



Residential School - Secondary Lesson Plan **developed by Jon Carr, SD#61**

Learners Outcome:

Students will be able to describe the intent and impact of Residential Schools on Aboriginal children and families. The main focus, however, will be on the topic of residential schooling.

Caution:

The topic of Residential Schools can be significantly difficult for survivors of this system and sensitivity for the well-being of survivors is paramount. The same sensitivity should be extended to students who may be deeply moved and shocked by what they witness.

Introduction:

Introduce yourself to the class (your name, Nation, and gratitude for working on the traditional territory of the First Nation you are in). Explain to the class that today we will discuss and learn about the history of Aboriginal education in Canada.

Guided Practice: Card Making Exercise – Debrief – Handout Review

- ❖ Ask for seven student volunteers. Arrange six desks facing each other with some space between. Arrange one desk at the head of both rows. Explain to the whole class that this is an experiential exercise and that I will be giving specific instructions to the volunteers; the remainder of the class is requested to be silent throughout the demonstration and to observe the actions and reactions of both sets of students.
 - Seat the students and inform them that they are going to make a greeting card. This card can be addressed to anyone and that they are to try their very best to make an interesting and thoughtful card.
 - Provide colored paper and colored markers/crayons to one group (group A) while giving basic paper and pencils to the other (group B). The student at the head of the desks is given the basic paper supplies for group B.
 - Check-in with group A and offer support and positive feedback. Encourage the students to add details and a positive greeting.
 - Give little support and guidance to group B. At this point silently ask the one student to go back to their desk without disturbing the others.
 - Make a show of support to the finished product of group A while acknowledging the work of group B. Thanks group A and send all students to their desks. Thus ends the simulation.
- ❖ Debrief the simulation:
 - Ask the student viewers to describe what they witnessed. When someone makes an observation about group A or group B; solicit a response from someone in that group. Was their support or was their apathy? How did they feel? Why did the instructor provide, or fail to provide, the support?

- Explain to the class that group A represented public education for non-Aboriginal students while group B represented Residential Schools.
 - Hopefully someone will ask about the student who was sent away. This student represented Aboriginal students who died while in residential schools.
- ❖ At this point explain to students that they will learn about the purpose, and impact of, Residential Schools in Canada.
 - ❖ Distribute handout.
 - Review introductory information with class and check for prior knowledge of a variety of topics.
 - Provide a brief background of Aboriginal-European race relations from contact to Confederation.
 - Describe the Indian Act and its purpose.
 - Read the *quotes* from the Summary Information page and ask students to describe the meaning of these quotes and attitude of the speakers – post this information on the board.
 - Read aloud the three paragraph description of Residential Schools in Canada – examine the pictures and ask students to answer the question about D.C. Scott.

Independent Practice:

Play the video *Education as We See It*. Ask students to identify the feelings, and consequences, of residential schools for the people in the video. Review the episode title; who is the “we” in Education as We See It?

Closure:

Read aloud Rita Joe’s poem. Answer questions 1-5. Share read Louise Bernice Half, Sky Dancer’s poem. Ask students to each read one line aloud. Answer question 6.

Thank students for their time and their conscience.



Quotes and Summary Information about Residential Schooling

What do you know about...

- The Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, and United Churches and their relationships with Canada's First peoples?
- First Peoples languages?
- The Indian Act?
- Indian Residential Schools?
- First Peoples storytelling?
- The significance of first Peoples Elders?
- The social problems and issues facing First Peoples people?
- Colonization and First Peoples?

The following quotes are from Duncan Campbell Scott, appointed Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs by the government of Canada from 1913 to 1932. He was responsible for making it compulsory for Indian children to attend residential schools and was determined to “take the Indian out of the Indian” through residential schools.

“I was to get rid of the Indian problem. Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question and no Indian Department.”

“They are a weird and waning race...ready to break out at any moment in savage dances; in wild and desperate orgies.”¹

“It is observed with alarm that the holding of dances by the Indians on their reserves is on the increase, and that these practices tend to disorganize the efforts which the Department of Indian Affairs is putting forth to make them self-supporting. I have, therefore, to direct you to use your utmost endeavors to dissuade the Indians from excessive indulgence in the practice of dancing.”²

“You will not give up your idle, roving habits to enable your children to receive instruction. It has therefore been determined that your children shall be sent to schools where they will forget their Indian habits and be instructed in all the necessary arts of the civilized life and become one with your white brethren.”³

From 1830 to 1996 Indian children were forcibly removed from their homes and taken to Residential schools operated by religious orders (Catholic, Methodist, United, Anglican, Baptist and Presbyterian). Some of these schools were situated right on reserves but most of the schools were far away from the schools’ drawing area. Many children had to travel a day’s journey, often being treated like cattle, to get to these schools. Even though some residential schools were on reserves, the children attending these schools were not allowed to see their parents, relatives or community members that lived on the reserve. The intent was to civilize the savages to that they could be assimilated into white society.

At residential schools the children were often subjected to cruelty to make them subordinate to the teachings of the church and ways of the white society. These children were denied, under threat of strict punishment, the use of their languages and cultures and their ways of life. They were isolated from their families for at least ten months of the year and forced to do labour to maintain the schools. Their schooling was often substandard since many of the teachers were untrained and the curriculum was mainly religious in content.

¹ statement by Duncan Campbell Scott, 1920, cited at http://www.shannonthunderbird.com/residential_schools.htm

² excerpt from a letter written December 15, 1921 by Duncan Campbell Scott as a circular to staff, cited at <http://www.redskyperformance.com/redsky.surface.html>

³ Indian Superintendent, P.G. Anderson, 1946 cited at http://www.shannonthunderbird.com/residential_schools.htm

The food and living conditions in the residential schools was foreign and detached. Abuses (physical, mental, sexual) were generally accepted as common practice and unreported because of the elevated stature of the religious clerics. Many Indian children died in these schools because of health problems associated with poor living conditions. The majority of deaths were from tuberculosis which spread rapidly through close living quarters and poor living conditions in these schools.

It is estimated that 100,000 children attended these schools and very few have indicated that this was a good thing. Most attendees have very bad stories to tell about their experiences at these schools. In attempts to redress the racism associated with residential schools and through leadership of the Assembly of First Nations, the government is preparing to compensate residential school survivors for the loss of culture and language. Measures are in place for residential school survivors to sue the government for severe physical and sexual abuses they experienced in these schools.



Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874.
Library and Archives Canada / NL-022474

How does this photo link with the mission of Duncan Campbell Scott?

I Lost My Talk

by Rita Joe⁴

I lost my talk
The talk you took away.
When I was a little girl
At Shubenacadie⁵ school.

You snatched it away:
I speak like you
I think like you
I create like you
The scrambled ballad, about my word.
Two ways I talk
Both ways I say,
Your way is more powerful.

So gently I offer my hand and ask,
Let me find my talk
So I can teach you about me.

I'm So Sorry

by Louise Bernice Halfe, Sky Dancer⁶

I'm so sorry the pope said
I thought you were just gathering
to life your legs, thump your chest
around that tree of old men.
I didn't know the rock and twig you
smoked.

Blueberries, and sweetgrass
were your offerings.
I wouldn't have taken your babies
and fed them wafers and wine.

I'm so sorry, I just thought
we could borrow land for a little
to plan our seeds,
raise sheep and build churches, schools.
I really didn't know how you survived
for centuries on buffalo and teepees,
praying in medicine wheels.

I'm so sorry, I should have told
the settlers to quit their scalping,
selling hair at two bits for each Indian
I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.
Maybe I could build healing churches
chapels full of sweetgrass and drums
chase the spirits out and fill sweatlodges
full of armed angels

1. What do you think the poem *I Lost My Talk* means?
2. What is Rita Joe's opinion of the residential school?
3. What type of emotions is she expressing when she remembers the school?
4. What does she feel she has lost?
5. How does she hope to change the future?
6. What do you think First Nations survivors of Residential Schools would think of *I'm So Sorry*?

⁴ Rita Joe is a widely recognized Mi'kmaq poet.

⁵ Indian residential school that operated in Nova Scotia from 1922-1968.

⁶ Louise Bernice Halfe, Sky Dancer is a Cree poet from Alberta.

“Indians have in the past been portrayed the bad guys, I write the positive image of my people, the Mi’kmaq.”



Quote from Rita Joe:

“When I started the first time writing, I was trying to inspire all minorities with my work. To make others happy with my work is what I wanted to do.”

Poem Analysis: I lost My Talk

This cultural theft occurred when Joe was a child attending Shubenacadie Residential School, where the Aboriginal children were taught to mimic the language and behaviour of their colonialist educators. The success of their conditioning tactics is evident in lines six to eight: she now speaks, thinks, and creates like them. Despite the severity of the crime, however, Joe does not express overt anger or lay blame; the emotionally-charged diction one would expect to find is replaced by a subdued, accommodating tone. The poem, ironically written in the language of the assimilator, insists on communication as a means of bringing peace between the peoples. It echoes Joe's common assertion that the resolution of conflicts between cultures lies in communication.

I lost my talk

- my language, my heritage, what defines who I am.

The talk you took away

- she's explaining how she felt, like she lost part of herself.

When I was a little girl at Shubenacadie school.

- when she started attending Shubenacadie school.

You snatched it away;

I speak like you

I think like you

I create like you

The scrambled ballad, about my word.

Because up to then, she'd only known to speak in her language, she'd only understood to do things the way her ancestors had taught her, the way she'd been brought up. But once she went to school she had to speak, act, think how she was taught by the teacher as the "right way". She says that she sounds just like everyone else her in the school.

By "word" she is referring to either her native tongue, culture, or heritage. What she means here is that her song (ballad), the thing that defines who she is has been scrambled. It's not lost yet it's still there, but it's been pushed aside by a need of uniformity taught at the school.

Two ways I talk,

Both ways I say,

Your way is more powerful

Here she says that there's two ways she knows (two cultures, two languages) but the one taught at school is more powerful (English) because it is enforced everywhere.

So gently I offer my hand and ask,

Let me find my talk

So I can teach you about me.

This is like a cry for help. Except it's more like she's asking herself to take the courage to speak up and really explain who she really is and what her native culture has defined her. (This probably occurs later in life, when she starts thinking about her roots.)

1) Ron Ignance¹

I was in and out of residential school. I went and then got really sick. I got scabies all over my body when I first went into residential school. I don't know, it might have been rickets. My great-grandmother heard about it and came and took me home. And she doctored me up so when I got healed I went back to the day school in Skeetchestn for a while. I wound up back in residential school for a year or two and then my parents took me out early because they had to go down and work in the strawberry fields in the summer before the school year was out. They took me out of the residential school and off we went to the States...

...The other hard thing in residential school is that I became a bedwetter. And the thing they did with bedwetters is that you had to wash your own sheets and pack it down to the girls' side. That was devastating because during the day you are standing around outside trying to look like a champ in front of all the girls, smiling at them, and you're walking down the girls' side, being a bedwetter. It was not too good for the morale; it was very, very tough.

You know, we would sneak away sometimes. I had some friends from the Reserve and we would sneak away, climb over the mountains, melt snow up in the mountains and boil up a cup of coffee up there. We enjoyed that, just to get away.

One time before I ran away we had a field trip and the priest took us to Riverside Park. We didn't have any money and they had these machines they had little cranes in these that picked up fifty cent pieces, and nickels and dimes, you know. I was trying my luck, and I got frustrated and I looked around, and I said, "Hey nobody's guarding this thing," and crawled under and I got a big handful of money and filled up my pockets. I went running around and gave money to all the other kids. We went on rides and rides all that day...

...Hawkeye, he was always going around and threatening the guys, "I'm Hawkeye you can't get away from me." A lot of guys would try to run away. Swim across the river climb over the mountains, go down the road, a lot of different ways. And old Hawkeye was out there and he had a good track record of catching you, hey.

Brother Murphy was there too. I remember getting whipped by him for doing something or getting blamed for something. The way I remember getting whipped up there was at nighttime. Just before everybody lined up to go to bed and get cod liver oil poured down your throat, they would call the names of the guys who were going to get a strapping. And then I got called up. You bent over and they put a wet towel on your bare ass and they got a strap out and you got hit. Yeah, you try not to cry and give them the pleasure of letting them know that you're hurting but that was tough to do...

¹Ron Ignance, in *Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School*, ed. Agnes Jack (Penticton, B.C., 2006), 3-9

Name: _____

**Kamloops Residential School:
Primary Source Analysis**

Instructions:

Read the excerpt from *Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School* – a book of interview with residential school survivors – and watch the slideshow on the SmartBoard.
Use what you learn from these sources to answer the questions.

1. What was your FIRST IMPRESSION of the Kamloops school based on the photos?
2. How are the students DEPICTED by the photographer? Do they look happy? Do you think this depiction is an accurate representation of everyday conditions?
3. In your PRIMARY SOURCE, what types of ABUSE (Physical? Verbal? Sexual? Emotional?) are recalled by the interviewee? Give examples.
4. How is FOOD described by the Residential School survivors?
5. Does your source give any examples of “happy times” amidst the sad times? Examples?
6. Did Residential School have a positive or negative impact on the person in this source?



REFLECT

Things You Learned:



Things That Changed Your View:



Question You Have:

Aboriginal, First Nations, Metis, Inuit People

<u>WHAT I KNOW</u>	<u>WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW</u>	<u>WHAT I LEARNED</u>

Online Residential Schools Resource List

<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=3>

This is the English language version of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission website. The PDF documents Justice Sinclair cited (Interim Report & They came for the Children) are both linked to this page.

<http://www.legacyofhope.ca/about-residential-schools>

The Legacy of Hope Foundation is a national charitable foundation founded to increase knowledge and awareness of Residential Schools and provide support to the survivors of Residential Schools. The About Residential Schools tab includes information from the early history of these schools, intergenerational impacts and healing movements, among other topics.

<http://www.fnesc.ca/resources/publications>

This link has portable document files for a variety of teacher resources. The teacher resource manual for English First Peoples 12 has a number of excellent units and lesson plans to support teachers in a variety of topics regarding First Peoples. The unit on Residential School uses two novels by Aboriginal authors that describe the impacts of residential schools on the protagonists.

http://aned.sd61.bc.ca/edsrvs/ANED/educationalResources/ResidentialSchools/Secondary_Residential_School_Tips_for_Teaching_Controversial_Issues.pdf

The Greater Victoria School District has posted this PDF on the World Wide Web that was easily found using an internet search string. The following portable document file is comprehensive kit for teaching about Residential Schools. The kit includes teacher support material, student information sheets, quizzes, and essay writing rubrics to help teachers assess the level of understanding and accomplishment of students.

<http://irsr.ca/lesson-plan2/>

The Indian Residential School Resources website is managed by the Indian Residential School Survivors Society. This website has lesson plans; BC Social Studies 10 prescribed learner outcomes and worksheets that will help teachers describe the history, and legacy, of Residential Schools in British Columbia.

<http://thenhier.ca/en/content/teaching-history-and-impact-residential-schools>

The History Education Network is a historical education project funded and published by the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Education department. An article posted by Katherine Joyce includes a number of hyperlinks to websites that help the reader better understand the national disgrace of Residential Schools in Canada.

http://erkiville.com/Docs/Lesson_Plan_RS-3.pdf

The following lesson plan views the topic of Residential School through the lens of racism. This PDF document includes a student activity sheet as well as teacher support material.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJtj4WJceY&feature=player%20embedded>

Kuper Island: Return to the Healing Circle

They called it Alcatraz. It was the Kuper Island Indian Residential School, a huge, four story, red brick structure built on a remote island off the east coast of Vancouver Island – built to provide education and straining for the children of the Cowichan Indian Agency and adjacent Coast Salish groups on southern Vancouver Island. The government funded, catholic-run institution operated from 1890 until the mid-1970's when it was closed and later destroyed.

For many former students, the memories of Kuper Island are almost too painful to bear. Some recall picking rat feces out of their food before they ate it. Others buried their babies near the school grounds, babies that were the result of sexual abuse at the school. Still others remembered children who died trying to escape their Island prison in canoes or on floating logs.

Until recently, few of them talked openly about their ordeal. But, like thousands of other Aboriginal people across Canada and the United States, the former residents of Kuper Island are now beginning to break the silence and to speak out about the trauma of their residential school experience. For them, the time for healing has come...