you could do better?

Protocol of the Talking Circle

- Establish circle protocol at the beginning of the class, as well as reiterating in the subsequent several classes.
- Creating a safe environment through confidentiality is a critical component of a successful talking circle therefore, place extra emphasis on 'what is said in this circle stays in this circle' by stating this at the beginning of each class.
- Students are asked to speak from the heart by expressing what they feels on a given topic or concern.
- All other students' are to listen respectfully, no interruptions, no talking to their neighbour.
- Each student that is part of this process can share their thoughts and feelings without fear of criticism or interruption.
- Students can disagree but no unkind words, thoughts, or actions are added or the whole circle is dishonoured.
- Therefore no note taking or any other form of recording the process is allowed in these circles.
- Everyone has the option of 'passing' the talking object, if they don't want to speak.
- As time goes on, if the required trust and comfort level has been established, there will be fewer 'passes' during the circle.
- Establish a signal so that one person doesn't speak 'overlong', such as a gentle cough.
- No one leaves the circle until it is closed, which is the role of the instructor. This may be in the form of a group thank you, good bye, comments on how the circle made them feel, etc...

(Material and content from: The Teaching Circle: Aboriginal Perspectives For Canadian Classrooms ETFO; <http://www.histori.ca/prodev/lp.do?id=13159>)

Task 3

Using the following list of Métis people, students will research and create a short biography on one to three of the individuals. They will need to determine if that person is a leader, role model, or hero and include their choice with an explanation as to their decision in their report. (Appendix 6) The following list contains a range of people, from historical to present-day figures:

Carole James

Reggie Elijah Harper Leach

Cuthbert Grant

Pauline Johnson

David Bouchard

Ralph G Steinhauer

Douglas Cardinal

Roddy Powley

Gabriel Dumont

Sheldon Souray

James McKay

Steve Powley

Louis David Riel

Theo Fleury

Marguerite Monet dit Bellehumeur

Todd Ducharme

Maria Campbell

William Kennedy

Marilyn Dumont

Christi Belcourt

Leader, Hero, and Role Model?

(Task 1/Appendix 1)

A Hero	A Role Model	A Leader
Looks Like:	Looks Like:	Looks Like:
Sounds Like:	Sounds Like:	Sounds Like:
Acts Like:	Acts Like:	Acts Like:
Examples:	Examples:	Examples:

Profile of a leader, hero, or role model worksheet

(Task 3/Appendix 5)

Name:

Are they a leader, role model or hero?

What characteristics do they have that make them a leader, role model, or hero?

Place of birth:

Date of birth:

Death:

Profile of a leader, hero, or role model worksheet

(Task 3/Appendix 5)

Important life events:

Most important achievements:

Resources used:

Resources

1. Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online

<http://www.biographi.ca/index-e.html>

2. Métis Culture and Heritage Resource Centre

<http://www.metisresourcecentre.mb.ca>

3. The Métis Nation of Ontario

This is the official site of the Métis Nation of Ontario. The Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) brings Métis people together to celebrate and share their rich culture.

<http://www.metisnation.org/>

4. The Métis Nation in Alberta

This website is a comprehensive website which provides rich information about the Métis peoples in Canada.

<http://www.albertasource.ca/METIS/eng/index2.htm>

5. The Métis Nation of Saskatchewan

This is the official website of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. This website provides links to events celebration both Métis and Aboriginal events.

<http://www.mn-s.ca/>

6. Métis National Council

<http://www.metisnation.ca>
MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL
350 Sparks St., Suite 201
Ottawa, ON K1R 7S8
Tel: (613) 232 – 3216
Fax: (613) 232 – 4262
Toll Free: (800) 928 – 6330

7. Origins, Louis Riel rebellion - historical Information

http://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/fp_metis/fp_metis_origins.html

8. Gabriel Dumont Institute Mission Statement: To promote the renewal and the development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collections and the distribution of those materials, and the development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.

<http://www.metismuseum.ca/main.php>

9. **<http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/eng/index.html>**

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis community information, history, and celebrations

<http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/ca-fnat.html>.

10. Who are the Métis?

<http://www.metisheritage.ca>

11. BC site on Métis

<http://www.michifmetismuseum.org/Home.html>

12. The Teaching Circle: Aboriginal Perspectives For Canadian Classrooms ETFO

<http://www.histori.ca/prodev/lp.do?id=13159>