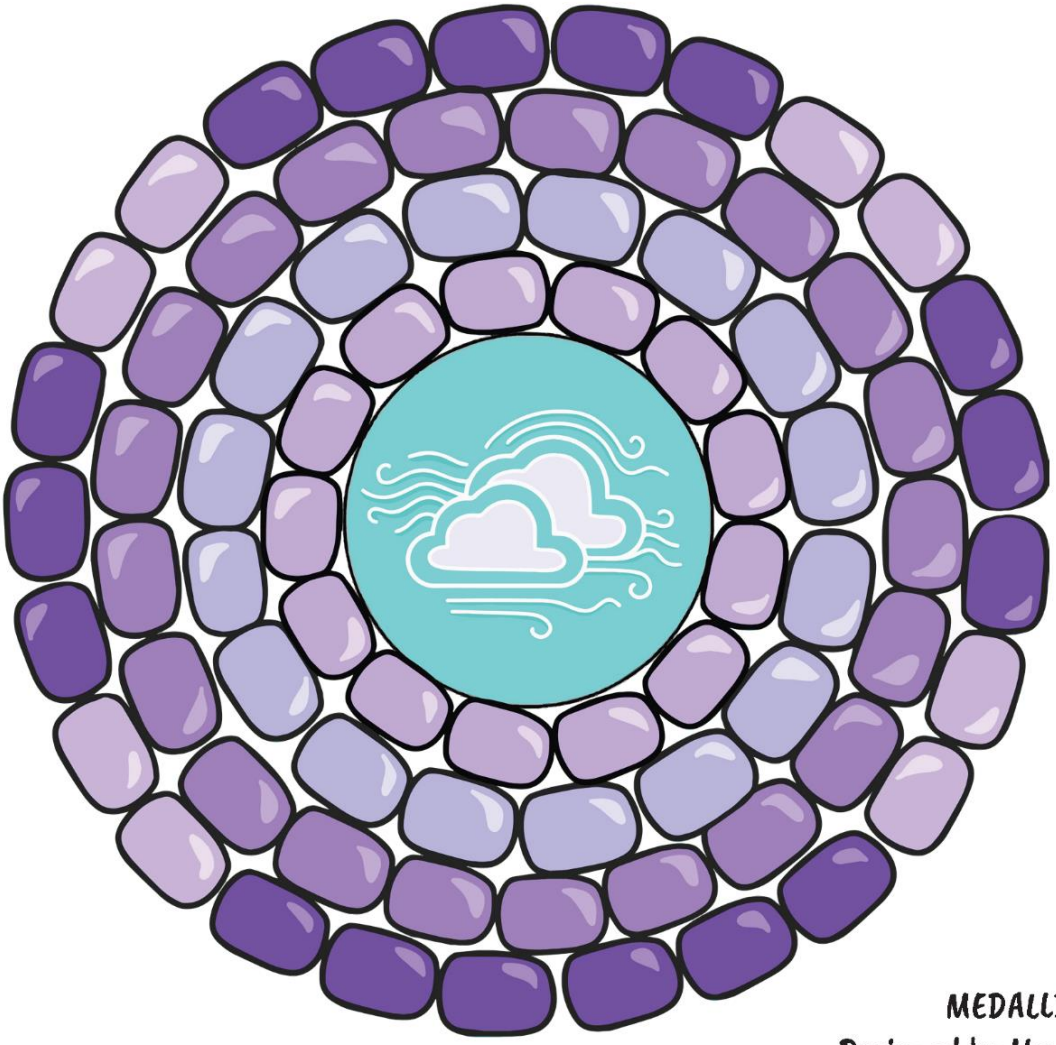

MEDALLION
Designed by Hawlii Pichette
Graphic concept by Crystal Clark

AIR LESSON PLANS

Created by Indigenous Education Consultant Crystal Clark

ADVANCED: GRADES 9-12

www.indigenousheroes.ca

presented by

ENBRIDGE
Fueling Futures™

Lesson Plan

Extension Activities for In-Class Learning

Suggested Grades: 9-12

ADVANCED

INTRODUCTION

Developing and maintaining relationships with each other in a good way is central to Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Saying hello to one another is a small yet meaningful gesture. Learning and acknowledging an Indigenous language can create entry points into creating and understanding relationships through an Indigenous context.

Connecting with each other in the circle can create pathways to understand and acknowledge Indigenous ways of knowing and being connected to original child-rearing practices, kinship circles and interconnected relationships with each other and the natural world. In the circle, everyone is valued, supported, interconnected, and on equal ground.

Oral understandings of the spirit and intent of treaty relationships reflect mutual respect, peace and friendship. Many First Nations did not enter into treaties, nor did Métis and Inuit Peoples.

The lesson plans included are basic entry point activities meant to inspire further learning, relationship building and deeper understanding specific to distinct First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. The term Indigenous is being used as a broad term which encompasses First Nations, Métis and Inuit. There are many distinct groups with distinct cultural traditions. These lessons do not go into depth, but rather offer brief introductions to some broad themes that relate to the cultures of the Indigenous Hall of Famers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

HISTORY OF MEDALS

Medals in sport are given as a symbol of achievement. Circular medals can be seen throughout history within many cultures across the globe. The history of medals also has origins in gifts for military and political service, gifts given to important people, and as a token of allyship. Throughout the history of sports competitions, medals coincide with the celebration of greatness during sporting ceremonies. Medals or coins were also given by representatives of the Crown to many First Nations leaders who entered into treaties. The circular design of a medal shares similar aesthetic qualities with medallions created by Indigenous Peoples throughout history and present times.

SYMBOLISM OF MEDALLIONS

Medallions, objects and embellishments on art, clothing, and jewelry were, and continue to be, done with materials such as beads, quills, moose and elk tufts, shells, wool, paint, antlers, copper, and carved wood. The designs include patterns and symbols that reflect a variety of meanings. Oral traditions of passing on stories, values, kinship, spirituality, natural world connections and beliefs are reflected in art, clothing, and regalia. Circular objects used to spin wool "were often carved with intricate designs using icons with personal or family meaning...."[1]

To create and give a gift of a medallion reflects values of honour, respect, and relationship building. The process involved in beading, tufting, quilling, painting and carving can be healing for many Indigenous Peoples and connects to culture, spirit, and land. The continuation of these practices is a form of resistance, resilience, and flourishing. At one time in history, cultural items and practices such as the Potlatch and Sundance were legally banned through the Indian Act. Ceremonial practices and cultural artefacts were often deemed sacrilegious. Many ceremonial leaders ended up imprisoned while cultural items ended up in museums, family homes of those who confiscated the items, destroyed or resold for large volumes of money. Many cultural items still need to be repatriated today.

MEDAL/MEDALLION as RELATIONSHIP

When a medal or medallion is given, it activates a relationship between the giver and receiver. The two parties exchange words through the air we share and breathe creating an interconnection to each other. In relationships, we share breaths when we converse with one another. It is in the conversations we have, the truths and stories

[1] Northwest Territorial Mint. (n.d.). *Thunderbird Spindle Whorl*. Retrieved from NWTM Store: https://store.nwtmint.com/product_details/2308/Thunderbird_Spindle_Whorl/index.html

we share that bring us closer together.[2] Athletes are mindful of the deep breaths of air they need to rhythmically take in order to fully empower their body, mind, and spirit when competing in sports. Even though the Indigenous Hall of Famers come from different places across this vast land, the air they breathe and the stories they share continue to connect them to each other, us and the natural world.

SIGNIFICANCE OF A CIRCLE

The circle is a symbol of interconnectivity and holistic wellness of the self, family, community, and society within many Indigenous cultural ways. The circle is reflected in the natural world and represents balance, relationship, wholeness, unity, and life cycles. When we sit or stand together in a circle, we are engaging in a mutually respectful relationship with each other where each person is valued. Commonly when ceremonies, feasts, and celebrations occur it is done so in a circle as said in Well being: Cycles of Life::

> The pipe ceremony, for example, follows the sun's path in a circle. Stories are often told to a circle of listeners and various meetings and decision-making institutions are conducted with a circle of participants...Each time that the sun rises in the east to circle across the sky, the day moves through four parts: morning, afternoon, evening, and night. The days join together to bring four seasons. The concept of four directions is sometimes represented by the idea of four winds that blow from the north, south, east, and west. Many dances incorporate the four directions, which symbolize different things to different Nations. In one interpretation, the east represents the sun and fire; the south, the thunderbird and water; the west, plants, animals, and earth; and the north, wind and air. Some First Nations also identify four sacred elements of creation: earth, water, air, and fire.[3]

The drum is a circle and plays an important role in bringing people together and in ceremonies. The heartbeat is like the rhythm of the drum. The first drum song you ever hear or feel is that of your mother's heart beat when you are growing inside her. The heartbeat is powered by the rhythmical nature of our breathing. When you are active, your heart beats to the rhythm of your overall level of health. When you are active, you are running to the beat of your own drum song, while your feet connect with the earth and your breath connects with the clean air that trees and plants provide for us. Drumming and singing within Indigenous circles have been passed down for generations and have several purposes. Traditionally, some First Nations men create a song to sing to their newborn baby, which the child carries through their life.[4] Songs provide self-regulation, attachment, empowerment, teachings, and

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[2] Wisselink, K. (2019, February 14). *An Indigenous Pedagogy for Decolonization*. Retrieved from AU Press: https://www.aupress.ca/blog/2019/02/14/decolonization/

[3] Government of Alberta. (n.d.). *Well-being: Cycles of Life - Excerpt from Aboriginal Perspectives.* Retrieved from Walking Together: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum: https://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/well_being/documents/cycles_of_life.pdf

[4] Health Nexus. (2019). *Taking Care of Our Children - Facilitator Guide: Parent Workshop on Childrearing in First Nations Families and Communities*. Retrieved from Best Start: Resources: https://resources.beststart.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/K67-A.pdf

spiritual connections. Drum and song continue to play a key role in traditional sports and games for example the drum is an integral part of traditional Dene hand games which are played at the Arctic Winter Games. Shared breath as one inhales and exhales the sounds of traditional songs are apparent in many examples of Indigenous everyday and ceremonial life.

KINSHIP CIRCLES

Original Indigenous child-rearing practices place the child at the centre, with nurturing supports circling the child. Supports that surround the child within a community will help nurture the child's growth and lifelong wellness. Distinct Nations have original child-rearing teachings that are unique and essential to them. Everything done was with and for children who learned from kinship systems that included immediate and extended family. Children were educated about life by being completely integrated and immersed into process and practices on the land they lived on.[5] Strong kinship systems create positive self-awareness, attachment, dignity, and belonging.[6] Talaga, T (2008), in All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward says, "Families are extensive networks of strong, connective kinship; they are often entire communities."[7] Learning more in depth about original child-rearing practices can be done by creating and maintaining relationships with Indigenous communities, which include traditional Knowledge Holder. Interconnection is a core way of knowing and being that some describe as the circle of life.

Traditional kinship bonds and transference of knowledge were forcibly severed through colonization tactics. When children were forced to attend Residential Schools, communication and attachment bonds were diminished between child and family through violent assimilation methods such as physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental punishment. A child uttering words or phrases in their first language, like "hello" or "I love you," could have seen violent consequences in these institutions. Laws, policies, and attitudes forced upon Indigenous Peoples attempted to destroy kinship systems rooted in love of each other, the natural world, and the Creator.

CIRCLE OF RELATIONSHIPS

The circle of relationships and interconnectivity extends beyond immediate family and community, and connects with larger social groups and society as a whole. Relationships between Indigenous groups existed pre-colonization and continue to

[5] Indigenous Motherhood. (16, March 2020). *Traditional Indigenous Kinship Practices at Home: Being Child-Centered During the Pandemic*. Retrieved from Indigenous Motherhood: https://indigenousmotherhood.wordpress.com/2020/03/16/traditional-indigenous-kinship-practices-at-home-being-child-centered-during-the-pandemic/

[6] Talaga, T. (2018). *All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward (The CBC Massey Lectures)*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press.

[7] Talaga, T. (2018). *All Our Relations: Finding the Path Forward (The CBC Massey Lectures)*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press.

form. Treaty relationships between First Nations groups occurred long before treaty relationships with the Crown.

The circular treaty coin has a depth of symbolism that goes beyond the aesthetics of the medal much like that of sports medals, beaded and carved medallions. The gifting of treaty medals was symbolic of shared promises and working together. The visual symbolism on the circular treaty coin gives the impression that both parties are on equal ground and entering a relationship that was supposed to be built on mutual respect.

The spirit and intent of treaties as understood by First Nations are sacred relationships between two groups and the Creator, yet treaties as understood by the original inhabitants of this land continue to be unfilled. A false sense of trust was built only as a colonization tactic to secure violent control over the land and way of life of Indigenous Peoples. Whether or not a Nation entered a Treaty with the Crown, all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples have had relationships with colonial newcomers, and typically that relationship was based on the newcomers' paternalistic and Eurocentric values that demeaned Indigenous Peoples even though Indigenous Peoples way of life contributed to the survival of the original colonizers that came to these lands..

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Developing and maintaining relationships with each other in a good way is central to Indigenous ways of knowing and being. When standing in a circle together and greeting each other in a positive way, we are making an initial connection with one another. Saying hello to one another is commonplace, yet when we place ourselves in a circle while learning an Indigenous language, we can begin to make deeper connections and acknowledge languages and cultures . This is also a small step towards supporting reconciliation and becoming a good ally

Connecting with each other in the circle is one small entry point into beginning to understand and acknowledge Indigenous ways of knowing and being connected to relationships with each other. In the circle, everyone is valued, supported, and interconnected. "All my relations" is an English phrase some Indigenous Peoples may use to reflect the connection we have to each other as well as the natural world.

SPORT

Every sport represented by the Indigenous Hall of Famers connects back to the air; one reason for this is because the air we all breathe sustains our bodies. Whether playing a team sport, or solo sport, relationships are essential. Teams become like family thus become a part of the larger kinship circle in which team members, coaches and mentors work together at building relationships. The strengths of each

team member is celebrated while mentors and coaches offer circles of support to individuals and teams much like that of the concept of interconnection within Indigenous circle pedagogy. When competing with teams, sportsmanship amongst those we compete with is central to maintain the integrity of sports. In sport, we shake hands with each other as a symbol of respect. Teams in sport connect back to the idea of relationships since a team becomes like family, thus creating extended kinship bonds.

Building positive relationships and promoting sportsmanship, even amongst rival teams, can be uplifting rather than leaving individuals, teams, and fans feeling deflated and bitter. Several Indigenous Hall of Famers experienced racism on and off the field, yet with self-determination, athletic drive, and support from their families and others, they were able to flourish. Indigenous Peoples in mainstream sports continue to battle against racist slurs, which can demean one's sense of self-worth. In her #WeWillDoBetter vignette, Hall of Famer Waneek Horn-Miller has said:

> … I do experience racism, and I do fear it, and I fear for my children and I fear because the shootings are still happening, the issues are still happening, it's still happening, but I think we are talking about it and there is movement to do something about it. That is the only way we are going to find solutions. It's not my community or your community; it's our community and we're going to have to find it together. Our children are in great, great need for that because their future is at stake and I would never ever, ever want them to go through something like the Oka Crisis, that is my greatest nightmare, but it's always a potential unless we do something.

Dismantling and confronting racism through education, action and upstander behavior, while instilling resilience in those who bear the burden of hateful action can help society flourish together, both on and off the sports field.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITY #1

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS – SAY HELLO

SET UP

Visit http://indigenousheroes.ca/ and go to the Advanced Air Educational Interactivity. Display the Advanced Air Educational Interactivity and move through the activity until you get to the beaded medallion digital interactivity. As a class, or individually/in small groups, students interact with the digital platform. If possible, arrange students in a circle or U-shape when they are sharing their thoughts and/or quotes and summaries.

OPTIONS

1. INDIVIDUAL: Students practice saying the word hello in an Indigenous language using the interactivity.
2. SMALL GROUP: The teacher assigns small groups and students interact with the digital beaded medallion to practice saying hello in an Indigenous language.
3. WHOLE CLASS: Teacher, or selected students, interact with the digital beaded medallion and as a class, practice saying the word hello in a variety of Indigenous languages.

PRACTICE

Pick one greeting represented on the digital interactive activity and practice saying it until it is remembered, or the teacher leads the research on how to say hello in an Indigenous language that is local or close to where their school is located.

SHARE

1. The teacher and students stand or sit in a large circle or U-shape.
2. The teacher begins by turning to the student on their left. They say hello in the Indigenous language they practiced to the person to the left of them. They can shake hands, fist or elbow bump. Smile to indicate they are done saying hello.
3. The person who received the greeting says hello back in the language, smiles and turns to the person on their left and repeats the process.
4. Continue sharing “hello” until everyone has said and received hello/handshake/smile.

CIRCLE REFLECTIONS

- Remain in the circle.

- Pose the questions below and give students 1-2-minutes to silently reflect on their thoughts.

ROUND 1

- QUESTION: “How do you build and keep friendships?” *(sharing, kindness, trust)*
- Go around the circle and invite students to answer.

ROUND 2

- QUESTION: How does learning about Indigenous Peoples’ ways of knowing and being directly from Indigenous Peoples contribute to building and maintaining relationships with Indigenous Peoples?

-

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH:

- ASSIGN the class into research groups.
- Research authentic Indigenous sources for written information, as outlined below.
- Once students have gathered their research, they will present a summary to the class.
- Class takes notes on other groups' topics then combines all information into one informational paper.
- Include original sources.

SUMMER: Research how the demonization of Indigenous languages within the Residential Schools system impacted family and kinship relationships.

FALL: How was Indigenous language suppression enforced and what short and long term effects has this had on knowledge transference of Indigenous ways of knowing and being?

WINTER: What are the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Actions and how can these Calls to Actions help repair and establish positive relationships between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians?
https://nctr.ca/records/reports/

SPRING: How does language influence relationship-building and why is Indigenous language revitalization important? What is happening today to support Indigenous language revitalization?

IN-CLASS ACTIVITY #2

ADVANCED-KINSHIP

SET UP:
Display the Advanced Air Educational Interactivity or students independently interact with digital platforms. If possible, arrange students in a circle or U-shape when they are sharing their thoughts and/or quotes and summaries.

INTRODUCTION:
Explain to students that in original ways of knowing and being within many Indigenous communities the child is placed at the centre. The child is raised, loved, and nurtured by family and extended family in the community in which they surround the child with love, education and support. The whole community has a shared responsibility to take care of the child. The relationship between child and grandparents is a special one in that the grandparents play a significant role in transferring knowledge to a child through nurturing, stories, experiences, and traditional teachings. Communicating through our words that are transmitted through shared air creates interconnection to one another. An intergenerational relationship is maintained as the child helps to nurture the grandparents with love and support throughout life while passing on knowledge to the next generation when they grow old. Some Indigenous Peoples refer to the rock as grandfather rock. The rock has a spirit and connects us to the land and all the land has to teach us, much like the wisdom of our Elders.

INTERACT with Advanced Air Educational Interactivity to become familiar with samples of kinship terms in a variety of Indigenous languages that represent the Indigenous Hall of Famers.

RESEARCH: Put students in groups of 2-3 to research kinship terms of an Indigenous group of their choice (preferably local to their area).

REFLECT and DISCUSS:
Using the same groups, ask students to reflect on and discuss the following topics:

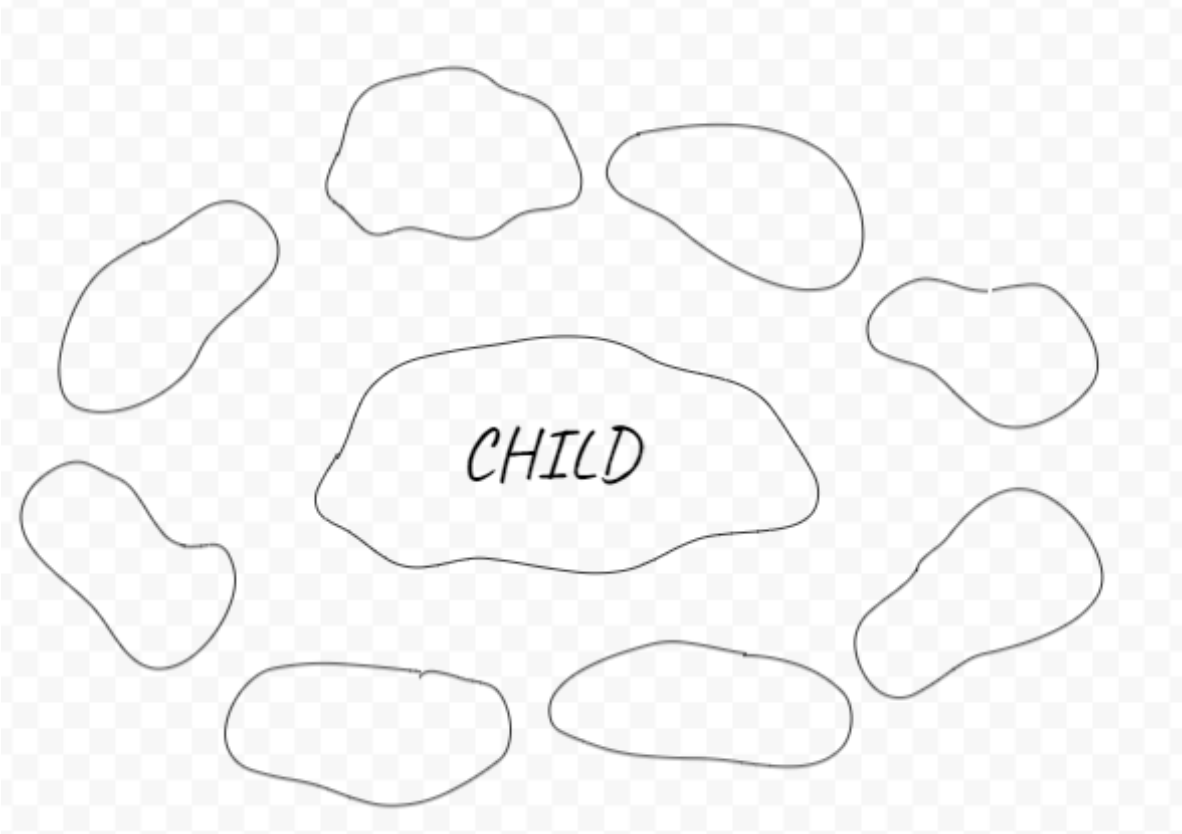
- What and who does a child need to feel loved and nurtured?
- What does the phrase “it takes a community to raise a child” mean?

SHARE: Have students stand or sit in a large circle. Students share their REFLECTIONS following the sequence of the circle.

DRAW:

- Using 8.5 by 11 paper or larger have students write the word CHILD at the center.
- Draw a rock shape around the word “CHILD.”
- Ask students to think about descriptions/characteristics/qualities of what is needed in life to feel nurtured, supported, and loved.
- Draw rocks in a circle around the centre rock that says CHILD.
- Insert the descriptions/characteristics/qualities of what is needed in life to feel nurtured, supported, and loved.

EXAMPLE:



EXTENSION #1: If going outside to gather rocks is an option, then go outside to search for rocks that will fit in the palm of the hand. If rock gathering occurs, be sure to practice reciprocity as mentioned in the LAND activity (i.e., have the students thank the land for providing the rock). Using washable markers, have students write “you are my rock” on the rock and gift it to someone who has impacted them in a positive way.

GALLERY WALK:

Do a poster gallery information sharing and gathering walk around the classroom. Share the questions with the students in advance of the gallery walk, and give them time to research answers, if needed. If research is done online, ensure the source is Indigenous.

- Write the following statements/questions on larger poster paper *(see "Poster Gallery Topics" below)*.
- Display the questions around the classroom.
- Divide the class into pairs or groups and assign questions to each pair/group. All students come together and share answers with the larger group.
- Give students time to reflect on and possibly research answers to the list of questions.
- Students write their reflections under each heading.
- Students can move freely around the room and insert reflections under the questions on the poster board.
- Optional for students to put their pair's initials or group name beside their reflections.
- Once students have added their reflections under respective headings they can rotate around the class reading other groups' responses.
- Alternatively, students are given sticky notes or pieces of small paper to write short reflections on, they stick or tape their reflections under the appropriate heading.
- After students have had a chance to read each others' thoughts they can add to their understanding if it has changed or expanded.

POSTER GALLERY TOPICS:

- What and who does a child need to feel loved and nurtured?
- What does the phrase "it takes a community to raise a child" mean?
- What short- and long-term impacts can arise when being forcibly separated from loving family and community at a young age (e.g. being put into a Residential School setting against the guardians' and child's will)?
- What happens to a child's sense of self-worth when love and nurturing are not circling a child?
- What long-term impacts will a lack of nurturing have on a child's sense of belonging and identity?
- How did the severing of Indigenous languages contribute to cultural identity loss?

EXTENSION #2:

If possible, connect with local Elders and Knowledge Holders to learn original child-rearing practice methods.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITY #3

ADVANCED- TREATY COIN SYMBOLISM

INTRODUCTION:
Some First Nations entered into treaty relationships with the Crown; however, many groups did not. Much of what is now British Columbia, for example, has been taken over despite not entering into Treaties with the original inhabitants of those lands, while Inuit have settled land-claim agreements with what is now Canada.

Furthermore, First Nations have their own understanding of what the spirit and intent of treatiesFor example, most First Nations that entered into treaties have oral understandings that are not reflective of "ceding" the land to newcomers, even though the written text might say this. When the treaties were originally created, the paper version was written in English, yet most First Peoples neither spoke nor read English. Many Nations describe their understanding of treaties as meaning the "Spirit and Intent" of treaty relationships in which we coexist in peace with each other - they did not believe they were signing away their way of life and lands to the Crown. The Two-Row Wampum of the Haudenashone represents a visual living treaty of peace and coexistence.

The Treaty Coin provides an example of visual representation of treaty relationships.

SET UP: Display or project a visual of the treaty coin with the side that has two men shaking hands.

OPTIONAL: Make a print copy of the treaty coin on 8.5 by 11 paper.

OBSERVE: As a class look closely at the visuals represented on the coin.

THINK: Using the sample "Symbolism Ideas" table below, come up with thoughts as a class as to what messages you might think were being conveyed, if you did not speak English, but rather were interpreting the act of giving from an Indigenous perspective through the imagery and/or symbolism of the coin.

SYMBOLISM IDEAS		
Act of giving the coin-	**Circular Shape of Coin-**	**Sun, land, water-**
Handshake-	**Clothing of each Individual-**	**Hatchet-**
Tipi-	**Hat/Headdress-**	**Placement of Hands-**
Stance-	**Chest-**	**Feather-**
Woman-		

NOTES ABOUT COIN'S SYMBOLISM		
Act of giving the coin- *Medal created to symbolically reflect treaty promises. Building of trust. Treaty medals given as a part of the Treaty negotiation process to entice Nations into entering relationships.*	**Circular Shape of Coin**- *Reflection of nature and the circle of life, creation.*	**Sun, land, water**- *"As long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow" reflects the living commitment of relationship Interconnection to the land, Sundance, connection to the Creator.*
Handshake- *Enter into a relationship, greeting, making an agreement, trust.*	**Clothing-** *Maintain a mutually respectful way of life.*	**Hatchet-** *"Burying the hatchet" means to make peace.*
Tipi- *Continuation of practicing ways of knowing and being in relation to land and lifestyle on the land*	**Hat/Headdress-** *Accepting of each other's cultural ways of life as represented in clothing.*	**Placement of Hands-** *Hand over chest may reveal hiding a promise.*
Stance- *Closed stance (perhaps hiding something) open stance (trust), on leveled ground indicating mutual respect.*	**Chest**- *Open chest - trust Closed chest- hiding something perhaps.*	**Feather**- *Connection to the natural world.*
Woman (flip side)- *value of woman and mother in matriarchal society, woman would help oversee and take care of each other.*		

CREATE: Create a map that shows Treaty areas with Nations, land claims, and unceded territories.

RESEARCH:

- What are some characteristics of oral tradition and how does this practice influence Indigenous ways of knowing and being?
- How could the coin's symbolism and imagery help entice First Nations leaders into the treaties?
- What does "Spirit and the Intent" of the treaty mean?
- How did ceremony play a part in the treaty entering process?
- How does oral understanding of treaties from a First Nations, Métis, and Inuit lens reflect relationships between Indigenous and non-indigenous people in Canada?
- What are oral understandings of treaty promises and are they being honoured?

IN-CLASS ACTIVITY #4

LEAVE, STICK, ROCK, SHARE

SET UP: Circle or U-shape with teacher included in the circle.

PROCESS: Each student takes turns following the sequence of the circle or U-shape.

GUIDED SHARE:

- *LEAVE:* One word of gratitude that you would LEAVE to the earth.
- *STICK:* One memory of the activity that will STICK with you.
- *ROCK:* One thing that ROCKED you so much you will share it with someone.
- SHARE: Take snapshots of student work that was created throughout the process and SHARE them on social media.

A heartfelt thank you to Blackfoot Elder, Saa'kokoto (Randy Bottle) who is credited for this activity.

CANADA'S SPORTS HALL OF FAME SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES

@CANsportshall

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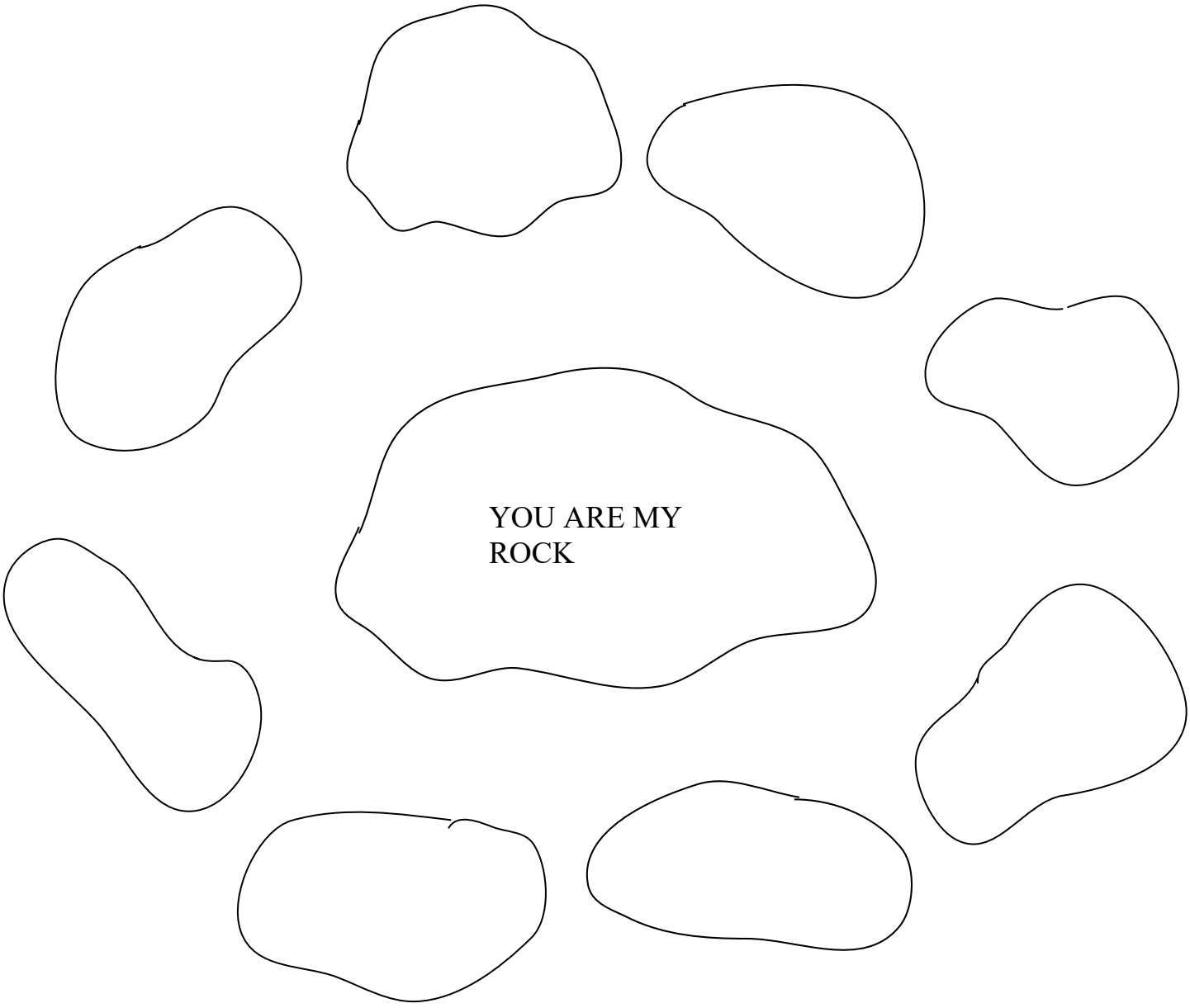
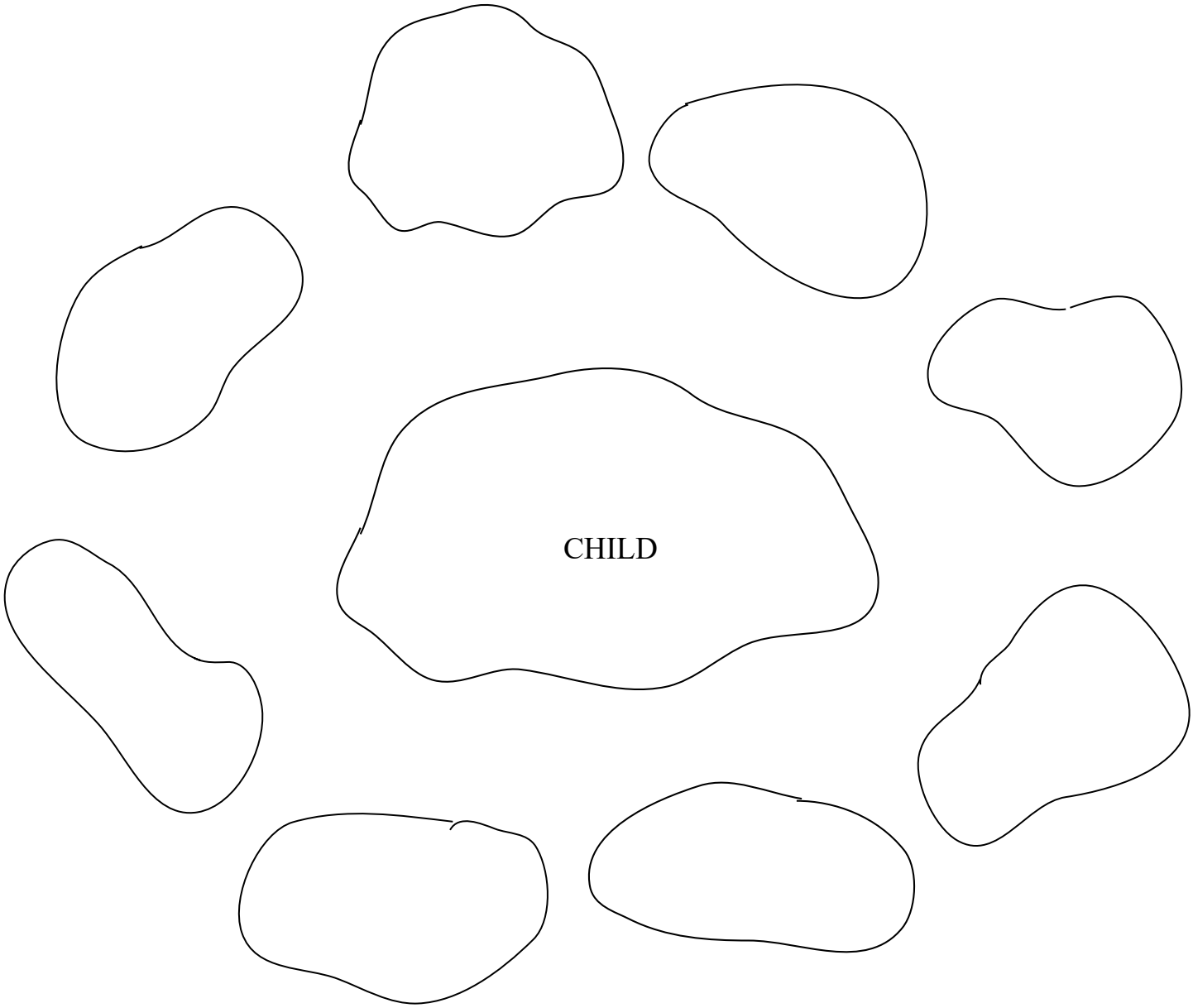
HASHTAGS

#IndigenousSportHeroes
#EducateandInspire

TEMPLATES




CHILD

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