

Grade 3 Social Studies

Heritage and Citizenship

- Early Settlements in Upper Canada

Aboriginal Teaching Strategy

Feasts of Thanksgiving

Students explore Aboriginal foods and feast traditions, and make connections between Canadian Thanksgiving and other thanksgiving celebrations.

Related Curriculum Policy

- *The Ontario Curriculum: Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8, 2004*

Specific Expectations

Knowledge and Understanding

- describe what early settlers learned from First Nation peoples that helped them adapt to their new environment (e.g., knowledge about medicine, food, farming, transportation)

Application

- re-create some social activities or celebrations of early settler and/or First Nation communities in Upper Canada

Aboriginal Context

In their thanksgiving celebrations, Aboriginal people show gratefulness through prayers of thanks for the abundant gifts and provisions (animals, plants, water, etc.) the Creator has given them.

Teaching Strategies

- Discuss Canadian Thanksgiving as students know it today and as it was observed by the first settlers.

Teacher prompts: Why do we celebrate Thanksgiving? How do you celebrate this day? What foods do you eat?

- Have students identify foods with Aboriginal origins that are Thanksgiving favourites (e.g., cranberries, root vegetables, squash, corn, wild rice).
Teacher prompts: When the first settlers came to Ontario, what fruits and vegetables did they eat? Who taught them about growing these foods?
- Pair off students and have the pairs gather information about these foods and create a “Did You Know?” information sheet.
- Read aloud stories that feature traditional First Nation feasts.
- Have the class prepare a simple feast of thanksgiving to share the bounty of the earth. Divide the class into four teams and assign one of the following tasks to each team: locate recipes for traditional Aboriginal dishes and plan the menu; prepare the food at school or bring it to school after preparing it at home; create invitations and decorations.

Resources

Aboriginal Innovations in Arts, Science and Technology Handbook. Thunder Bay, ON: Lakehead University, 2006. <http://aboriginalinitiatives.lakeheadu.ca>. Describes the innovative contributions made by Aboriginal people to art, science, and technology.

Caduto, Michael, and Bruchac, Joseph. *Native American Gardening: Stories, Projects and Recipes for Families*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 1996. Using tribal tales as inspiration, the authors provide practical information about seed preservation, planting and maintaining a garden, reaping the harvest, and cooking the harvested food.

The Great Peace ... The Gathering of Good Minds. CD-ROM. Brantford, ON: Goodminds.com, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, 1999. A multimedia exploration of the history, culture, contributions, and spirituality of the Haudensaunee (Six Nations Iroquois).

Greenwood, Barbara. *Pioneer Thanksgiving: A Story of Harvest Celebrations in 1841*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1999. A story about how a settler family and its First Nation neighbours celebrate the harvest.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. *Claire and Her Grandfather*. http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/lr/ks/cgf/index_e.html. A story that includes descriptions of innovative contributions made by Aboriginal peoples.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. *Did You Know?* http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/lr/ks/6001_e.html. Information about Aboriginal contributions and inventions.

Making Community Connections

- Invite an Aboriginal Elder or wisdom keeper to the class thanksgiving feast.
- Brainstorm feasts of thanksgiving from various cultures and invite students to talk about how they and their families celebrate this feast.

ABOUT THE TEACHER’S TOOLKIT

This teaching strategy is one component of *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher’s Toolkit*, a collection of resources designed to help Ontario educators bring Aboriginal perspectives into the classroom. Based on the revised Ontario curriculum, the collection includes resources for educators at both the elementary and secondary levels. Other resources in this series can be found on the ministry website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca.

