

# Idaa Trail

## Lessons from the Land

### Teacher's Guide & Lesson Plans

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**Title: Learning About Our Land****Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE Social Studies 110-120
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Locate places and/or features using number and letter key system (grid on highway maps, atlases)
- Locate your community and other major communities in your region
- Identify cultural groups – including dialect groups and ethnic groups within the community/region
- Describe some of the geographic features in your region (delta, mountain, plateau, lowland, upland, tundra, pingo, treeline, permafrost, forest, peninsula, bay, isthmus, island, lake, river, etc.)
- Identify major rivers, lakes, oceans, seas, bays, and mountain ranges in the NWT
- Interpret maps and globes
- Use cardinal (north, south, east, west) directions
- Interpret and use basic map legends and symbols (dots, lines, colours, pictures, land and water symbols)

**You will need:**

- Map of the Idaa Trail
- Map of the Northwest Territories (available from NWT Tourism)
- Topographic maps of your local area
- Official Languages of the Northwest Territories map (from Language Commissioners Office or at <http://www.gov.nt.ca/langcom/map.htm>)
- Handout on Traditional Names of communities (available from <http://pwnhc.learnnet.nt.ca/programs/officalnames.htm>)

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

Many learners may not be able to locate or know much about communities other than their own, so be sure to use this opportunity to expand their background knowledge about their region and territory.

- Have the learners locate and label locations mentioned on the Idaa Trail - Rae, Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, Fort Norman on a map of the NWT.
- Have the learners brainstorm a list of all the communities and major lakes, rivers and geographic features within the NWT. Give the learners a blank map of the NWT and a complete list of communities, lakes, rivers, and geographic features and have them locate and label these on the map.
- Discuss the significance of geographic features in terms of history (location of settlements near bodies of water and economy (rivers as transportation networks).
- Brainstorm a list of all the official languages in the NWT and have the learners write the languages spoken in the various communities in the NWT. (<http://www.gov.nt.ca/langcom/map.htm>)
- Have learners construct maps of an area to show the geographic relationship of one community to another. Be sure students can use cardinal directions (north, south, east, west) to identify one community in relation to others.

- Have learners draw conclusions about the locations of many communities (close to bodies of water) and suggest reasons for this. Transportation and availability of food are obvious ones; what other reasons can learners come up with? Brainstorm for ideas.
- Get a map of your local area and have learners write as many local names and places of importance on the map. Invite an Elder into the class to work with the learners to further identify local hunting and fishing areas, places where people lived in camps, and places of importance to the local people.

### **Suggested Resources:**

- GNWT, Resource Wildlife and Economic Development Website has maps online at <http://www.gov.nt.ca/RWED/maps/map.htm>
- NWT Arctic Tourism website has maps of the NWT at <http://www.nwttravel.nt.ca/>
- Check with your local Renewable Resources Office for maps of your region and the NWT

**Title: Traditional Knowledge and Technology**

Along the Idaa Trail you will learn about traditional knowledge and technology. In this activity, the learners will investigate traditional knowledge and technology in the north. It is important to ensure you, the instructor, draw from the learners own understandings of what traditional knowledge is in its broadest (life experiences) and narrowest (cultural practices based on observations) sense.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE 110 – 120 Science and Social Studies
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land
- Northern Studies – MODULE ONE

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Name a minimum of three examples of traditional technologies and explain how they illustrate an adaptation to the environment
- Explain what traditional knowledge is and compare and contrast with scientific knowledge.
- Explain what technology is.
- Give examples of how science and technology have developed over time in response to human and environmental need.
- Describe ways that science and technology have worked and will continue to work together in investigating questions and problems.

**You will need:**

- Bristol board
- Markers
- Magazines, photos, drawings
- Glue
- Traditional and Local Knowledge in the Science Curriculum – handout
- Traditional vs Modern Technology – handout
- Birch Bark Canoe template

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Brainstorm with learners what “traditional knowledge” means to them. Have them generate as many ideas as possible
- Read the “Traditional and Local Knowledge in the Science Curriculum” article and discuss with learners. Discuss the idea of fact and opinion as it relates to the article and ask the question “Whose definition of traditional knowledge is this?”
- Compare and contrast traditional vs. scientific knowledge. Complete the learner activity sheets on traditional knowledge and technology.
- Create a small model birchbark canoe using the template. Learners can discuss the advantages and disadvantages of travelling in this type of canoe.

**Traditional Knowledge Poster Series**

- Have learners, in groups of two or three, choose an aspect of traditional knowledge, and make a poster depicting traditional knowledge and technologies used by northern people.
- Ask the question: “What types of things did northern people make/create/do to make their lives easier?”

The following categories could be used:

- clothing
  - cooking
  - transportation
  - hunting and fishing
  - shelter
  - medicines
- Have learners research the topic, including interviewing Elders in the community. Have them include drawings, pictures, photos, diagrams, and written descriptions to highlight their research.
  - You could hold an open house featuring the poster series or have learners display the poster series in the local library, school, or business to present their findings of their research and answer questions from the public.
  - As the learners travel down the Idaa Trail, traditional and modern technologies are mentioned. Have the learners keep a list of traditional technology and knowledge mentioned at each site along the trail. A sample handout is provided.
  - Invite an Elder in as a guest speaker to describe what life was like before modern technologies were available. Ask them to share some of the challenges and difficulties of living on the land and describe how life has changed for them over the years with regards to new technologies.

### **Advantages and Disadvantages of Technology**

- Have learners brainstorm the advantages and disadvantages of technology. Use the handout provided and start with the example of comparing the advantages and disadvantages of using the birch bark canoe and a motor boat. Discuss what has been lost in the culture because of all that we’ve gained technologically (e.g. TV – storytelling, drum dancing, family interaction; GPS-traditional knowledge of navigating by stars, snowdrifts, etc.).
- Ask the question: What would your life be like without a particular technology (TV, telephone, snowmobile etc...)? Have learners perform a skit showing how their life would be changed without a particular technology.

### **Suggested Resources:**

- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre has a collection of traditional Dene, Metis and Inuit artifacts and Edukits (tools & technology, clothing) that may be loaned to groups upon request. Use a selection of their artifacts from the Dene and Inuit cultures to provide an interesting hands-on look at traditional knowledge. They also have the NWT Archives photographic database that has 20,000 images that can be viewed online as well as online Student Activities such as The Mooseskin Boat and Legends.
- Martha Johnson and Robert A. Ruttan, Traditional Dene Environmental Knowledge: A Pilot Project Conducted in Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake, NT 1989-1993 (Hay River, NT: Dene Cultural Institute, 1993).
- Website: Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre <http://www//pwnhc.learnnet.nt.ca>
- Birch Bark Canoe video from PWNHC

## Traditional and Modern Technology

As you travel along the Idaa Trail and stop at the various sites, keep track of the traditional and modern knowledge and technologies.

Site	Traditional	Modern
Leaving Rae		
Bea Lake		
Village beside Nidzii		
Sliding Hill		
Komoola Portage		
Hook Place/ Grave Site		
Blood Rock		
Fence Narrows		
Arriving at Hottah Lake		

**The Science and Technology of Nature**

Watching nature has led to the development of many new technologies. Nature is the master of the environment, and by watching and learning from nature Aboriginal people and scientists have developed many new technologies.

Many cultures have taken ideas from nature and developed them into useful technologies for human. For example, the snowshoe hare and its ability to stay on top of soft snow was noticed by aboriginal peoples and then the snowshoe was designed based on the same principles of the snowshoe hare's feet. .

Can you think of other things that have been developed by watching nature?

<b>Technology</b>	<b>What in nature might have inspired this?</b>
Snowshoes	Foot of the snowshoe hare
Airplane wing	
Fish net	
Birch bark canoe	
Fur clothing	
Iglu shape	
Quinzee	
Velcro	

**Advantages and Disadvantages of Technology**

Every technology has its advantages and disadvantages. These can be social, cultural, environmental or personal. It is important to look at both aspects of a technology and weigh the risks and benefits of a technology before we embrace it.

Fill in the chart below listing the advantages and disadvantages of a traditional and modern technology.

You could try to do a similar chart comparing other technologies: bow and arrow vs gun; snowmobile vs. dog team; inuksuit/snowdrifts vs. GPS.

<b>Traditional Technology</b>		<b>Modern Technology</b>	
<b>Birch Bark Canoe</b>		<b>Motor Boat</b>	
<b>Advantage</b>	<b>Disadvantage</b>	<b>Advantage</b>	<b>Disadvantage</b>

A recent example of a new technology is the use of genetically engineered foods and the controversy it has caused. If you were to do a comparison chart like the one above, what would be some of the positive and negative effects?

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**Title: Timeline of Events**

The purpose of this activity package is to provide learners with activities that will familiarize them with the local area they live in and develop an awareness of how their own local community has been influenced by history.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE Social Studies
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land
- Northern Studies – MODULE ONE & TWO

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Demonstrate a general knowledge of pre-history leading up to contact with Europeans
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of event applicable to your region/community resulting from European contact
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of the Fur Trade standards (that the Made Beaver was the currency used in the early days of the Fur Trade).

**You will need:**

- Resources available in local community - Elders, history books, museums and historical society
- Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
- “NWT Timeline” available from the Dept. of Education (873-7674)
- “Standards of Trade” handout

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Have learners brainstorm any facts or events they know of, even those they are not really sure about, in the history of their community and region and write them on the board. Now draw a long horizontal line across the board or long piece of paper with arrows at each end and indicate ‘Past’ on the left side and ‘Future’ on the right. Somewhere near the right end, mark ‘Now’ on the time line. Now ask learners to assign a position on the timeline to the events they brainstormed. The emphasis here is not on dates but on the relative position of events in time. Include event that occurred both before and after contact with Europeans, such as signing of Treaties, the arrival of fur traders, etc.
- Arrange a field trip to the local museum to see pictures and artifacts surrounding the early history of the area or search the photo database on the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre’s website.
- Invite guest speakers or interview local Elders who have lived in your community and area for a long period and have them share their stories of local and personal history. Brainstorm a list of interview question with the learners. (Some sample interview questions are included to get you started.)
- Using information from the local sources, have learners do reports or posters about famous people who have influenced the growth of the community or region, such as K’aawidaa, the trading chief.
- Using materials from the local library and historical society, have learners do research and write reports about how the community and region were established.
- After doing the research and reporting to the class, have the learners complete another timeline of significant historical events from the perspective of their community, region, and territory. Use a continuous roll of paper (one foot wide or so) and pin your timeline up on your classroom wall. Use diagrams, pictures, colour, etc. to help make the images and events memorable for the learners.

- Students will list items that the fur traders brought to the north. They will also list the furs that were traded by the trappers. (All these items can also be drawn and cut out so that they can be physically traded.) They will make up a mock trading system (ie one beaver fur = 1 axe) and set up a situation where the trappers come to the trading post to trade. Students could also use the “Standards of Trade” handout to determine values of trade. Students should address problems that will involve credit situations.

### **Suggested Resources:**

- Prince of Wales Heritage Centre has archives, photos, and searchable databases that learners can use online at <http://www.pwnhc.ca/databases/index.htm>
- “Fur Trade” Edukit available from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (call 920-3255 or 920-3267).

**Elder Interview – Sample Questions**

1. Where does your family come from?
1. How long have you lived in this area?
1. Can you tell me about your family history?
1. Do you and your children speak your first language? What language is it?
1. How did people travel in earlier times?
1. How has modern methods of transportation affected a traditional way of life?
1. How has the location of your village changed?
1. Do you know how the environment has been affected by modern transportation?
1. What events occurred annually or seasonally which have special ceremonies?
1. How have the celebrations of holidays changed since you were a child?
1. Are there certain practices or ceremonies done when an animal has been killed for food or other purposes?
1. Was fish an important part of your food as you grew up?
1. How has fishing gear changed over time?
1. Was fishing a gender specific role?  
What was the process for acquiring clothing? Who was responsible for what?
1. Was there special regalia worn at different times or seasons?
1. What are your thoughts on the diseases brought by Europeans influenced First Nations population?
1. Can you tell me when and how the land was used in the past? How should we use it in the future?
1. In earlier times before or at contact how did the people divide the land? How do they do it now?
1. What is your favorite season? Why?
1. How and where were stories told to you?
1. Now and in pre-contact times what month of the year did people have to work harder? Why?

**Title: Traditional Medicines: The Healing Forest**

The learners will investigate how the Dene used various parts of trees and other forest plants for a whole range of ailments and health conditions. As well as identify forest plants with healing power and explain the importance of accurate plant identification.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE Social Studies and Science
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land
- Northern Studies – MODULE ONE

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of the following aspects applicable to your region – mineral resources, use of the land by man, classification of region as arctic or sub-arctic, animal life, climate, other
- Explain what traditional knowledge is and compare and contrast with scientific knowledge.
- Give examples of how science and technology have developed over time in response to human and environmental need.
- Describe ways that science and technology have worked and will continue to work together in investigating questions and problems.
- Describe positive and negative effects that result from applications of science and technology in their own lives, the lives of others, and the environment.

**You will need:**

- Pencils and pencil crayons
- Paper
- Camera (optional)
- Laminating material
- “Forest medicines” information sheet
- Books on plant identification and traditional medicine (see Additional Resources)

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

The learners will make a medicine book using information from plant field guides, people in the community and other resources.

1. Ask learners to raise their hands if they have medicines from the drug store or health station in the house (for example, cough syrup, pain killers, antiseptic cream, etc.). Write down some of the examples on the flip chart. Then ask them if they know if their parents or other relatives use any plants from the local area for medicines. Write any examples of these traditional medicines on the flip chart.
1. Lead the class into a discussion about traditional medicines derived from local plants and animals vs. “western” medicines that are processed and sold in pharmacies. How are traditional and modern medical systems linked? How do they differ?
1. Ask learners to imagine that all of the pharmaceutical companies that make modern medicines have decided to stop sending medicines to drug stores and hospitals in the NWT. The government has heard about this and has given your class a job to do while they try to bargain with the companies. You are to make a medicine book for your community so that people can heal themselves in case of sickness or injury.

1. Have each learner make one page for the community medicine book. He/she is to choose a medical problem, or ailment (e.g. sore throat, bleeding) and research one or two plants that were traditionally used as remedies. Students can read the attached information sheet “Forest Medicines” and refer to various books in the Additional Resources section for information on traditional medicines and plant identification. Learners should also be encouraged to ask parents, grandparents, and other community members for information.

Each learner’s page should contain the following information:

- the name of the ailment or sickness
  - a labelled picture/photo or drawing of the whole plant part(s) that contains the medicine
  - how to prepare and use the medicine (if known)
  - any specific warnings about the plant’s use (i.e. are certain parts poisonous? Or, should the plant be “paid for” its gifts?)
  - at least one place where the plant(s) can be found locally
1. Laminate each page and put it in a binder complete with a title page, a table of contents and warning about the book’s use. An example is given below.

**Forest Medicines of the Sahtu**

Compiled by the ABE Science 120 Class in September 2000 in the community of Deline.

**Contents:**

Medicines for earaches.....2

How to stop a wound from bleeding.....3

Relief for arthritis.....7

**Warning:** Earth Medicines such as the ones listed inside should not be tried without the help of an experienced Elder. This type of knowledge is very special and takes many years to learn. It can be dangerous if used incorrectly.

1. Ask learners if they had any confusion in identifying the correct healing plant. For example, did any learners find different names for the same healing plant in different books? Or perhaps a healing plant not described well enough in the various resources for you to be able to find it outside or in a field guide? Would this be a problem if you were going to use the plants for healing? How could mix-ups be avoided? (By using the plant’s scientific name, which is the same all over the world; also by having someone knowledgeable about healing plants teach you by practical example.)

### Extensions:

1. Social Studies: Research some of the drugs we have today that come from forests around the world. Did indigenous peoples originally use these? Are any of the plants endangered or threatened? What can we do to protect plants that have healing powers? What are the consequences if we don’t take measures to protect them?
1. Social Studies: Make a map to accompany the medicine book. Label on the map areas that contain healing plants around your community. Learners can learn the use of symbols to show different types of plants.
1. Put together a collection of plants that can be used by people, either for medicines, food or utility uses (e.g. birch bark baskets). Have each learner choose one plant and mount a specimen on stiff, white paper. The specimen should be pressed, mounted and then labelled with the following information:

**Name of plant:** (common and scientific)  
**Place of collection:** (Fort Smith, NT)  
**Habitat:** (boggy area along the Slave River)  
**Description:** (e.g. how common is the plant; what does it look like)  
**Collected by:** (your name)  
**Date:** (when it was collected)  
**Other information:** (e.g. how can it be used; what season; what parts of the plant are used)  
**Warnings:** (e.g. gifts to pay for the plant; is it toxic)

### Suggested Resources:

- Eleanor G. Viereck, *Alaska's Wilderness Medicines: Healthful Plants of the Far North* (Alaska Northwest Publishing Co, 187) This book provides detailed information about 79 plants with healing qualities.
- "Boreal Forest Component Cards" (included in this manual or available from the Conservation Education Division of Resources Wildlife and Economic Development, Yellowknife) Many of the plant cards contain a note on their medicinal use.
- *The Dene Medicine Book* This eight-page pamphlet was compiled by the Dene Cultural Institute based on information collected in 1989 by Gwich'in Language and Cultural Program Staff. Available from the Dene Cultural Institute (867) 874-8480.
- *Traditional Dene Medicine*, Part 1(report) Part 2 (database), Lac La Martre, NT. 1994. The database contains almost 400 pages of cures for various ailments, plus other information on such offerings that should be made before certain medicines are used. Available from the Dene Cultural Institute (867) 874-8480.
- Traditional Medicine (Video) – Traditional Methods of Healing, Ruth Walsh (Gwichin Social and Cultural Society) - Healing plants, traditional knowledge and medicine

### References

- Conservation Education Division, *NWT's Focus on Forests* (Yellowknife, NT: GNWT, Department of Renewable Resources, 1996), p. 182-183. Reprinted with permission. (This resource has a lot of excellent activities and is available from Conservation Education Division, RWED at (867) 920-8716.)

## The Healing Forests

(Background)

Many of today's medicines sold in drug stores come directly from forest plants (or are synthetic copies of plant compounds). For example, some cough syrups contain extracts from eucalyptus trees. Many vapour rubs for reducing cough symptoms or muscle pain contain camphor, which is obtained from the wood and bark of the camphor tree. Aspirin contains salicylic acid, a compound that comes from the *Salix* genus of plants or willow. It is interesting to note that willow bark was used by many native peoples in North America as a painkiller at least 2400 years ago!

In fact, we owe much of our knowledge about the medicinal properties of forest plants to native people around the world. By experimenting with different plants and passing the knowledge down through hundreds of generations, indigenous peoples learned which local plants could cure sickness and heal wounds.

In the N.W.T., the Dene had their own medical system before the western "scientific" medicine that arrived with the Europeans largely displaced it. Although the plants used and the methods involved in healing varied by region, the following quote helps to describe the practice of traditional medicine in Denendeh:

"Everyone in camp had some basic knowledge of medicine, of remedies for their ailments. More specialized knowledge was possessed by the camp's medicine makers. These were usually women, who offered their skills in exchange for gifts and other benefits. They were trained in these skills from a young age, by older medicine makers. This training involved learning to recognize useful plants (and their buds, bark, leaves or roots), and to apply age-old remedies. Although Sahtuotine used both kinds of medicine, they relied mostly on spiritual powers for treatment and healing."

The Sahtuotine Long Ago

Because the traditional Dene system of medicine is passed on orally, some important information has been lost. However, various projects in the NWT have identified traditional knowledge about the use of forest plants and other earth medicines for healing. The extent that people in communities use traditional medicine has also been evaluated in some places. For example, in Lac La Martre, it has been said, "Most people over 50 years of age have considerable knowledge about bush medicine, and many continue to use local plants and animal parts to keep healthy and to cure minor ailments, such as sore throats. Most people use these traditional medicines in combination with non-Dene ones provided by the nursing stations." (Traditional Dene Medicines, Part 1, 1993)

Attached is a partial list of some of the traditional Dene remedies from the bark, leaves, fruit or roots of trees or woodland plants (see "Forest Medicines").

## Forest Medicines

### Trees and Shrubs

#### Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)

- Fungus – chopped off the tree and dried. A brew can be made from this fungus to help shortness of breath.

#### Balsam Poplar (*Populus balsamifer*)

- Buds – boiled and the herb juice used to reduce swelling; used to cure colds.
- Catkins – helps to reduce breathing problems

#### Juniper (*Juniperus species*)

- Berries – good for digestive problems and rheumatic pains to joint problems; when boiled, the vapours are said to be good for bronchitis
- Large doses or continuous use can apparently irritate the kidneys and urinary passages. As well, some people may be allergic to juniper.

#### Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*)

- Branches – juice from the branches rubbed on the body to get rid of aches and pains.
- Trunk and branches – chopped up in small pieces and the brew is good to cure a cold, a chest pain or even tuberculosis

#### Spruce (*Picea glauca*, *Picea mariana*)

- Inner bark – made into a past for healing cuts or wounds
- Inner bark – either chewed or boiled to make a tonic
- Gum – boil and drink for flu and colds; wash cuts with it; chew it and swallow the juice for a sore throat or to reduce coughing; wrap spruce gum in a cloth and wrap it around a painful limb; make paste with gum and dried mushrooms by mixing it with fish oil. Apply it to open sores or scabs to heal them
- Gum or leaves – apply to a bee sting
- Boughs – boil branches of small tree and drink the juice to clean out your system and help chest colds.
- Needles – boiled and used for a mouthwash for infected gums or a drink for body aches; also chew needles and swallow juices for a sore stomach.
- Cones – boiled and used for cold sores or a sore throat

**Tamarak** (*Larix laricina*)

- Top shoots of tree – boil and drink juice to help an upset stomach
- Boughs – cut up and boil in a covered pot. Use sticky part inside pot for curing infection; use the juice for colds or for washing infected cuts.
- Inner bark – spongy layer beneath the bark used for stopping blood flow in wounds
- The tamarck tree must be “paid” for by leaving a gift such as sugar or tobacco

**White Birch** (*Betula papyrifera*)

- Buds - boil with grease and apply to sores
- Sap/inner bark – boil small pieces of the inner bark and drink the brew to cure a cough
- Bark – used to wrap a broken bone to help heal it quickly

**Willow** (*Salix* species)

- Spring buds – boiled and used to heal open sores and cuts/cold sores
- Boughs – boiled and used for body ache.
- Leaves – chewed to a paste and applied to a wound to stop bleeding or cure a bee sting.

**Red Willow** (other names Red Osier Dogwood; *Cornus stolonifera*)

- Inner bark – when boiled, the liquid is good for stomach pains following childbirth and general aches and pains; cleans out the kidneys

**Some Other Forest Plants****Raspberry**

- Stems – boil with water and tomato plants for sore eyes

**Wild Rose**

- Petals – can be soaked in hot water and liquid used to rinse out the eyes.
- Buds – can be boiled and the tea used to wash cuts or ease a rash

**Lupin**

- Flowers – can be boiled and the solution used to get rid of lice

**Yarrow**

- Flowers – can be sniffed to stop a nose bleed

**Labrador Tea**

- Leaves – boiled for 4 hours and used for treating body ache
- Leaves and twigs – boil to make a broth or tea and use to clean out kidneys
- The leaves contain a toxin that can be harmful if taken in excessive amounts

**Lichen**

- Scraped off a rock and boiled to use as an ointment to reduce swelling; herbal brew of lichen is good for breathing problems

**Title: Showing Respect**

Throughout your journey along the trail, the grandparents have ways of showing respect to people, the animals, and the land. This activity will give the learners an opportunity to think about traditions, ceremonies, and rituals in their own family, community and culture.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE English and Social Studies 110 – 120
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land, The People, The Self
- Northern Studies – MODULE ONE & TWO

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Identify prior knowledge of the region's history and culture
- Describe methods used by people to record their history
- Independently and with others summarizes and uses personal knowledge of a topic to determine information needs and formulates questions to guide research

**You will need:**

- Local stories about rituals used with resource use
- Elders to share rituals used

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- **What are traditions and values?** Handout: "What are Values and Traditions?" Divide into pairs and ask participants to think of traditions and values in their families /cultures and share them with their partners. Give an example from your own family. Share with the larger group.
- **Respect:** Respect is very important in Aboriginal cultures and it is important to always treat people, animals and the land with respect and to use respect in our daily lives.
  - Write, "Respect is..." on a flipchart. Ask the group to brainstorm what respect is. Write the answers on the flipchart or have participants write their responses on Post-It notes and put on flipchart.
  - Ask each group member to share a time in their lives when they were young and learned about respect. Who taught them? What did they learn? Ask participants to share their stories with the group. How could you use this story of respect today?
  - Talk about some ways that you show respect to your Elders, family, children, the land, their culture. How has that changed from the way it was long ago?
- Give learners, or have them research print, online, and local resources for, information on a local Aboriginal ritual associated with resource use (e.g., respect for the land, safe journey, offering to the river, hunting ritual). Have learners in groups read and discuss together why they think this ritual occurs. Have a spokesperson for each group report back on the group's ideas. Discuss these in a whole-class setting. (The local cultural centre can be a valuable resource for this activity.)

## **Suggested Resources:**

- Dene Kede Curriculum
- Legends and Stories from the Past by George Blondin, available online at [http://siksik.learnnet.nt.ca/02%20k\\_12/index.html](http://siksik.learnnet.nt.ca/02%20k_12/index.html) under Culture Based Education

## What Are Traditions and Values?°



### What are traditions?

- Unwritten beliefs, facts or behaviours that are handed down from generation to generation
- Often centre around important family or community events like births, deaths, weddings, religious events, cultural events
- Often take place when families are closer to each other

**Traditions in my family:**



### What are values?

- Qualities we think are important for our children and ourselves
- Values are often found in traditions. For example: respect for Elders is seen in children when they are quiet when an Elder is speaking

**Important values in my family:**

° Activity from Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills, p. 45, © Bow Valley College, Reprinted with permission.

## Changing Cultures – Changing Values

Our culture and situation are always changing. Our values and traditions sometimes change along with the situations.



Think about how your culture and situation have changed from the time of your grandparents or great-grandparents. What values are the same? What values are different?

Values that are different	Values that are the same

### Ways We Teach Our Values, Traditions and Culture to Our Children<sup>o</sup>



1. Values and traditions are very important to all families. We all hope that our children will learn important cultural and family values from our teachings and we hope that they will include many of our traditions in their lives when they become adults.
1. We also know how important it is for our children to feel comfortable and be successful in different settings. We hope that they are able to find a happy balance between the two cultures so that they can feel good about themselves.
1. Work in small groups and talk about ways that you are teaching your children about your culture and traditions. Write down your ideas and then share them with the larger group.

#### 1. Modeling

#### 1. Talking to your children

#### 1. Rewarding your children

#### 1. Listening

#### 1. Starting new traditions

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<sup>o</sup> From Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills, p.50 and VT-5, © Bow Valley College, Reprinted with permission

### Ways We Learn Our Values, Traditions and Culture from Our Parents and Elders

- Values and traditions are very important to all families. Parents and Elders hope that their children will learn important cultural and family values from their teachings and hope that their children will include many of their traditions in their lives when they become adults.
- We also know how important it is for children to feel comfortable and be successful in different settings. Parents hope that their children are able to find a happy balance between the two cultures so that they can feel good about themselves.



Work in small groups and talk about ways that you are learning about your culture and traditions from your family and Elders in your community. Write down your ideas and then share them with the larger group.

#### 1. Modeling

##### 1. Talking to your parents

##### 1. Listening

##### 1. Starting new traditions

As you travel along the Idaa Trail and stop at the various sites, keep track of the traditional ceremonies and rituals used at various times and occasions.

Site	Ritual or Ceremony
<b>Leaving Rae</b>	
<b>Bea Lake</b>	
<b>Village beside Nidzii</b>	
<b>Sliding Hill</b>	
<b>Komoola Portage</b>	
<b>Hook Place/ Grave Site</b>	
<b>Blood Rock</b>	
<b>Fence Narrows</b>	
<b>Arriving at Hottah Lake</b>	

What other ceremonies or rituals are used in your community? Describe what is done and when the ritual is used.

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**Title: How to Make A...**

Hook Place is a place where the family discovers a fish cache and the children learn about how they caught fish before the modern fishing rod. In this activity, learners will use local, print, and online resources to learn how to make a traditional technology, construct a model, and a pamphlet with details on how to make it.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE English and Social Studies
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land
- Northern Studies – MODULE ONE & TWO

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Write simple descriptive, narrative, and expository paragraphs with main ideas and related details
- List local and natural resources and identify their personal and commercial uses.
- Name a minimum of three examples of traditional technologies and how they illustrate adaptation to the environment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of at least 3 types of northern fish.

**You will need:**

- Elders to teach how to make various traditional technologies
- Print and online resources on how to make certain traditional technologies
- Supply of wood, fish bones, fibre lashings, birch or willow strips
- Camera
- Available Science and Biology research books and access to Internet

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Have learners research local resources to learn how to make traditional technologies. Have them use resources gathered from museums, print, online and local Elders and other resource people.
- Have students construct replicas of traditional technologies. Provide natural resources (e.g., wood, fish bones, fibre lashing, birch or willow strips, sharpened stone or bone), and instructions for making small items such as fish hooks, small fish nets, baskets, hide scrapers, and so on. When the objects are complete, have students demonstrate their use. Discuss the cultural and environmental implications of making the technologies compared to buying the manufactured objects.
- Have students create two and three-dimensional patterns after studying examples of traditional Aboriginal structures or technologies (e.g., trappers cabins, food caches, fish traps) then construct a model or replica.
  - Fish cache - dechi
  - Fish hooks
  - Fish net
  - Drying rack
  - Stickfish - ligotse
- Have the learners do an expository writing piece describing the steps in detail of how to make one of the traditional technologies. Have them make this into a pamphlet, with photos, drawings, and details on how to make the item.

- Each student should choose one type of northern fish found in their community and complete a research project on this fish. This project should include scientific knowledge regarding each fish as well as local knowledge regarding the fish and how it is used.

### **Suggested Resources:**

- Dept. of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development
- Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans

**Title: Legends and Storytelling**

Legends and storytelling are very important in Aboriginal cultures. They have been used for generations as a way to pass on history and as a tool to teach traditions, values and rituals.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE Social Studies and English
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land, The People
- Northern Studies – MODULE ONE

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Describe methods used by people to record their history
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of prehistory leading up to contact with Europeans
- Identify the topic, main characters, retell main points of text
- Participate in a variety of shared and independent reading activities using a variety of texts

**You will need:**

- Legends and stories from the local area
- Elders willing to share legends

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Have the learners retell the Yamozha's story about his grandfather at Blood Rock or of Yamozha at the Sliding Hill.
- Invite an Elder to share legends, myths, and stories from the local area with the learners. Have the learners record the stories and draw pictures or create sculptures to illustrate the legend.
- Have groups of learners choose a myth or legend and make up a skit to dramatize it. Have the learners share these skits with classmates, school children, or during an open house.
- Storytelling teaches important lessons about life and lets learners use their imaginations. Have the learners create and tell their own legend/story. Have each person choose a "Teaching Card" and write a story about it. Think up a story that will teach a lesson about the card or make up your own.

1. Title: \_\_\_\_\_
1. What lesson does the story teach?
1. Who is in the story? Two or three people or animals.
1. What qualities do the people or animals have? For example: "The Raven is very clever and teases."

Here is a sample pattern for a story.

Long ago there lived \_\_\_\_\_. His/Her name was \_\_\_\_\_. He/She was very \_\_\_\_\_. One day, (an event) happened \_\_\_\_\_. Because of this, there was (an outcome) and (this is where the teaching comes in)...

**Suggested Resources:**

- Legends and Stories from the Past by George Blondin, available online at [http://siksik.learnnet.nt.ca/02%20k\\_12/index.html](http://siksik.learnnet.nt.ca/02%20k_12/index.html)

Storytelling

Teachings

Photocopy this page and cut out the cards with the lesson or teaching.  
Give one card to each group and have them make up a story to teach the lesson.

Don't be greedy.	Don't make fun of others.
The strong should help the weak.	Don't be boastful.
Be creative! Make up your own.	Be creative! Make up your own.

**Title: Caribou, The Provider**

In this chapter of the story, the grandparents explain how caribou fences were built and used by people in the past. They were used for spring hunting and everyone worked together to ensure a successful hunt.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE Science 110 – 120
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Dene Kede – The Land
- Northern Studies – MODULE ONE

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Describe how we use traditional knowledge in day to day life given the northern environment
- Describe characteristics of living and non-living things
- Describe adaptations of northern animals to their environmental conditions
- Describe relations among animals: individuals and populations, predator/prey
- Demonstrate knowledge of the following aspects applicable to your region: use of land by man, animal life, etc.
- Demonstrate knowledge of caribou hunting methods and use of caribou for food, shelter and clothing.

**You will need:**

- Parts of the Caribou handout

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Divide the class into 4 groups – 3 scouts, 12 hunters, a group of other family members and a group of caribou. Students can re-enact the construction of the caribou fence (using stumps and trees) and the actual hunt. The scouts being posted at the highest point watching for caribou, the hunters hiding and waiting to ambush the caribou and the family members waiting at camp to do the work of processing the meat and hides back at camp. Why was it necessary for everyone to work together?
- Divide the class into 4 groups. If it is possible, invite an elder to the class to assist with this activity. Each group will be assigned one part of the caribou and must make a presentation to the rest of the class as to how this part would be processed and how it would be used. The 4 groups would be: caribou meat, caribou hide, caribou bones and antlers, other parts of caribou.
- Many tourists come to the North. They often know very little about our land, animals and people. Set up a mock interview or conversation with a tourist and a northerner. Themes for the conversations could be 1) What is a caribou? 2) How did people use to hunt caribou in the past? 3) How do they hunt caribou now? 4) Why did they hunt caribou? 5) How did they use caribou?

**Suggested Resources:**

- Dept. of Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development
- [A Way Of Life](#), Ed Hall, Dept. of Resources, Wildlife & Economic Development (1986)

**Title: Our Own Stories**

Now that you have completed the Idaa Trail and the learners have heard about all the adventures that took place on the trip from Rae to Hottah Lake, learners will write about their own experiences and stories from past – travel on the land or to other communities.

**Curriculum Links:**

- ALBE English 110 – 120
- Elementary Social Studies – STRAND 4 & 5
- Language Arts
- Northern Studies
- Dene Kede – The Land, The Self

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Participate in group and individual activities to generate ideas for writing
- Make and record connections between personal experiences, prior knowledge and a variety of reading, viewing, and listening materials and/or activities
- Write narratives with a beginning, middle, and end

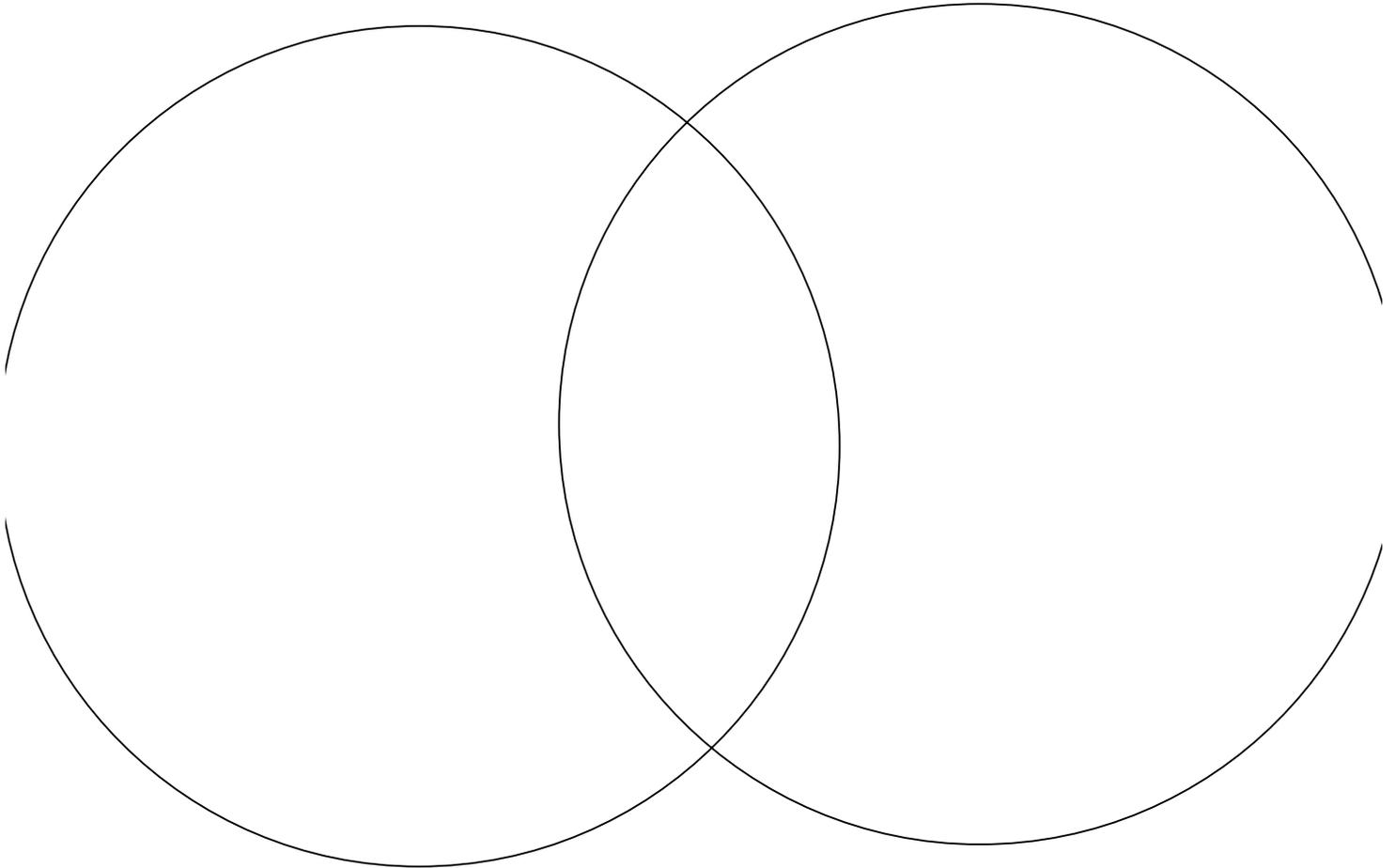
**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Have the learners think of all the adventures that have happened along the Idaa Trail as they travelled along with the family. They have learned about life travelling on the land. Have them do a Venn diagram (two partially overlapping circles) showing the commonalities and differences between life on the land and life in the community.
- Have the learners write a personal story or letter to a friend, about a past experience while travelling on the land with their family. 110 Level learners can use the language experience approach (LEA), which is explained on the attached sheet. Encourage the learners can also do drawings or use photos to go along with their story.

Questions they may find useful in this exercise; *What were the highlights of your trip? What were the adventures? Not so good times? What did you learn on the trip? Would you do it again?*

**Life on the Land**

**Community Life**



### Language Experience Approach (LEA)

The language experience approach (LEA) is a whole language approach that promotes reading and writing through the use of personal experiences and oral language. In this approach, the learner dictates a story that then becomes the basis for a number of reading, writing, and vocabulary development activities. The learners own words and stories become the basis for learning activities. LEA can be done as a group writing activity as well as part of classroom or community-based projects.

#### Steps for Language Experience Story

1. Explain the process and that you will assist them by being their scribe.
2. Decide on a topic. The topic for this activity will be a personal experience while traveling on the land. Topics should be based on the learner's or whole group experiences and knowledge. Photos are also helpful in promoting ideas.
3. Pre-writing: Discuss the topic to help the learner generate, select and organize ideas. Ask questions to prompt ideas, flow, etc. (What happened next? How did you feel? Keep notes on the ideas, then review them and have the learner decide where to begin, what goes in the middle and how to end the story.
4. Dictating and Scribing: Ask the learner to dictate the story to you. Write down exactly as told by the learner. Don't worry about errors in grammar or sentence structure. Repeat each word as you print it. This will help the learner see the match between oral and printed words. Explain capital letters, punctuation, and the concept of a sentence.
5. Revising: Read the story back to the learner. Ask if he/she would like to add any ideas or make changes. Have the learner dictate the revisions. You can help the learner form complete sentences by asking, "Does that sound right?" This helps to explain the differences between oral and written forms of language.

The final product can be used to help develop reading comprehension, word analysis and vocabulary development skills. Keep a collection of language experience stories to share with learners.