

# Grade 1 - Connections between People, the Land and Features in their Communities

Social Studies, Grades 1-6; History and Geography, Grades 7-8 (2013) Grade 1, People and Environments: The Local Community

## Overview of Module

Students explore, interpret and analyze the interrelationships between people and features of the natural and built environment through field study, Knowledge-Building Circles and opportunities to share personal stories of cultural significance. These activities will help students to understand First Nations, Métis and Inuit worldviews on the environment and places of cultural significance.

## Connections to Curriculum

The curriculum expectations addressed in this teaching and learning example (TLE) are identified within the TLE plan and can also be found in the Ontario curriculum: [Social Studies, Grades 1-6; History and Geography, Grades 7-8 \(2013\)](#), Grade 1, People and Environments: The Local Community.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/sshg18curr2013.pdf>

## Opportunities for Cross-curricular Connections

Language, Grades 1-8 (2006), Oral Communications strand

## Considerations for Planning

- Teachers may choose to begin the lesson with a short introductory task: “Whose land are you on?” Many students and community members are unaware of which traditional lands their school is located upon. Maps include: The [First Nations and Treaties Map of Ontario](#) – a copy of which was sent to all schools – available at: [www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties](http://www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties); or a historical map such as the one found at the [Canadian Museum of History](#) web page: [http://www.historymuseum.ca/cmc/VMNF/premieres\\_nations/en/map/index.shtml](http://www.historymuseum.ca/cmc/VMNF/premieres_nations/en/map/index.shtml)
- Teachers should expect that the activities outlined in this module may take a total of 3-4 days to complete.
- Elders or an Aboriginal family or community member could be involved in this module by being invited to visit the classroom to share their teachings on the functions and significance of features in the natural or built environment.

- Some families of Aboriginal heritage do not practice their traditional beliefs and values. Some have adopted Christian customs. A large number of Aboriginal people are beginning a journey of reclaiming their cultural identity and are at various stages of this process.
- Many urban Aboriginal families continue to maintain a connection to their home community to help with family and cultural ties/revitalization. Many Aboriginal families still practice some of the traditional concepts of family and extended family.
- Field study can facilitate “being in the moment”, allowing for greater appreciation of the natural environment. Following outdoor activities, Aboriginal children can be encouraged to share their insights, experiences, perspectives on, and with, Mother Earth. This can help students acknowledge the Aboriginal worldview on the inter-connectedness of all living things.
- Students use the components of the social studies inquiry process to investigate, and to communicate their findings about, significant events, developments, and issues. By applying the inquiry process, students develop skills that they need in order to think critically, solve problems, make informed judgements, and communicate ideas.
- The social studies inquiry process consists of five components: formulating questions, gathering and organizing information, evidence, and/or data, interpreting and analysing information, evidence, and/or data, evaluating information, evidence, and/or data and drawing conclusions, communicating findings.
- It is important for teachers to understand that the inquiry process is not necessarily implemented in a linear fashion. Not all investigations will involve all five components; moreover, there are different entry points within the process

## **Connections to First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples and Perspectives Curriculum Connections**

Aboriginal peoples have special regard for the geographic region and environmental features within their communities. For example, in Ojibway-speaking Nations, the home community is referred to as Odenang. In Ojibway, Ode represents “your heart” and, Nang describes the physical region of origin. Translated, it means, “where the heart is”.

In First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities the physical features of an area may have cultural significance, historical connections and relevance (e.g., a community's ancestors will be buried within the community/territory). Although there are differences in the types of features that have significance in individual communities, all Aboriginal groups have strong connections to the land and respect the geographic and environmental features within their communities.

In this TLE, it is the hope that in leading a traditional Talking Circle ([hyperlink](#)), students will be encouraged to contribute their narratives of personal significance, such as a connection to a special place on the land.

Cultural Implications: The features of places and spaces can have different meanings to people of different cultures and backgrounds. Concept of Social Studies Thinking (Interrelationships) – How do features of the built and natural environment meet the mental, physical, social and spiritual needs of people?

Environmental Implications: Aboriginal peoples have connections to the land. Concept of Social Studies Thinking (Perspective) – First Nations communities are often named to reflect the significant features and/or territory with cultural significance, function and/or history, (i.e., local natural resources which were extracted and utilized for trade and sustenance).

Curriculum Overall Expectations	Curriculum Specific Expectations
<p><b>Social Studies: Grade 1 – Strand B:</b></p> <p>People and Environments: The Local Community</p> <p><b>B1.</b> Application: describe some aspects of the interrelationship between people and the natural and built features of their community, with a focus on how the features and services in the community meet people’s needs.</p> <p><b>B1.1</b> describe some of the ways in which people make use of natural and built features of, and human services in, the local community to meet their needs, and what might happen if these features/services did not exist.</p> <p><b>B2.</b> Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some aspects of the interrelationship between people and different natural and built features of their local community, with a focus on significant short- and long-term effects of this interrelationship.</p> <p><b>B2.2</b> gather and organize information on the interrelationship between people and the natural and built features of their community, and on the effects of this</p>	<p><b>We are learning to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• investigate and explore the local environment to observe, identify and describe features of our classroom, school and home communities, and the relationships that exist between people and their environment.</li> <li>• construct maps that represent natural and built features of the school community, using photographs, images and/or artifacts we collect.</li> <li>• reflect upon and contribute personal narratives, images and/or artifacts pertaining to the natural and/or built features of significance within our home communities and environment.</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of appropriate listening behaviour, and communicate ideas clearly with appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sample Success Criteria</b></p> <p>I will know I am successful when I can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify features within the classroom, school and home communities, and the relationships between people and their environment.</li> <li>• represent features and analyse elements of significance in the school community on</li> </ul>

Curriculum Overall Expectations	Curriculum Specific Expectations
<p>interrelationship using sources that they have located themselves or that have been provided to them.</p> <p><b>B2.5</b> evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about some aspects of the interrelationships between people and natural and built features of their local communities, and some of the effects of this interrelationship.</p> <p><b>B2.6</b> communicate the results of their inquiries, using appropriate vocabulary and formats.</p> <p><b>B3.</b> Understanding Context: describe significant aspects of their community, with reference to different areas, services and natural and built features, demonstrating an understanding of some basic ways of describing location and measuring distance.</p> <p><b>B3.1</b> identify some of the natural and built features of their community.</p> <p><b>B3.2</b> identify some distinct areas in the local community, and describe some of the characteristics of these areas.</p> <p><b>B3.6</b> demonstrate the ability to construct simple maps of places they have visited, using symbols and non-standard units.</p>	<p>maps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate narratives regarding my personal connections to features of my community or local environment.</li> <li>• listen respectfully and communicate clearly with appropriate vocabulary.</li> </ul>

## Getting Started

### Learner Readiness

Knowledge and understanding:

- Concept of community and culture
- Concept of membership in multiple communities (classroom, school, home, First Nation/cultural community)
- Familiarity with data collection via field study, safety protocols
- Experience working within small groups
- Participation in Knowledge-Building Circles and Talking Circles.

### Inquiry process

- How to gather relevant data and information through experiential activities (walk around the classroom, field study in local school community) and primary sources (stories from parents, grandparents about connection to the land/places of significance)
- How to interpret and analyse the data using a graphic organizer, map, etc.

### Terminology

- culture
- community
- natural features
- built features
- spatial and distance terms (e.g. left, right, near, farther, beside)
- significant/significance
- connection
- observation
- tally
- sort
- categorize

### Materials

- Chart paper
- Markers, pencil crayons
- Large sheets of paper for student-generated maps (chart paper, craft paper, bristol board, foam core)
- Accessible mobile technologies (tablet, digital camera, cell phone)
- Clipboards, paper and pencils for community walk
- A variety of manipulative materials
- A variety of maps of the school community (online digital maps, street view maps, pictographs)
- [The First Nations and Treaties Map of Ontario](http://www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties) that was sent to your school, also available at: [<www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties>](http://www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties)
- Consolidation activity sheet

Minds On	Connections
<p><b>DAY 1</b></p> <p>Students move around the classroom observing and identifying features within the classroom environment. Prompt students to utilize multiple senses to expand their perception of what is around them (e.g., hear the bubbling from the fish tank, feel the coolness from the window, the smoothness of the chairs).</p> <p>Invite students to contribute observations and list on chart paper. Include ways that specific features meet student needs (e.g., the open window keeps us cool, the sink is used to wash our paint brushes).</p> <p>Collaboratively draft a map of the classroom community using the features generated by students. Use this opportunity to identify/highlight elements of maps, direction, etc. Some useful terminology lists in preceding section.</p> <p>Post within the classroom.</p> <p>Prepare for the Day 2 community walk by discussing safety protocols related to field study. (Note: Check Board policies and procedures related to taking students outside of building.)</p> <p>Invite a First Nations family or community member or Elder to visit the classroom on Day 4 of this module to share their teachings on the functions and significance of features in the natural or built environment.</p>	<p>(Assessment of, as and for learning; Tips; DI)</p> <p><b>Differentiated Instruction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use of multiple means/modes for gathering evidence, information, and data (experiential, observation)</li> <li>• representation of data through use of multiple learning strategies (visual/verbal)</li> <li>• scaffolding/modelling/collaborating on tasks/developing concepts</li> </ul> <p><b>A for L:</b> confirm students' prior knowledge of geometric shapes and monitor application to the classroom floor plan. Redirect as required.</p> <p><b>A of L:</b> observe/note student contributions. Look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to identify a variety of features within the classroom community</li> <li>• accurate understanding of spatial orientation</li> </ul>

Action!	Connections
<p><b>DAY 2</b></p> <p><b>Part 1 – Community/School Walk</b></p> <p>Students participate in a walk around the school community to gather data and images related to features of significance.</p> <p>Throughout the community walk, encourage students to stop and observe, take notes, make sketches, and take photos or videos of both natural and man-made features of significance (e.g., trees, paths, streams, gardens, symbols/signage, crosswalks, playgrounds, streams, animals, parks).</p> <p>Option: Tally specific features as part of students’ data collection.</p>	<p>Differentiated Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maps can be generated through a variety of formats, including manipulatives</li> <li>evidence, information, and data can be documented through multiple modes and means</li> </ul>
<p><b>Part 2 – Classroom Work</b></p> <p>Help students to sort and categorize features within the school community into natural or built features.</p> <p>Hold a Knowledge-Building Circle to discuss and analyze the data, including whether built or natural features surfaced as important and why.</p> <p>Prompting questions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How did you feel when you saw, touched, smelled or felt the different features?</li> <li>What are some of the favourite places or things you saw on the walk?</li> <li>What are some special places or things (e.g., cottage, grandma’s house, the lake) that you didn’t see on our walk?</li> <li>Why do some of those places make you feel happy?</li> <li>What “new” features did you become aware of during the walk?</li> </ul>	<p><b>A for L:</b> During the field study, provide feedback as students document a variety of features within the school community through a variety of ways.</p> <p><b>A of L:</b> In sorting activity look for students understanding of the difference between natural and built features.</p> <p>During the Knowledge Building Circle, look for students’ ability to articulate the significance of features within the school community, and why certain features are more present than others.</p> <p><b>A as L:</b> Throughout mapping activity students collaborate in choice of materials and refine choices based on new learnings and ideas.</p> <p><b>During Gallery Walk,</b> look for students respectfully articulating similarities and differences to their peers.</p>

Action!	Connections
<p>Document and post questions that arise out of the Circle for future reference to demonstrate a variety of perspectives and stories on places of personal significance.</p>	
<p><b>DAY 3 – Small Group Activity</b></p> <p>Present students with a variety of sample maps (online digital maps, street view maps, the First Nations and Treaties Map of Ontario, pictographs) of the school community. Discuss elements of the map, and what maps represent, if needed.</p> <p>Within small, co-operative groups, students will construct a map of the school community, based on the data they collected during the community walk. Suggest a variety of materials that can be utilized to represent features, such as drawings, symbols, shapes, and manipulative materials.</p> <p>If time permits, hold a Gallery Walk and allow time for student sharing, feedback and assessment. Encourage students to compare/contrast each groups' map in order to appreciate similarities and differences, and further understanding of the personal context/connections/ culture of others for relationship building, mutual respect and understanding.</p>	<p><b>Tip</b></p> <p>Consider showing students the copy of the <a href="http://www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties">First Nations and Treaties Map of Ontario</a> that was sent to your school, and is also available at: &lt;<a href="http://www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties">www.ontario.ca/aboriginal/treaties</a>&gt;</p> <p>Carpet maps that include roads and surrounding natural features may be used to demonstrate a mapping/spatial orientation.</p>

Consolidation	Connections
<p><b>DAY 4</b></p> <p><b>Large group activity</b></p> <p>If previously arranged, have an Elder or First Nations family or community member come to share their teachings on some of the functions</p>	<p><b>A as L:</b> Students can reflect on their own and other students behaviour during the Talking Circle. They should articulate whether they followed the guidelines for respectful participation.</p>

<b>Consolidation</b>	<b>Connections</b>
<p>and significance of community and environmental features.</p> <p>If an Elder or community member is not available, students can learn about some of the functions and significance of community and environmental features by viewing a video or reading a picture book.</p> <p>Recommended story books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving Thanks: A Native American Good Morning Message. (1997). Chief Jake Swamp. USA: Lee &amp; Low Books.</li> <li>• Last Leaf, First Snowflake to Fall. (2012). Leo Yerxa. USA: Groundwood Books.</li> <li>• Morning on the Lake. (1997). Jan Bourdeau Waboose and Karen Reczuch. USA: Kids Can Press.</li> </ul> <p>Students reflect upon the features in their home, cultural, and/or First Nation community.</p> <p>Facilitate a Talking Circle to share personal narratives surrounding features of significance within the community, relationships between people, and places/land and why they are significant.</p> <p>Encourage students to appreciate common perspectives regarding significance and see similarities and differences between their views and that of their peers. Make explicit the connections between humans and Earth.</p>	<p><b>A of L:</b> Check that students can articulate the significance of features within their home/First Nations community through personal narrative.</p>
<p><b>Possible Extension Opportunities</b></p> <p>If teachers have additional time to allocate to this module, they may choose to have the class visit a First Nations community, with the intent of comparing the specific features with those of their</p>	<p><b>Tip</b></p> <p>Many First Nation communities are receptive to telephone inquiries from teachers and are honoured to host a visit. Students and teachers are often enlightened and realize that First Nation communities have similar features (fire hall,</p>

Consolidation	Connections
own community.	Elders complex) to their own school or home communities. Visits can help to dispel stereotypical images and support the development of mutual respect and understanding. Furthermore, First Nations families have expressed feeling honoured and acknowledged when their child's learning at school includes exploration of Aboriginal perspectives and context.

## Related Websites/Resources

Conroy, E., Wheatley, K., Harquail, A, Watson, K, Johnson, B. (2012). [Walking with A'nó:wara](http://www.turtleislandconservation.ca). Available online at <[www.turtleislandconservation.ca](http://www.turtleislandconservation.ca)>

Kirk, Connie Ann. (2004). *Sky Dancers*. USA: Lee & Low Books.

Pattou, Edith. (2001). *Mrs. Spitzer's Garden*. USA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

[The Learning Circle: Classroom Activities on First Nations in Canada, Ages 4 to 7](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/ach_lr_ks_clsrs_learningcircle_lc47_1316538044949_eng.pdf). Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, <[http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/ach\\_lr\\_ks\\_clsrs\\_learningcircle\\_lc47\\_1316538044949\\_eng.pdf](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/ach_lr_ks_clsrs_learningcircle_lc47_1316538044949_eng.pdf)>

[Learning Circles: Curriculum Links for Ontario Teachers, Grades 3 to 6](http://www.etfo.ca/Resources/ForTeachers/Documents/Learning%20Circles%20Grades%203-6%20-%20Curriculum%20Links%20for%20Ontario%20Teachers.pdf). (2002). Publishing partnership of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, <<http://www.etfo.ca/Resources/ForTeachers/Documents/Learning%20Circles%20Grades%203-6%20-%20Curriculum%20Links%20for%20Ontario%20Teachers.pdf>>

[Aboriginal Perspectives Resources for the Social Studies](http://aboriginaleducation.epsb.ca/documents/socialstudies_websites.pdf), <[http://aboriginaleducation.epsb.ca/documents/socialstudies\\_websites.pdf](http://aboriginaleducation.epsb.ca/documents/socialstudies_websites.pdf)>

Toronto Zoo's Turtle Island Conservation Program. [First Nations' Sacred Spaces and Special Places Mapping](http://www.torontozoo.com/conservation/tic.asp?pg=mapping), <<http://www.torontozoo.com/conservation/tic.asp?pg=mapping>>

## First Nations Talking Circles

**Background/Introduction:** The “Primary Grade Circle” has its origin in First Nation cultural practices for engagement of each individual during community discussions and Clan gatherings. This adaptation is relevant for elementary school classroom processing and reflecting on content and experiences.

With young children it is helpful to invite them to come sit in a "listening circle" as this places emphasis on a respectful environment, and removes the expectation that everyone will speak. Introduce a “talking stone” (Mishomis), "talking stick", or "talking feather" and explain that it will help each person listen respectfully, remember, and share openly from the heart. Every circle has a purpose such as a storytelling circle where each person tells a story about something that happened to them or something as told to them by a family member; a sharing circle where each person shares how they are feeling today and why; a talking circle where each person comments on a topic introduced by an artifact/tangible object or picture.

The person holding the stone is the speaker, and when finished, he or she hands the stone over to the person on the left. (Thus the circle flows in a clock-wise direction, following the route of the sun as perceived by Anishinaabek people.) The option of passing the stone, stick or feather on to the next person without speaking is always present. The passing of the stone to the next person signals that the person is finished their turn, and this precludes the need for prompting the child to say more or to verbally indicate when they are finished. The stone, stick or feather always goes around the circle a second time so that each person has two opportunities to participate.

The importance of not interrupting or making fun of the speaker is demonstrated and upheld by everyone. In a situation where more than one person has an experience in common, a listener may want to correct or blurt out their views and it is important that this be interrupted so that others have a chance to recount their version when it is their turn and they have the floor. Teachers may find that some speakers stray from the topic at hand and it is crucial that no re-direction be provided.