



Teaching Treaties



Across the Curriculum

A guidebook for educators

TREATY RELATIONS COMMISSION OF MANITOBA

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TREATY RELATIONS COMMISSION OF MANITOBA.

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Treaty Education Across the Curriculum

Treaty Education

Treaty Education is the kindergarten to grade 12 public education initiative of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM) in partnership with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), including the Council of Elders, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), and Manitoba Education. The overarching goal of Treaty Education is to increase the knowledge and understanding of Treaties and the Treaty relationship for all students in Manitoba. Begun in 2009-10 as the Treaty Education *Initiative*, it has become a curricular staple of the province's K-12 education landscape.

The purpose of Treaty Education is to provide classroom teachers with a cache of educational materials to facilitate the delivery of Treaty Education in their classrooms. Complemented with professional development, teacher training, and a variety of supports, Treaty Education's goals are to foster long term and sustainable professional relationships with teachers, schools, and school divisions.

Treaty Education resources are intended to complement and enhance Manitoba curricula and the learning outcomes are carefully woven into existing Manitoba curriculum foundation documents. The lesson plans found in the Treaty Education K-12 teacher's resource guides are framed on four Big Ideas: Relationships, Traditional Teachings, History, and Treaties.

A Multidisciplinary Approach to Treaty Education

While the knowledge, values, and skill of social studies are a curricular fit with Treaty Education, there are ample opportunities to broaden the themes of Treaty education to other subject areas.

The intent of this guide is to offer teachers a series of teacher tips – high level ideas, rather than formatted lesson plans - to aid them in incorporating Treaty Education in their classrooms. The tips are not grade specific, rather they offer broad implementation ideas per subject area. They are a consolidation of ideas put forth by teachers at Treaty Education training sessions over the past decade.

Treaty Education: Four 'Big Ideas'

A 'Big Idea' refers to core concepts, principles, theories, and processes that should serve as the focal point of curricula, instruction, and assessment. Big Ideas reflect expert understanding and anchor the discourse, inquiries, discoveries, and arguments in a field of study. They provide a basis for setting curriculum priorities to focus on the most meaningful content.

A Big Idea is inherently abstract. Its meaning is not always obvious to students, and simply covering it will not ensure student understanding. "Coverage" is unlikely to cause genuine insight; understanding must be earned. Thus, the idea must be uncovered – its meaning discovered, constructed or inferred by the learners, with the aid of the teacher and well-designed learning experiences. (McTighe & Wiggins, 2004, p. 69)

- Treaties established what is commonly referred to as a "brother-to-brother" relationship between the First Nations peoples and the Newcomers.
- Treaties were to last "as long as the grass grows, the sun shines and the rivers flow".
- The Treaties created a living relationship that can change to reflect the current realities of both Canadian and First Nations peoples.
- The Treaty-making process was a way of reconciling the interests of both nations and a means to build lasting and meaningful alliances between the Crown and First Nations peoples that would foster the future well-being of their peoples.

RELATIONSHIPS

TREATY EDUCATION: 'BIG IDEAS'

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- Understanding the different worldviews of First Nations peoples and the Newcomers is an integral part of understanding the Treaties and the differing perspectives of the Treaties.
- First Nations peoples believe the Treaties are based upon specific understandings of the relationship between the Creator, human beings, and the earth; they view the Treaties as permanent, sacred agreements to be honoured forever.
- First Nations peoples are reliant upon oral tradition to pass on their traditions and knowledge from generation to generation and believe the Creator is a vital part of all life including interactions with other societies.



TRADITIONAL TEACHINGS



TREATY EDUCATION: 'BIG IDEAS'



- The Treaties were negotiated among many other historical events occurring in Canada which affected the development and implementation of Treaties.
- Understanding the historical context of Treaties requires a brief chronological review of events, legislation and policies that existed prior to, during and after Treaties were negotiated and agreed to.
- Though Treaties were the building blocks of Canada and are considered standalone documents, other historical events have greatly impacted the Treaties and the Treaty relationship.



HISTORY



TREATY EDUCATION: 'BIG IDEAS'



- Treaties between the First Nations peoples and the British Crown are the building blocks in the creation of the country of Canada.
- The Treaties are agreements, voluntarily entered into by both parties, which provide for peaceful relations between the two nations. For First Nations peoples, the Treaties are more than a simple written document; they are sacred agreements between the First Nations peoples and the British Crown with the Creator as witness.
- Treaties were to provide both sides with the means of achieving survival and socio-economic stability, anchored on the principle of mutual benefit.



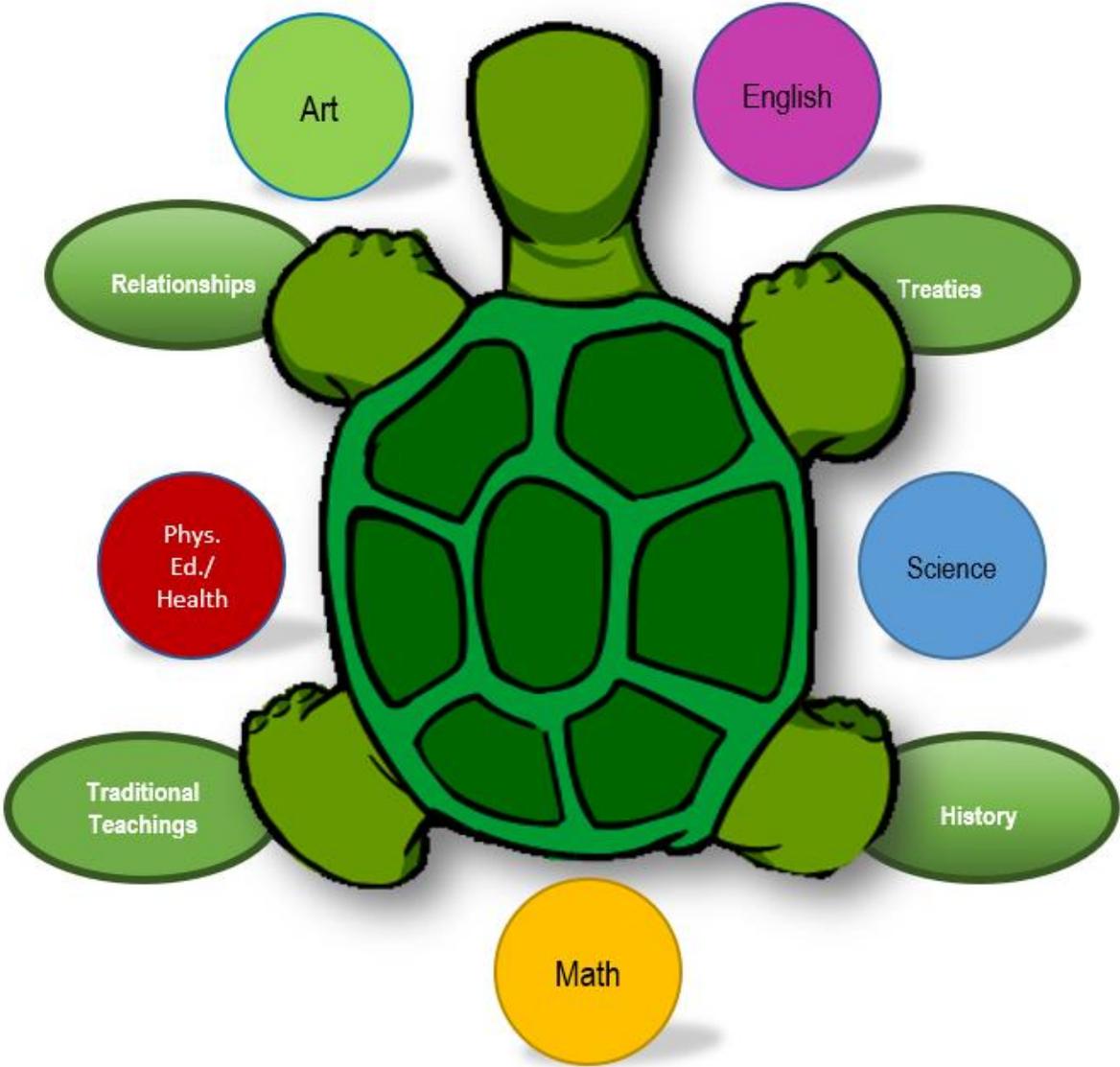
TREATIES



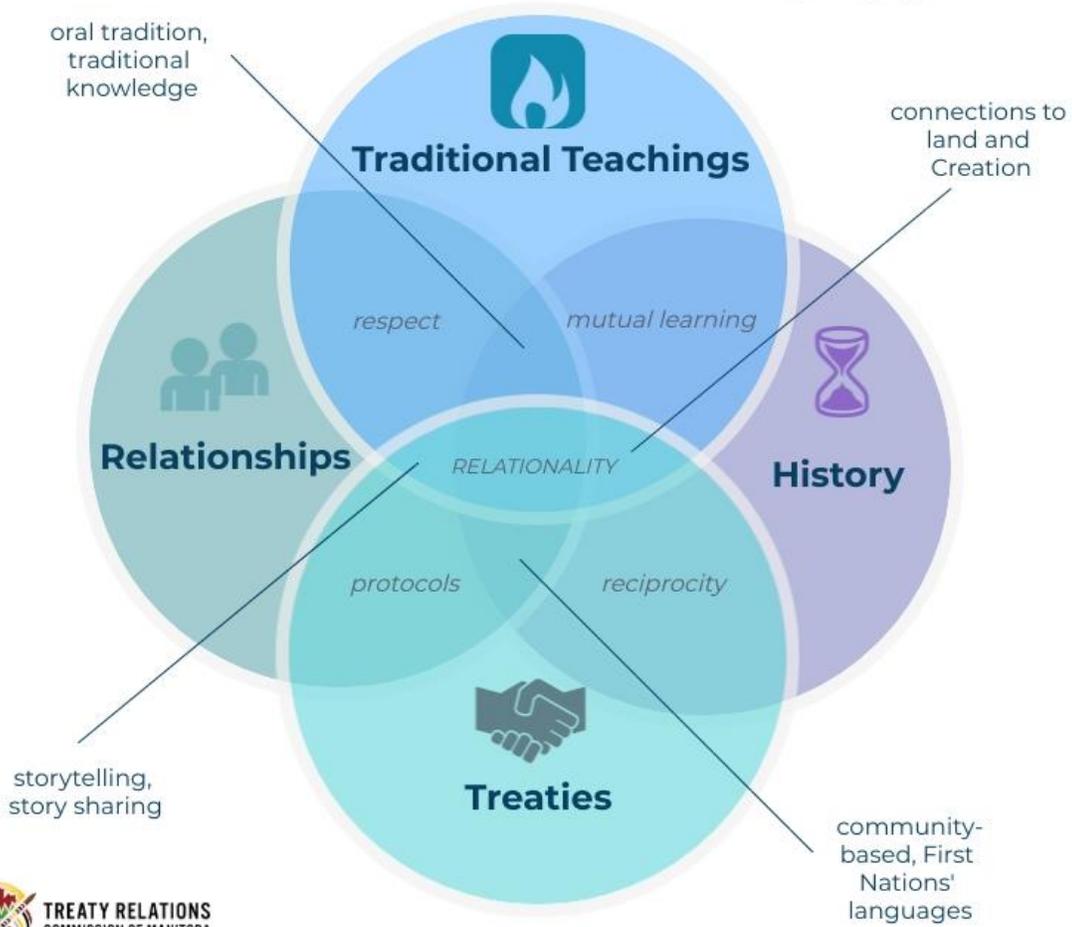
TREATY EDUCATION: 'BIG IDEAS'



Treaty Education Cross-Curricular Framework



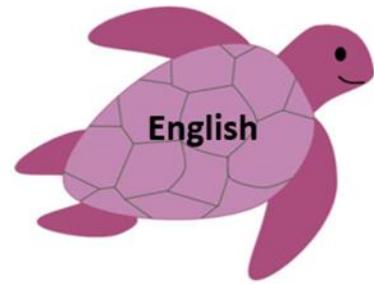
Treaty Education *Pedagogy*



Treaty Education: English

K-12 English in Manitoba

English Language Arts enables student to understand and appreciate language. Students become confident and competent users of English through many opportunities to listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent in a variety of combinations and relevant contexts using a variety of texts. There are oral, visual, and written texts, and various combinations of these. As listeners, speakers, readers, writers, viewers, and representers, students are actively involved in making meaning. All the language arts are interrelated and interdependent. ¹



Learning Activities to Embed Treaty Education

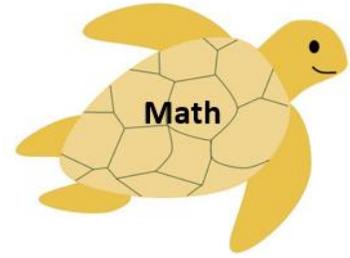
- Analyse and compare two media texts centred on Treaties, one with a First Nation perspective and one with a non-Indigenous perspective. [Treaties]
- Explore the significance of talking circles for Indigenous people. Participate in classroom talking circles. [Traditional Teachings; History]
- Read and compare creation stories from various Indigenous cultures. Prepare a story for a reader's theatre presentation. [Traditional Teachings; History]
- Explore the text of one of more of the Numbered Treaties and compare with oral histories. [Traditional Teachings; History]
- Explore the spirit and intent of a Treaty (the unwritten promises) and compare it to the written text. [Treaties]
- Create and post a classroom Treaty. [Treaties]
- Explore English words and phrases associated with Treaty-making: 'spirit and intent'; negotiation; forever/perpetuity; nation-to-nation; etc. [Treaties]
- Explore First Nation people's words and phrases associated with Treaty-making: e.g. *kihci-asotamâtowin* (Cree meaning 'sacred promises to one another ... sacred undertakings'); *agowidiwinan* (Anishinaabe word meaning 'putting things together, bringing things together'). [Traditional Teachings]
- Explore First Nation peoples' worldviews through Indigenous literature. [Traditional Teachings]
- Analyze the lyrics of songs by Indigenous artists or songs that have an Indigenous theme. [History]
- Provide opportunities to read illustrated age-appropriate Indigenous stories. Have students learn the story and tell it to younger students or have students read the stories to younger students. [Traditional Teachings; History]

¹ [http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/ela/docs/frameworks-ktos1.html#The English Language Arts](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/ela/docs/frameworks-ktos1.html#The%20English%20Language%20Arts)

Treaty Education: Math

K-12 Mathematics in Manitoba

There are critical components that students must encounter in a mathematics program in order to achieve the goals of mathematics education and encourage lifelong learning in mathematics. Students are expected to communicate in order to learn and express their understanding; connect mathematical ideas to other concepts in mathematics, to everyday experiences, and to other disciplines; demonstrate fluency with mental mathematics and estimation; develop and apply new mathematical knowledge through problem solving; develop mathematical reasoning; select and use technologies as tools for learning and solving problems; and develop visualization skills to assist in processing information, making connections, and solving problems. ²



Learning Activities to Embed Treaty Education

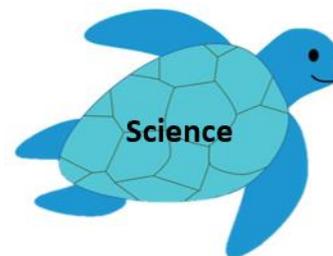
- Explore shapes and patterns by investigating the images Indigenous peoples used to decorate teepees. [Traditional Teachings]
- Using Statistics Canada as a resource, explore Indigenous Canadians' demographic statistics (consider: graphing, population pyramids). [History]
- Investigate contemporary and historical Indigenous demographics (number percentages, data presentation, data analysis). [History]
- Teach radius, diameter and circumference using a Treaty medal replica or handout. [Treaties]
- Calculate the square kilometres of a local First Nations reserve; compare it to the related Treaty territory. [Treaties]
- Use latitude and longitude coordinates of First Nations reserves/Treaty-making sites and have students locate and plot them on a map. [Treaties]
- Use images of a powwow arbor site to explore geometry. [Traditional Teachings]
- Using inflation, calculate the value of the \$5.00 annuity presented a Treaty time today. [Treaties]
- Calculate the distance between First Nations communities. [History]
- Using 160 acres per family of 5 (as in the original Treaty agreements), calculate the number of acres a local First Nations community would be entitled to using present-day population numbers. [Treaties]
- Use Treaty numbers/Treaty cards to build ascending/descending number line. [Treaties]

² http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/math/framework_k-8/concept_framework.pdf

Treaty Education: Science

K-12 Science in Manitoba

Manitoba science curricula aims at creating scientifically literate individuals who can more effectively interpret information, solve problems, make informed decisions, accommodate change, and create new knowledge. A key element in science education is developing scientific literacy and providing students with diverse learning experiences that provide learners with opportunities to explore, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, appreciate, and understand the interrelationships among science, technology, society, and the environment that will affect their personal lives, careers, and their future. ³



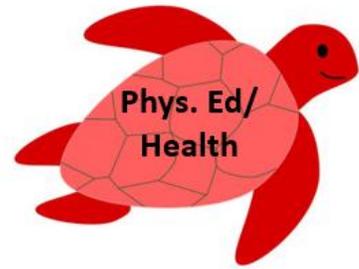
Learning Activities to Embed Treaty Education

- Explore the seasonal cycle in relation to traditional ways of life (relationship to seasons). [\[Traditional Teachings\]](#)
- Using the images of sun, grass, and water on the Treaty medal, have students investigate the sacred/reciprocal relationship First Nations have with water and the environment. [\[Treaties\]](#)
- Create a Venn diagram exploring to significance of relationships (to land, to animals, to water) to First Nations. [\[Traditional Teachings\]](#)
- Explore the text a Numbered Treaty in Manitoba; have student identify parts of the Treaty that pertain to land, the environment, sustainability, etc. [\[Treaties\]](#)
- Create a web connecting Treaty rights, decision making, environmental assessment, and tradition Indigenous knowledge concerning natural resources, lands and waters. [\[Traditional Teachings; History\]](#)
- Explore traditional medicines and plants and/or sacred medicines (tobacco, cedar, sweetgrass, sage). [\[Traditional Teachings; History\]](#)
- Research Indigenous weather knowledge and terms related to weather. (e.g. the Cree identify six seasons as opposed to four.) [\[Traditional Teachings\]](#)
- Create a comparison table that contrasts and compares Indigenous Knowledge (scientific, evidence-based knowledge, that has been built up over thousands of years of interaction with the environment) and Contemporary Science (an evidence-based way of understanding the natural world based on asking questions and discovering answers as part of a continuous revision of knowledge.) [\[Traditional Teachings\]](#)

³ <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/science/outcomes/k-4/introduction.pdf>

Treaty Education: Physical Education/Health

K-12 Physical Education/Health in Manitoba



The Manitoba Physical Education/Health Education curriculum was designed to address the 5 major health risks for children and youth. They are: inadequate physical activity; unhealthy dietary behaviour; drug use, including alcohol and tobacco; sexual behaviours that result in STIs and unintended pregnancies; and behaviours that result in intentional and unintentional injuries. The aim of the curriculum is to provide students with planned and balanced programming to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for physically active and healthy lifestyles. The vision is physically active and healthy lifestyles for all students. ⁴

Learning Activities to Embed Treaty Education

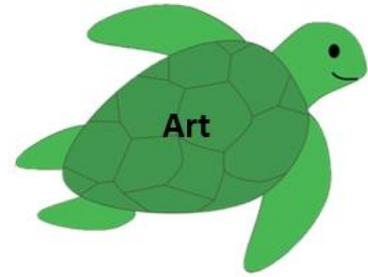
- Health – Explore food preservations techniques First Nation peoples shared with Newcomers [Relationships]
- Health – Investigate Indigenous names and naming traditions and examine how these and other aspects of culture and community are passed on through the generations. [Traditional Teachings; History]
- Health – Explore the meaning and importance of the concepts of ‘All My Relations’ and *mino pimatisiwin* (the ‘Good Life’). [Traditional Teachings]
- Health - Compare key social and cultural characteristics of Indigenous groups in Manitoba (e.g., language; agriculture and hunting; governance; matriarchal and patriarchal societies; arts; storytelling; trade; recreation; roles of men, women, and children). [Traditional Teachings; History]
- Health - Explore the Seven Teachings. [Traditional Teachings]
- Phys. Ed. – Explore and play traditional Indigenous games (i.e. – lacrosse) [Traditional Teachings]
- Phys. Ed. – Construct and raise a teepee. [Traditional Teachings]
- Phys. Ed. – Place Numbered Treaty tiles in different sections of the gym floor; use the tiles as ‘home bases’ in a number of games. [Treaties]
- Phys. Ed. – Invite a knowledgeable member of the local First Nations community to lead the class in traditional Indigenous games and sports. [Traditional Teachings]
- Phys. Ed. – Offer activities and opportunities to reflect on the importance of holistic pursuits such as snow shoeing to collect food or canoeing to move from camp to camp. [Traditional Teachings]

⁴ http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/physlth/c_overview.pdf

Treaty Education: Arts Education

K-12 Arts Education in Manitoba

Arts Education in Manitoba schools is mandatory from Grades 1-8. Several electives are offered from grades 9 – 12. Manitoba Education provides Dance, Drama, Music, and Visual Arts curriculum frameworks and implementation resources that are intended to support, promote and inspire the growth of all students as artistic learners as they journey towards becoming creative, artistically literate “adults and citizens who will truly enrich their own lives and the lives of future communities” (Manitoba Education, 2011, p. 10).



The overarching goals of each are the support, nurture, and inspire the growth of every student as a dancer/dramatic artistic/musician/visual artist and as an artful learner. ⁵

Learning Activities to Embed Treaty Education

- Dance, Music - Research the types of ceremonies, dance, etc. that took place at the time of Treaty signing. [Treaties]
- Drama - Dramatize traditional activities, like woodcutting and canoe carving, or dramatize legends. [Traditional Teachings]
- Music - Explore rhythm with traditional First Nations rhythms, both complex and simple. [Traditional Teachings]
- Music - Explore contemporary and traditional musical instruments. These may include flutes, whistles, drums, rattles, or logs. (Some of these are ceremonial instruments) [Traditional Teachings]
- Music - Arrange a field trip to a gathering, potlatch, powwow, feast or other celebration where there is dance performed. Explore the purpose of dance they observed (e.g., as part of a ceremony, celebration or entertainment). [Traditional Teachings; History]
- Visual Arts - Create a mirror with the title 'We Are All Treaty People'. Have students artistically reflect their cultural heritage in art alongside a frame that artistically depicts Indigenous culture. [Treaties; History; Relationships]
- Visual Arts - Create a Treaty medal to be issued the sesquicentennial of a Manitoba Treaty (Treaty 1: 1871/2021; Treaty 5: 1875/2025, etc.). [Treaties]
- Visual Arts - Explore the cultural significance around traditional First Nations regalia. [Treaties; History; Relationships]
- Visual Arts - Explore how traditional paint and dyes were made; use traditional paint and dyes as part of a class art project centred on the theme of the Treaty relationship. [Treaties; Relationships]

⁵ <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/arts/index.html>



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