

Introduction to Métis Culture (4-5)

Time: 60 minutes

Materials:

- Video
- Métis sash (x3)
- Red River Cart and variety of posters (all found in the Introduction to tote)
- Métis flag
- 2 capotes
- ***Videos are also found on the Indigenous Centre Website:
- <https://indigenous.abbschools.ca/resources/video-resources>
- Flower Beadwork People book (to be used as a back-up plan if video doesn't work – during the video time)
 - Read the book after showing the pictures and the items from the totes.
 - Read the book in sections and return to the question on the board after each section - sticky notes for questioning

Introduction: (5 minutes)

- *Tansi. Bonjour mes ami → TAAN-SAY. Bonjour MEZ A ME.
Bonjour mes ami – Hello, my friends
- Introduce yourself (name, title, where you are from, who you are as an Indigenous Person)
- Acknowledge the territory. “We acknowledge that we reside on the traditional ancestral unceded shared territory of the Sumas and Matsqui First Nations, Sumas and Matsqui First Nations have lived in the Fraser Valley for at least 10,000 years.
- Ask who are Indigenous people? (Answer: 3 groups, First Nations Métis and Inuit People).
- “Today we are going to focus on learning about the Métis people.”
 - Circle the Métis word on the board
 - Have the students repeat the word Métis after you (s is silent) 3x

Presentation:

Question #1: Who are the Métis People? (write on board and circle the question)

- Tell me who yo think the Métis people are.
- Write on the board all the answers given (there are no wrong answers at this point)
- At the end, we may change some of our thinking.

Show Pictures and Cart

- Show the students the pictures one at a time, tell them the information about what is in the picture:
 1. Red River cart & show the replica
 2. Pemmican drying
 3. Red River Jacket

Question #2: What do these pictures tell you about the Métis people?

- Get students to stick to the information in the photos
- Write the students' answers on the board

Show the Video “Métis Past” (4 minutes)

- I want you to watch and listen to the video.
- You will learn about the Métis people’s past history. Hold in your head 2 things you can add to our question, “Who are the Métis people?”
- Share with the person beside you the 2 ideas you learned from the video about who the Métis people were.
- Who has something they want to add to our learning?
- Write the students’ answers on the board (don’t take too many answers).

Show the Métis Flag

- Show the students the pictures one at a time, tell them the information about what is in the picture
 1. Red River cart & show the replica
 2. Pemmican drying
 3. Red River Jacket

Dressing the Students

- Dress 2 students with the Métis sash (one female, one male) in the traditional way.
- People are proud to wear the sash because they are proud to show that they are Métis.
- Sashes were traditionally finger woven
 - a. Females – over the left shoulder
 - b. Males – across the waist with fringe hanging down usually to close a coat
- Other uses for the sash and sash fibers (originally plant fibers, now wool):
 - Fibers – thread for sewing other items
 - Sash – tourniquet for injuries, washcloth or towel, saddle blanket or bridle to steer the horse, tie up the canoe, a pulley to lift heavy objects, to pull items closer, rope, scarf and tumpline (scarf that holds heavy objects to the back).
- Explain the colours of the sash:
 - *Red* – represents the colour of blood from fighting for their Métis rights
 - *Blue* – represents the Métis spirit
 - *Green* – represents the fertility of the Métis Nation (the ability of the Métis people to grow in abundance and numbers)
 - *White* – represents the sacred/special connection to the Earth (spiritual)
 - *Yellow* – represents future prosperity (the thriving future of Métis people)
 - *Black* (our sashes don’t have black, some have replaced the yellow colour with black) represents the dark period of suppression

What does the sash tell you about the Métis people?

- Write 4 answers on the board.

Dress 2 students with the capote (1 female/1male)

- These two jackets were made from 1 Hudson Bay Blanket
- put a sash around the boy to tie the jacket closed.
- put a wool tie around the girl to tie the jacket closed
- Show the kids the ties on the hood, what do they think they are for?

- the ties off the hood are used like a scarf to keep the hood tight to the face
- the fringes on the arms were so the rain and snow trickles off the shoulders
- the fringe around the hood is to keep the snow from freezing solid

What does the capote tell you about the Métis people?

- Write 4 answers on the board.

Show the Fiddling Video

- “This video introduces you to a form of music that is synonymous with Métis people”
- Hold in your head 2 things you can add to our question, “Who are the Métis people?”
Students may automatically tap/stomp their feet.
“Please don’t let the tapping of your feet distract you from your thinking, still need to hear the video.”
- Play video
As a back-up plan if video doesn’t work, read the Flower Beadwork People book.
Read the book after showing the pictures and the items from the totes.
Read the book in sections and return to the question on the board after each section - sticky notes for questioning
- “Share with a person beside you 2 more ideas you learned from the video about who were the Métis people.”
- “You have 30 seconds.” (allow no more than 30 sec. for the sharing)
- Who has something they want to add to our learning?
- Write the students’ learning on the board (don’t take too many ideas).
- **Have one student try the spoons at the front of the class.**

Conclusion:

- “We have learned much about who the Métis people are in the past and even today 2012. Are there Métis people in Abbotsford today?”
- “By examining the pictures, listening to the Métis History, learning about the clothing, and listening to the fiddle music do we have a better idea of who Métis people are?”
- “We may have been learning about some of your friends’ families.”
- “Who would share something that they learned about the Métis that you have learned about the Métis!” (take about 3-5 answers)
- “Thank you for having me in your class today. I hope you leave today knowing more about the history of the Métis people in Canada.”
- Get the students to turn to put their “eyes on their teacher”. – this is a definite signal to the students and the teacher that you are done and have physically handed the class over to the teacher.

FYI

- Métis were considered one of the first “postal workers” (mailmen) because they transported mail as they travelled from community to community-trading furs and pemmican.

SASH

- A sash is presented as a thank you to and honor for outstanding cultural, political and social contributions to the Métis Nation. Presentation of a Sash is considered a great honor and it is worn with pride and esteem. Today, the sash is worn by all members of the Métis Nation as a symbol of nationhood and pride. Métis women occasionally wear it over the shoulder, while others wear it the traditional way, around the waist and tied in the middle, with the fringes hanging down. The sash has been the most persistent element of traditional Métis dress, worn long after the capote and Red River coat were replaced by European styles.

Accessing presentation Videos:

For Métis presentation:

<https://indigenous.abbschools.ca/>

Then click

Resources

Drop down to

Video Resources

Then scroll to

Métis Youth Express Pt. 1

Sierra's Song Pt. 2

Please return this paper to the presenter.

Kwa's Hó:y





