

SUMMER 2022 | TREATY EDUCATION

Storytelling

& TREATIES: CONNECTIONS TO LAND & PEOPLE

In this guide:

THE IMPORTANCE OF STORYTELLING

Storytelling creates a shared sense of history and a common future.

THE FORMS OF STORYTELLING

Oral, written, visual, digital: the storytelling skills that we've been practicing for millennia.

THE NATURE OF NARRATIVE

Treaty histories come together in the creation of a personal narrative

SEEING OURSELVES IN TREATY

What's your Treaty story?

**A learning
complement to the
2022 Treaty Education
Teacher Summer
Institute**



**TREATY RELATIONS
COMMISSION OF MANITOBA**



TREATY EDUCATION

TREATIES & STORYTELLING

In August 2022, the Treaty Education team offered its annual Summer Institute. The theme of the 2-day in-person institute was 'Treaties and Storytelling'. Educators gathered at The Forks in Winnipeg.

Using storytelling as a guide, they visited the Manitoba Museum and Planetarium where they viewed the film 'Legends of the Northern Sky', toured Upper Fort Garry Provincial Park, and listened to, read, and told stories. They spent time immersing themselves in the wisdom of Elders and Knowledge Keepers. They explored classroom applications and learned from each other.

SUMMER 2022

Using this guide



First Nations & Storytelling

First Nations have long passed on knowledge from generation to generation through oral traditions, including storytelling.

Storytelling is a traditional method used to teach about cultural beliefs, values, customs, ceremonies, history, protocols, relationships, and ways of life. First Nations storytelling is a foundation for land-based learning, empathy building, reflective learning, and exploring Treaties and Treaty relationships.

Stories make people want to listen. Storytelling is one of the first ways we are taught how to listen and learn as a human. It teaches us how to see situations from different perspectives and opens our minds. Listening creates understanding and respect, both which lead to a sense of shared history and community.

In the Classroom

The learning activities that follow are meant to engage students in Treaty Education by using storytelling as a portal. They are aimed at learners from grade 5 to 12.

The activities are divided into four themes:

1. The importance of storytelling
2. The forms of storytelling
3. The nature of narrative
4. Seeing ourselves in the story of Treaty

Each theme acts as an entry point and is prefaced with a teacher overview. Each theme offers one or more associated printable student worksheets.

Read each activity beforehand. Assemble the necessary supports to complete. Consult the Treaty Education website and/or the pedagogical materials found in the Treaty Education Kit for additional materials.

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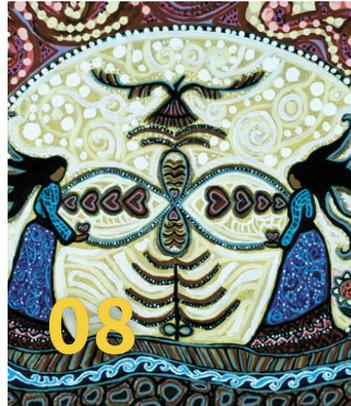
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You will hear about Treaties from the Elders in the oral tradition, and perhaps in your own language, all the while improving relationships with those that you learn with and from.

Treaty Commissioner Loretta Ross
Grassroots News, February 2020

FIRST NATIONS' TERMS

Huntun Kan Kan | **Dakota**
legend, myth

Daghodighildttha | **Denesuline**
we listened to

Ácimowina | **Nehethwuk/Ininiwak**
stories

Gageteyaajimotaak | **Anishinaabe**
to be told stories about long ago

Hektakiya Ounye Oyakapi | **Dakota**
oral history

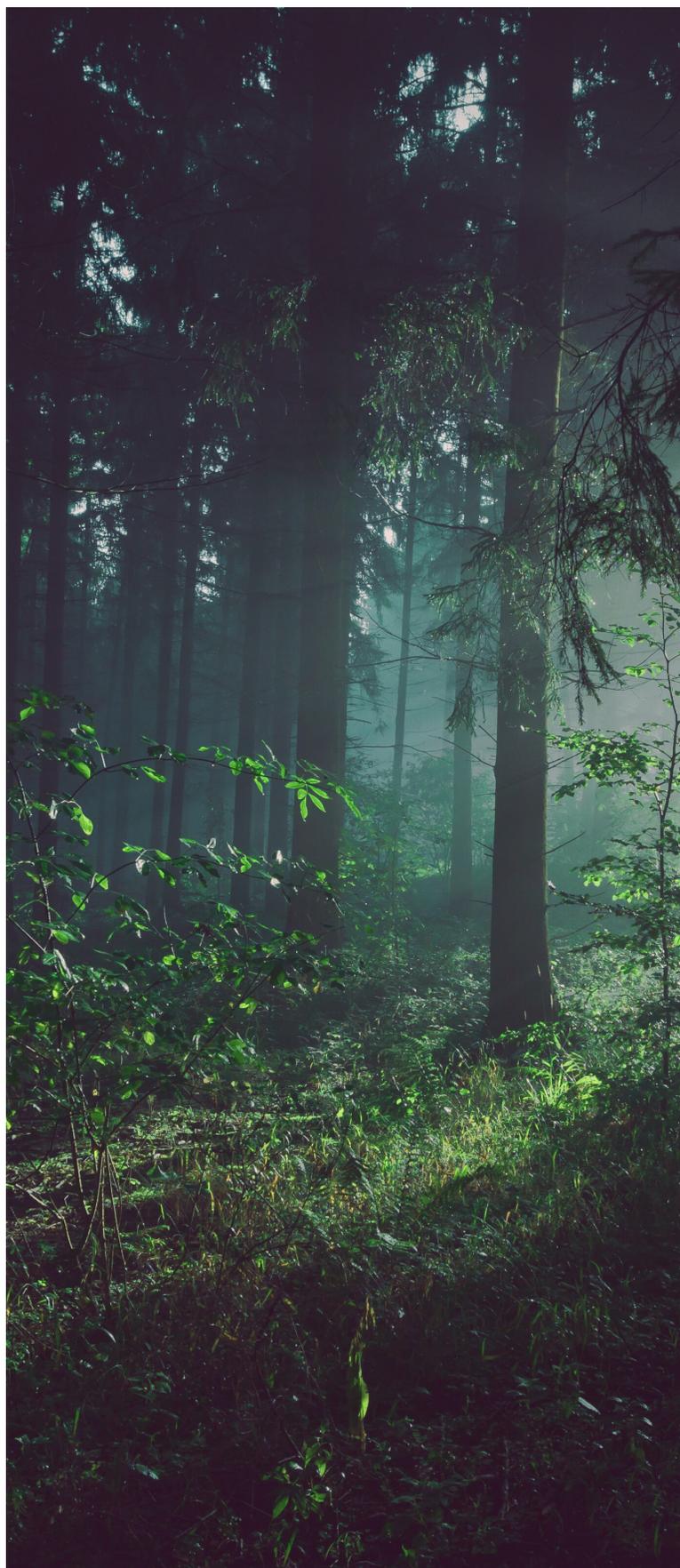
Ácimat | **Nehethwuk/Ininiwak**
to tell a story about someone

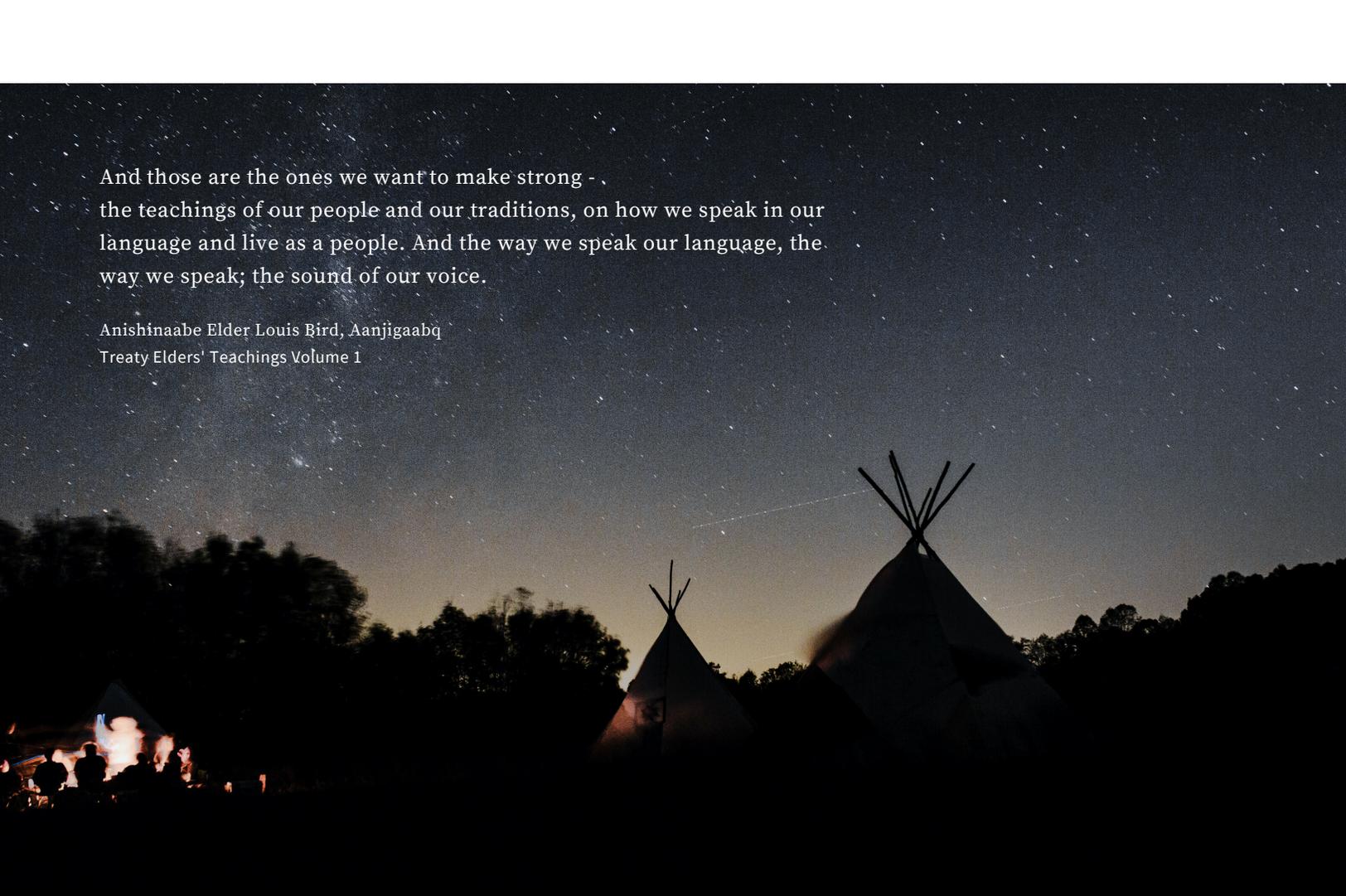
Animosodawad | **Anishinaabe**
generational narratives

Ago'idiwin gete Anishinaabeg |
Anishinaabe
Treaty ancestors

Selghulni | **Denesuline**
tell me some stories

Kakéhtácimow | **Nehethwuk/Ininiwak**
to speak with wisdom





And those are the ones we want to make strong - the teachings of our people and our traditions, on how we speak in our language and live as a people. And the way we speak our language, the way we speak; the sound of our voice.

Anishinaabe Elder Louis Bird, Aanjigaabq
Treaty Elders' Teachings Volume 1

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION:

- Why are people drawn to stories?
- Why is Indigenous storytelling important?
- What are the benefits of storytelling?
- What are the key features of a well-told story?
- How can storytelling help us learn about Treaties?

THE IMPORTANCE OF STORYTELLING

Why are people drawn to stories?

To begin with, stories help us to find order in things that have happened to us and make sense of the events of a random world.

Stories can also let us see how others think and feel. They allow us to empathize with the people around us. They can offer us a way to 'put ourselves' in someone else's shoes, both historically and in the present-day. In our case, they move learning about Treaties from head to heart.

Stories also allow us to share information in a memorable way, a living way. By telling a story rather than merely reciting dry facts, we remember the details more clearly. We humanize events, bridging time, culture, and worldviews.



A Treaty Story

In this activity you will research the historical facts associated with one of the Numbered Treaties as well as a person involved in it. After consolidating your research, you will write a short story about the Treaty to share with a partner.

01

Choose one of the Numbered Treaties (for example, Treaty No. 1). Conduct a research to find out when the Treaty was made, where/at what place, who was involved in the making of the Treaty, etc.

Expand your research to include several key players in the making of the Treaty. What chiefs and headmen were there? Who represented the Crown (the government)? What other types of people were there. List their names.

02

Choose one of the people you listed above. Research their life. Consult the internet, books, local historians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, etc. as needed. Prepare a short bullet-point biography.

You might choose to create a fictional or composite character.

Make note of a few interesting aspects about the person you researched. For example: Did they have a nickname? Could they speak more than one language? Did they have any distinguishing physical characteristics? Who were their family members? What other events were they a part of?

03

Write a story that sets your character in the time around your Treaty was made. This may be before, during, or after the Treaty. Follow the tried and true steps of crafting an engaging story: (1) make sure there is a beginning, a middle, and an end; (2) establish a conflict (consult books you have read or ask your teacher if you are unsure what this means); (3) include a turning point - usually in the middle of the story when the character does something interesting; and (4) offer a resolution or ending that wraps up the story.

04

Tell your story! Share with a partner, as part of a sharing circle, and/or with your family and friends. Don't feel the need to read word for word, ad-lib (that means make it up as you go along) all or some parts. Just be sure to share the essence of your story.

THE FORMS OF STORYTELLING

Humans have been practicing and telling stories for millennia. In the past, people gathered around campfires to hear seasoned storytellers and Knowledge Keepers.

Today, we can engage in storytelling using four main forms: oral, written, visual, and digital.

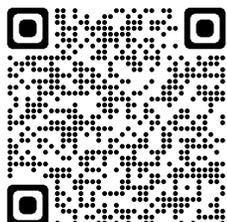
Oral storytelling is a traditional, tried, and tested means of knowledge transmission. An oral story is spontaneous, in the moment, and performative.

Written storytelling can be silently read or read aloud. It requires the writer to show attitude, emotion, using words. The writer is unaware of the reaction of the reader.

Visual storytelling is when visuals are used to tell a story. This may include still photography, illustration, painting, beading, sculpture, an object or artifact, and so on. The use of visuals help engage the listener, elicit emotion, and drive stories forward.

A digital story is a multimedia presentation combining a variety of digital elements within a narrative structure. This may include text, images, video, audio, social media elements (e.g. Tweets) and interactive elements (e.g. digital maps). Digital stories help to collect and share Indigenous Knowledge, integrating traditional storytelling techniques with modern technologies.

All four of these forms of storytelling can help us explore and learn about Treaties.



Visual storytelling gives Indigenous people a voice. Art serves to preserve the past, grown awareness and understanding, and bring about change.

Artwork: "Infinite Heart" by Leah Dorian

Métis artist says visual storytelling gives people a voice, CBC, Aug 27, 2017

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION:

- What are the various forms of storytelling?
- How does a storyteller develop a story to prepare it for an audience?
- How can a storyteller develop and refine their storytelling ability?
- Check out **Let's Talk Treaty** to listen to a number of speakers and storytellers. **[CLICK HERE](#)** or scan the QR code for access.

The Forms of Storytelling



In this activity you will go on a Treaty storytelling scavenger hunt. First, provide a description of the four forms of storytelling. Second, find an example of each. Make sure your example is linked to Treaties; this may include stories about Treaties, relationships, history, and/or First Nations' traditional teachings. Share your findings with a partner!



ORAL STORYTELLING is

Example:



WRITTEN STORYTELLING is

Example:



VISUAL STORYTELLING is

Example:



DIGITAL STORYTELLING is

Example:



An Object Biography

Biographies are used to write the life story of a person. An object biography explores the histories and life story of objects or material culture (also called artifacts). Additional to the research associated with the object, and object biography creates a rich potential for creative writing and storytelling.

01

First, identify your object. Consider:

- Why was it created? By who?
 - What was it used for?
 - How did it get to be here today? (Who owned it? Where was it stored? Where was it before?)
 - What is its use today?
-

02

Second, determine what it is made of. Consider:

- What is the object made out of?
 - Are the materials natural or man-made?
 - Are there signs of wear? Damage?
 - Has it been changed considerably from what it looked like originally?
-

03

Third, estimate the age or era the object came from. Consider:

- When did people use this object?
- Place the object into historical context. What significant events (social, political, economic, etc.) were going on during that time?
- What Treaty events were going on at the time?

Go a step further and consider:

- Place the object into geographical context. Where would the object have lived? Canada? Manitoba? North America? North? South? Urban? Rural?
 - What type of natural environment? Plains? Forest? Mountains/hills? Ocean coast? Rivers/waterways?
-

04

Finally, use your research and your object to tell a story. Be creative and share!

*****BONUS**: Use your object biography to design a museum space.

Create a Storyboard

A storyboard is a graphic organizer that plans a narrative. It is a set of sequential drawings that helps adapt a story to video or film. Choose a Treaty story and bring it to life using the storyboard below. Add boxes as needed.

| | | | | | |
|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|
| Scene | Duration | Scene | Duration | Scene | Duration |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Scene | Duration | Scene | Duration | Scene | Duration |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Process

- Look at the Treaty story you've researched.
 - What was the most interesting part of the story?
 - What quotes and anecdotes stood out?
 - Did any subthemes emerge, such as family, friendship, identity, belonging, sharing?

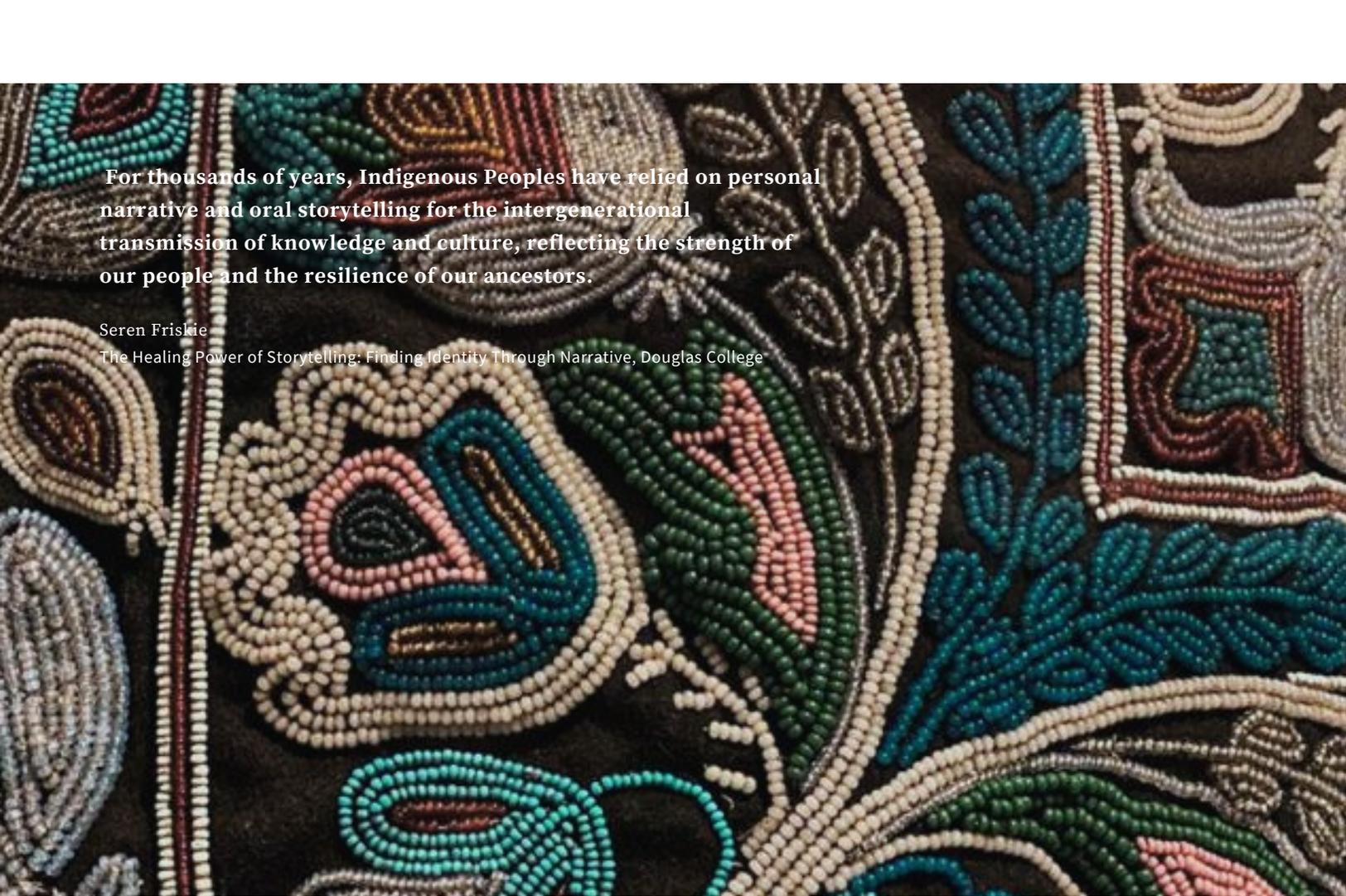


A storyboard is an outline of your story from beginning to end that shows what will be included and in what order.

- What do you want it to look like?
- What footage, audio, photos or animations will you include?
- Will you use a voiceover or narration or text? Maybe a mix of all three?
- What order will everything go in?
- What will be the opening scene? What will be the closing scene?
- Will it be short or will it go for the full three minutes?

- Use the template. Each box represents a scene.
 - Draw a basic sketch to show what is happening in each scene. Add the duration (how long) of the scene.
 - In the space directly below the top box add the actions. What is happening in this scene? For example, camera pans from top to bottom of screen or close up of Mary talking.
 - In the bottom box, note any narration/lines of dialogue.
 - You may also add the names of music tracks or sound effects you're going to use.





For thousands of years, Indigenous Peoples have relied on personal narrative and oral storytelling for the intergenerational transmission of knowledge and culture, reflecting the strength of our people and the resilience of our ancestors.

Seren Friskie
The Healing Power of Storytelling: Finding Identity Through Narrative, Douglas College

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION:

- What is the difference between a story and a narrative?
- In what ways are they the same?
- What is a personal narrative?
- How can personal narratives be used to develop and foster Treaty relationships?
- Check out **Kinikinik: A Treaty Play** by Ian Ross. It is the story of a beaver, turtle, and wolf and is an allegory for the Treaty relationship. **[CLICK HERE](#)** or scan the QR code for access.



THE NATURE OF NARRATIVE

Oftentimes the word 'story' and 'narrative' are used interchangeably. How are they the same? In what ways are they different?

A story consists of events that are relayed by a storyteller. The events in a story consist of actions carried out by characters; characters are motivated, they have reasons for the things they do; there is conflict involved; and the story has a conclusion.

The narrative is the way in which the story is told or demonstrated. A narrative is the interpretation of the events within the story. Unlike stories, narratives are often open-ended — they do not have a resolution. Narratives operate at personal and social levels.

A personal narrative is a story about yourself. You are the key actor in the story and it is told from your point of view.

WHAT'S YOUR TREATY STORY?

All Manitobans live, work, and play in a Treaty territory.

By Connie Wyatt Anderson

My home is in the Carrot Valley, a farming district west of The Pas, Manitoba. My home office window faces south, directly looking at a wide expanse of Canadian prairie which has been ploughed, cultivated, and sown for the last century, since settlers first broke the land.

If I turn slightly to the right, the tops of the Opasquia Hills loom unobtrusively in the west, more like a shimmering mirage than the northern extent of the Manitoba escarpment.

For the Swampy Cree, this area has been their traditional territory for millennia. To them, this area was known as *opaskwayow*: the place where there is upward growth of trees and vegetation. A serpentine moraine rising above the marshes and swamps that make up the Saskatchewan River delta.

Today, there are three communities living adjacent to each other forming a tri-community: the Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Town of The Pas, and the RM of Kelsey.

The Swampy Cree entered Treaty No. 5 in 1876, an agreement which they interpreted to mean the sharing of lands with newcomers, finding their place in new

economies, and safeguarding their children's future. While this agreement opened lands and opportunity to newcomers, the Cree did not share in the bounty. That same year the Indian Act was put into place, hemming First Nations onto reserves and denying them the things they had been promised at Treaty time: sovereignty, culture, livelihood, health, and education.

I live on the lands accessed by my husband's grandfather in the 1920's. As a Danish immigrant, he was able to obtain 'free' farmland for a nominal fee. At the time, the prairie around The Pas was the last available for European newcomers; southern Manitoba had been divvied up a generation or two earlier.

The landscape, the waterways, the toponyms, and the people and places that make up my community all tell a Treaty story. This story helps explain how our communities came to be, the challenges we faced (and face), the obstacles we have overcome, and the future we can write together.

Our Treaty stories - whether they are rooted deep in the soils of Turtle Island or they began anew this century - are personal and help situate our families in time and space and can guide us to a place of understanding in a Canadian present currently seeking reconciliation.

KATHY'S TREATY STORY

By Kathy Boulanger

Chief Jacob Berens, an Anishinaabe, was one of the chiefs who signed the first Treaty 5 for Berens River, Manitoba. According to F.W. Hooker, he was the last of the five chiefs who signed the Treaty of transfer in September 20, 1875.

His spirit name was Nah-wee-kee-sick-quah-yash translated to English meaning "light passing across the sky" and at that time was the second passing of Halley's Comet. His father, Ozaawashkogaat, Yellow Legs was known to be a gifted spiritual medicine man who cared and helped the people.

When Chief Jacob Berens became an adult, he was elected as a leader of his community of Berens River. He also practiced compassion for his people, he spoke by asking the government not to have commercial fishing on Lake Winnipeg where they fished as he wanted the people of the surrounding communities to have the subsistence of fish and also for future generations. He was also known as Barter, meaning "one who looks after things".

I am Kathy Boulanger, daughter of Florence Boulanger (nee Everette) who was the daughter of John James Everette. His mother was Elizabeth Berens who was the daughter of Chief Jacob Berens. Elizabeth passed away and my grandfather, John James Everette along with his sister Mary Jane were very young and so they were raised by their grandfather, Chief Jacob Berens. His son, William Berens, Tabasigizikweas, which translates to "sailing low in the air after thunder" served as chief from 1917 after Chief Jacob Berens died.



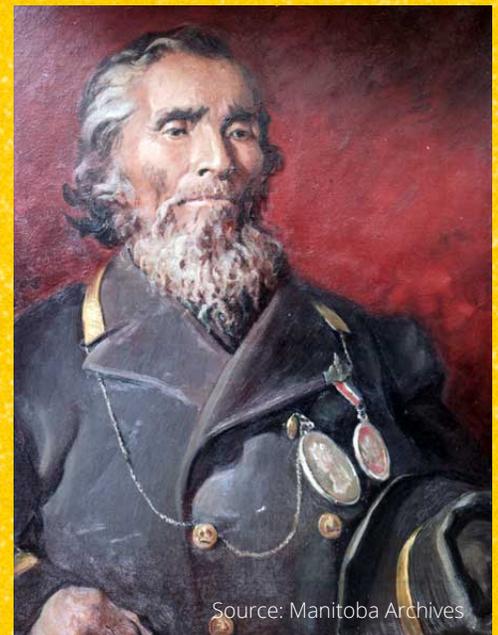


Source: Winnipeg Free Press

On the previous page is an image of the The Manitoba Museum's Berens Family Collection. The historically significant artifacts include:

- Chief's Treaty Medal No. 5 and Chain, given to Chief Jacob Berens at the signing of Treaty No. 5, September 20, 1875.
- Chief's 1901 Commemorative Medal and Ribbon, given to Chief Jacob Berens in 1901, in commemoration of Treaty No. 5, by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, later King George VI and Queen Mary, as part of a cross-Canada rail journey.
- Chief's coat, early 20th century, red wool with gold trim, epaulettes, and buttons which read "Dominion of Canada Indians," belonged to Chief William Berens, the son of Jacob Berens; pants, navy wool with red wool stripe.
- Navy Chief's coat, mid 20th century, worn by Chief William Berens.

See: Everything you should know about the Berens Family Collection (manitobamuseum.ca)



Source: Manitoba Archives

LORILEE'S TREATY STORY

By Lorilee Loewen Scharfenberg

My name is Lorilee Loewen Scharfenberg and this is my Treaty story. In May of 2015, I attended the Gathering of Friends event on Roseau River Anishinaabe First Nation. The powwow was followed by a number of workshops and I chose to participate in a Treaty story-telling event.

The drumbeats of the music resonated in my heart as an Elder explained how in their tradition different stories were memorized and repeated as oral history and how Treaties were made. In my Mennonite family, many were great keepers of oral history as well.

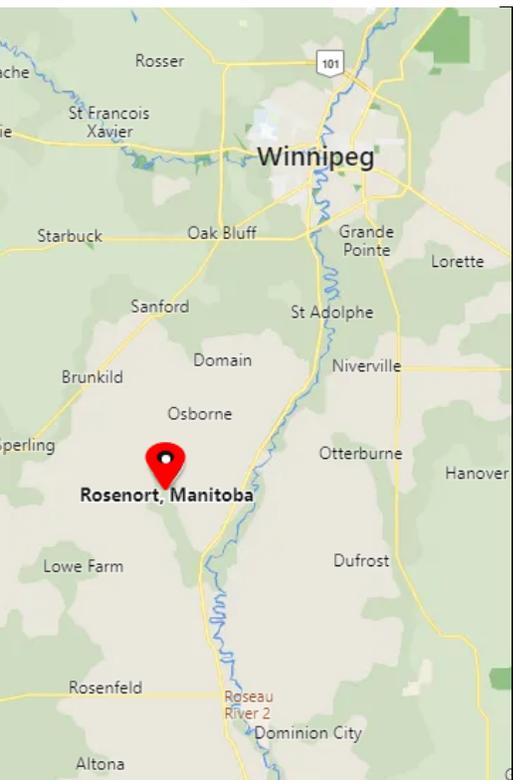
One story that caught my attention was that of a First Nation who had a high-functioning autistic young man who was a Story Keeper. I've spent much time teaching students across the spectrum. The Elder told us that at Treaty signings they sent leaders who could memorize every detail of verbal agreements. Interestingly much more was verbally promised to our First Nations than was written or delivered.

We had the opportunity to dialogue with the Elder and so, as an oral Storyteller myself, I told part of my family story as it related to Canadian First Nations. The story was passed down from my great-great-grandfather David Klassen through to my uncle and my mother who were also storytellers and historians. The story unfolded that in 1873 Klassen came to investigate the possibility of a mass move

to Manitoba by the Mennonites of Ukraine. The Riel Rebellion had ended, Treaty 1 had been signed, and the Manitoba government was moving forward with settling the young province.

While Klassen was on a journey near Portage la Prairie they were attacked by a discontent Metis who was quite upset by these potential settlers. The Mennonites were peaceful and did not bear arms. Klassen questioned the government officials and pressured the government to show him land that was not under conflict. He was assured that the land between the Morris River (Scratching River) and the Red River was available with no record of First Nations having a permanent settlement there. Some research indicates that several First Nation families lived briefly in our area previous to the 1870s but after repeated flooding set up more permanent homes on the Pembina Escarpment

Klassen investigated it and found this area to his satisfaction. Roses bloomed well, the area was floodplain, and he deemed it fine agricultural land with a good road to the Winnipeg markets. This decision led a group of 30-40 Mennonite families to settle in the summer of 1874 in the area designated the Scratching River Mennonite Reserve with twin villages of Rosenort and Rosenhoff. Treaty 1 had been signed in 1871 and the Anishinaabe and Swampy Cree were relocated to the Roseau Reserve. Many years later my great-great-grandfather David Klassen met an elder



Source: The Place of Roses | Rural Municipality of Morris (rmofmorris.ca)



Lorilee at the Morris (Scratching) River holding two baskets that have been in the family for years. "These are most likely baskets traded for food or other items many years ago. We cannot verify their origin completely, but we saw baskets like this in a museum that were labelled as baskets woven from willow or ash by Indigenous peoples. It is possible that the larger basket may have been a bassinet and the smaller one an egg basket."

Source: Lorilee & Arlin Scharfenberg

from Roseau who was harvesting a certain type of willow to do basket weaving on the banks of the muddy river. Klassen asked if indeed they could live at peace with each other. The Elder agreed in conversation that our family could farm the first six inches of land because land was to supply needs, but firmly stated that the river was for "everyone and no one" because it was life. The Elder, with humour, let him know it was foolish to settle there because their phrase describing the area was that it was a "land of rushing water". This story was passed on to me by my uncle Dick B. Eidse in 1995.

My uncle was a curious historian and had visited Roseau Reserve in the 80s to talk with elders to clarify the history. As he repeated what he knew, the Elders acknowledged it to be in keeping with their stories but reminded him that the government promises of their Treaty had not been fulfilled.

Sadly, after one of the major floods in the area, the municipality did major dredging and clear-cut most of the trees along the river. Most of the desired willow disappeared. As late as the 1940's First Nations had a summer encampment in Riverside (Rosenhoff) on the banks of the Morris River but the lack of income from the selling of baskets ended their summer camps. Well into the

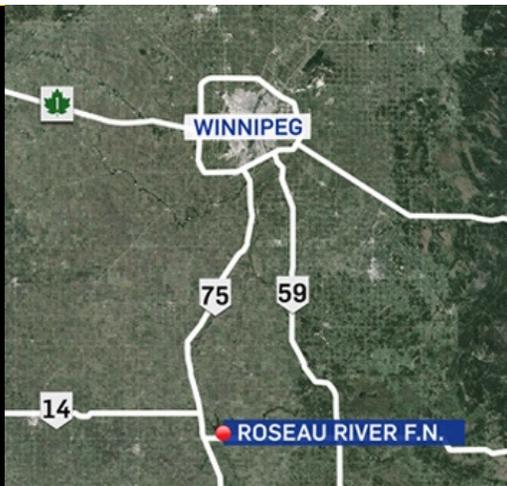
70s, First Nations came by the Mennonite villages requesting bread and clothing from time to time due to increasing poverty.

"Does my oral family history seem sensible to you?" I asked nervously as the Roseau Elder listened intently and responded by nodding. "That was a Treaty your great-great-grandfather made with us," she stated. The statement caused me to shiver.

Unknown to me, I grew up in an idyllic setting which was Treaty land. Sturdy green maples, golden wheat fields, a meandering river to skate on or raft along with the most amazing sunrises and sunsets. For me the Red River Valley was a safe and prosperous place to be educated and raised in.

In contrast, the language barriers, homogenous community lifestyle as well as the Mennonite reluctance to be involved in politics seems to have greatly limited my family's understanding of what Treaties entailed and the horror of residential schools as well as the poverty and trauma caused by the government's failure to honour the Treaties.

I am hopeful that as truth and understanding grows my family will become better neighbours and live as people who honour the Treaties that were made.



The people of Roseau River First Nation have a rich history in the Red River and Pembina Valleys. Their main community is located about an hour south of Winnipeg, near Emerson, with a total membership of 2,000 people across their three reserve communities.

As part of the collective Ojibway of Manitoba, they were known as the "Strong Heart People" in recognition of their bravery. Roseau River signed Treaty 1 on August 3, 1871 and resolved their outstanding land claim in 2011 with a final settlement offer that is held in trust for future generations.

Source: <https://treaty1.ca/roseau-river-anishinaabe-first-nation/>



My Personal Treaty Narrative

A personal narrative is a story about yourself. A personal Treaty narrative places your story within the context of Treaties and Treaty relationships. Use the steps below to frame your story. Use the first person voice (use the word "I"), hook the reader early on, use descriptive words and examples, make the reader think, and conclude with an action or lesson.

● **TITLE**

INTRODUCTION

**BEGINNING OF
STORY**

MIDDLE EVENTS

**END OF
STORY**

ACTION/LESSON

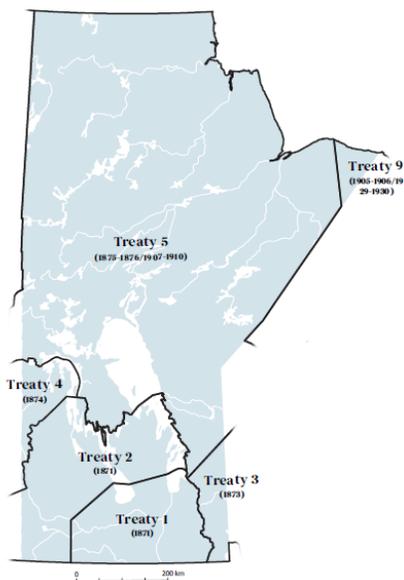


SEEING OURSELVES IN TREATY

Each of us is a storyteller with a unique voice and a unique Treaty story to tell. These stories connect to both our head and our heart.

Head: A growing body of brain science shows us that many different areas of the brain light up when someone is listening to a narrative. One study of listeners found that the brain networks that process emotions arising from sounds were activated, especially during the emotional parts a the story. As you hear a story unfold, your brain waves actually start to synchronize with those of the storyteller. *

Heart: When you tell a story, you invest yourself in the narrative. Listeners, in turn, may keep thinking about the story and talk to others about it, reinforcing the memory and, over time, can drive a broader change in attitudes.



In many ways, storytelling + Treaties is an exercise in reconciliation. Reconciling the past with the future, reconciling historical wrongs with current-day movements for reparation and healing, reconciling neighbours and communities, or in Anishinaabe, **ago'idiwin** (Treaty): 'bringing things together'.

*Source: Storytelling's Power To Connect Us, Shift Perspective And Spur Action : Shots - Health News : NPR



Your stories are beautiful. These are your stories. They should be taken to the school and told there so children can hear them too...They should be told in school so that our children will not forget what happened to us and they will stand firm that this won't happen again.

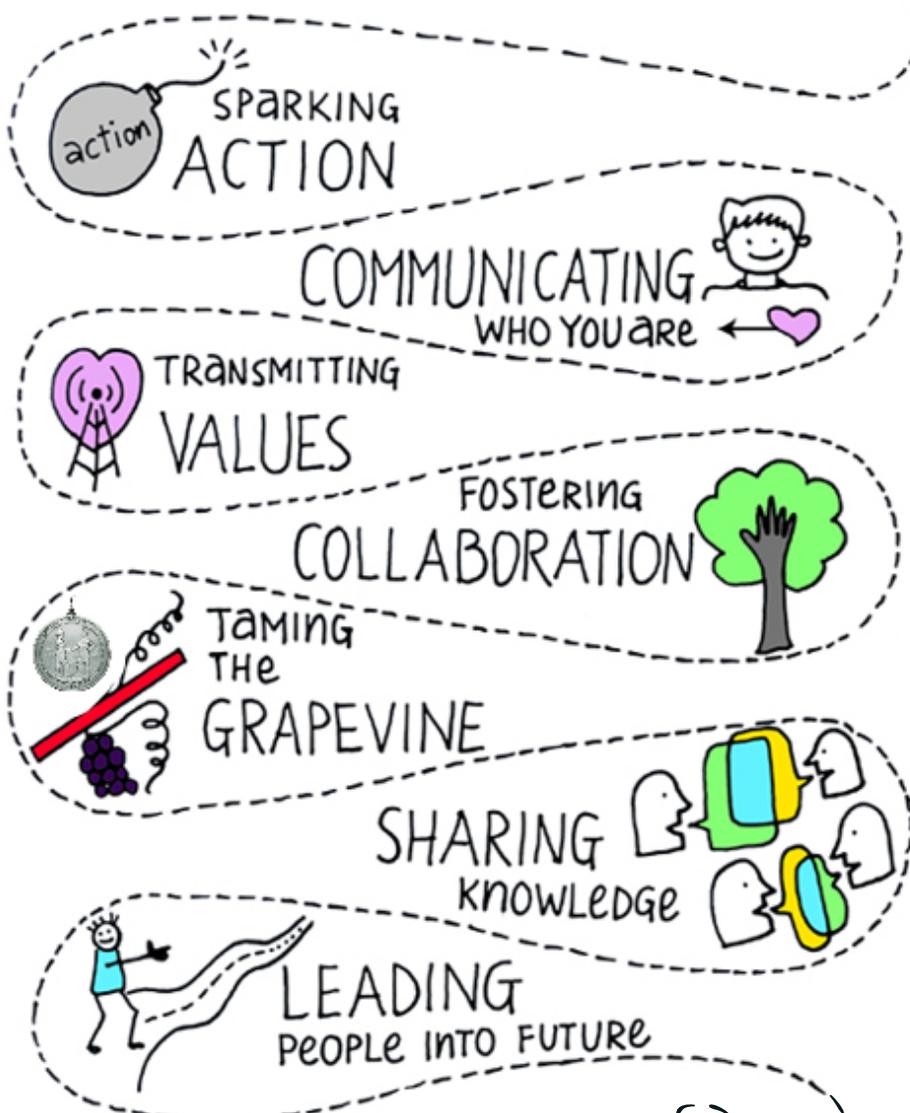
Ininiw Elder Nathan McGillivray
Treaty Elders' Teachings Volume 1

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION & REFLECTION:

- How many Treaty areas are there in Manitoba?
- What Treaty area do you live in?
- How do you fit into the story of Treaty?
- In what ways is an understanding of Treaties integral to movements toward reconciliation?

Telling Stories

Leaders need storytelling for



Graphic adapted from Tamay Vora at qaspire.com

Think about it: you affect change by influencing our leaders. Leaders include your school principal, your teachers, your parents, your boss at work or athletic coach, and your friends. At the same time, you can be a leader now and in the future.

Choose one of steps in the graphic ('Sparking Action', 'Fostering Collaboration', etc.) and explain how telling Treaty stories help achieve the goals of the step. Share with a partner.

What's Your Treaty Story?

A BROCHURE OUTLINE MAP

"We were placed on this land by the Creator, and we have been here for many generations. Each of us has our own place, our own language, and our own customs."
 —ELDER STELLA NEFF

1871-1921

"What I have offered does not take away your living, you will have it then as you have now, and what I offer now is put on top of it. This I can tell you: the Queen's Government will always take a deep interest in your living."
 —ALEXANDER MORRIS, TREATY COMMISSIONER
 TREATY NO. 8, 1876

"The true history of Mihinak Mins (Turtle Island) started with the First Nations peoples of this land. We must remember this and reconcile the true history of this land - that the Creator placed us here. It is part of our reconciliation and recognition to our first language, Anishinaabemurin, and our iwotikwek which is embedded in Anishinaabemurin. They go together. Our people's reconciliation is with the Great Spirit, our language, ceremonies, history, teachings, culture and our culture system.

It is through our first languages that we understand our teachers who have passed on their knowledge, teachings, stories, and songs that tell us who we are as nations - as a people, and where we come from."
 —DR. ELDER HARRY BONE

"As long as the sun shines, grass grows, and the waters flow. That's Eternal Law."
 —ELDER WAYNE SCOTT

The Numbered Treaties, 1871 to 1921, were integral to the growth and development of Canada and are foundational agreements that continue to guide us today.

There are seven different Treaty territories in present-day Manitoba: Treaty No. 1, Treaty No. 2, Treaty No. 3, Treaty No. 4, Treaty No. 5, Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7, Treaty No. 8, Treaty No. 9, and Treaty No. 10. Dakota traditional territory is located in southwestern Manitoba. Treaty No. 10 forms the northeastern point of the province; however, there are no communities there. All Manitobans reside within a Treaty territory.

First Nations relied on the oral teachings, stories, lessons, and knowledge to maintain a historical record and sustain their cultures and identities. Traditional languages and oral traditions form the foundation of society and culture, joining the spiritual and material with the past and present.

Understanding the Treaty relationship means exploring First Nations and accounts of Treaty-making as well as Treaty-making sites, traditional territories, and sacred places. It also means recognizing Treaty history in local rural and urban landscapes.

First Nations hold that they have been bestowed with a responsibility for the land. Land is an integral part of identity and culture. This relationship to Mother Earth is bound by a sacred sense of stewardship.

Treaties are sacred agreements between sovereign First Nations, the Crown, and the Creator. **Right and intent** refers to the combination of spoken words and actions that took place during Treaty-making. These were not captured on paper. They included welcoming speeches, gift exchanges, feasting, ceremony, and the smudging of the pipes. The Treaty partners were bound not only by a written document, but by honest words and honourable acts as well.

"A great starting point for understanding Treaties is the symbolism found in the Treaty medal. Exploring the medal, you see two equal partners coming together and shaking hands; tepees representing the First Nation way of life and that it was to continue under Treaty; and the other symbols of creation, the sun, water, and land, which represent the everlasting nature of the agreement. As Manitobans, we all have benefits and responsibilities to uphold as Treaty partners."
 —TREATY COMMISSIONER LORETTA ROSE

Asotamakewin • Wowapi suta • Ashotamaatiwin • Ago'idiwin • Tzamba nalyei • Traité • Treaty

Use the outline map of Treaties in Manitoba as a canvas to tell your Treaty story. Access the Treaty info postcards and suggested learning materials by clicking the link or scanning the QR code:

