

Indigenous Perspectives: Maple Sugaring

These preparation activities were collected with elementary students in mind, but may be adapted for use with any grade. Students and staff are invited to participate in the Youtube Livestream event "[Live from the Sugarbush](#)" on Wednesday March 24th at 1pm.

Thank you to the WRDSB Indigenous Equity & Inclusion team for their support in developing these planning materials.

Preparation:

Identify prior knowledge: Students may carry many stereotypes about Indigenous people or may have no knowledge at all.



Activity: Ask students what they think they know about Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Metis and Inuit). Write down ideas on an anchor chart. Think of this as an opportunity to identify current knowledge but also to identify misinformation so that you can address these stereotypes later on.

Here are some misconceptions to watch out for:

- Indigenous peoples existed only historically; no enduring presence or culture
- Indigenous peoples were uncivilized or inferior to white settlers
- Indigenous peoples always look or dress in a certain way; there aren't any Indigenous students in our class/school.

Educating toward Reconciliation:

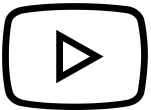
Students may have some misconceptions as a result of exposure to colonial narratives about Indigenous peoples (e.g. cultural genocide). Often these ideas are embedded within us as educators as well. Throughout your work with students, find ways to combat stereotypes:

"Indigenous peoples existed only historically; no enduring presence or culture"

- When talking about Indigenous peoples, be sure to use the present tense, not just the past tense. For example, if you are addressing the historical uses of maple sugar, also take time to discuss the role of maple syrup in an Indigenous community today.

"Indigenous peoples were uncivilized or inferior to white settlers"

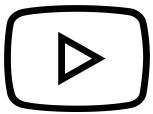
- Provide examples of Indigenous technological innovations (canoe, snowshoe, maple syrup, etc).
- Reciprocity with the land underscores many Indigenous cultures. As a result, many Indigenous people are leaders in protecting the environment. Learn about Water Walker Grandmother Josephine Mandamin through this [Historica Canada Video](#), and [the picture book "The Water Walker" read by the author](#).
- Provide examples of Indigenous role models and leaders using this video of [Wab Kinew reading his book "Go Show the World."](#) (Begin at timestamp 7:00.)



“Indigenous peoples always look or dress in a certain way; there aren’t any Indigenous students in our class/school.”

- When you address the topic of Indigenous peoples, don’t assume that all the students in your class identify as non-indigenous.
- Be careful not to ‘other’ Indigenous peoples; in other words use inclusive language rather than us/them language when talking about Indigenous peoples. For example, don’t say “Indigenous Canadians taught us how to make maple syrup.” Instead say, “Indigenous peoples like the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe have been using maple sap for hundreds of years, long before European settlers arrived. We are lucky to have some Indigenous folks in our community who are going to share their culture with us around making maple syrup.”

Learning Activities: Traditional Maple Sugaring



- Watch this CBC Video: [Caleb Musgrave demonstrates how to gather maple sugar the traditional Anishinaabe way.](#)
- Read the picture book [Maple Moon](#) by Connie Brummel Crook. This book may be available at your school or public library, or you can order it from [GoodMinds.](#)
- Get ready for “Live From the Sugarbush” [livestream event](#) on March 24th, 2021 at 1pm. Check out this [promotional video](#) featuring Land-based Indigenous Educators Garrison McCleary and Dave Skene. This livestream event is open to the public for streaming via youtube, and will be available after-the-fact on our [youtube channel.](#)
- Watch this video to learn about [Land Based Indigenous Education in the WRDSB.](#)



Learning Activities: Science of Maple Syrup and Modern Production

- WRDSB Outdoor Educator Sean McCammon sings [The Sugar Bush is Just Awesome.](#)
- Read the book [At Grandpa’s Sugar Bush](#) by Margaret Carney with illustrations by Janet Wilson. This book may be available at your school or public library.