

Canoe Pulling and Traditions- Grades 8-12 (75 minutes)

Materials Needed:

- 2 Paddles
 - Large Semath Paddle
 - Large District Paddle
- Mini paddles with split ring attached to Lanyard hook
- 4 tubs of beads – red, yellow, black, and white
- Class set of Coast Salish Design sheets by Carlos Julian with bio
- Coast Salish Eye Design sheet
- Cord 10-25 cm long per keychain

Introduction:

- Introduce yourself (name, title, where you are from, who you are as an Indigenous Person).
- Acknowledge the territory. We acknowledge that the Abbotsford School District is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Semá:th First Nation and Mathxwí First Nation. With this, we respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers.
- Ask who are Indigenous people? (Answer: 3 groups, First Nations Métis and Inuit People).

Presentation: Introduce the Paddle and Canoe – Large Paddle Teachings:

1. Together the canoe, the paddle, and the people make up the canoe family. Teachings are taught and shared.
 - a. Sumas Paddle
 - Made for river use
 - Wide, short paddle
 - Rounded tip
 - Made from Cedar Plank
 - Round handle grip
 - Single Sumas symbol
 - b. District Paddle
 - Northen style
 - Made for ocean use
 - Slender tip to go in kelp beds
 - Fin shaped handle grip
 - Symbols: First Nations, Metis, and Inuit, and our district symbol of Mámele'awt
2. A paddle symbol tells others who you are and who your family is. Some have unifying symbols (family) and some show individual symbols.
3. Our district paddle shows a unifying symbol and individual symbols.
4. The Sumas paddle has one symbol, showing the Sumas Canoe Family. The paddle belongs to the canoe family, not to an individual. The unifying symbol represents all the individuals within the family.

The Canoe and Pullers – Coast Salish Teachings Shared:

5. When traveling or racing the people are called 'Pullers'. They pull the water using a paddle.
6. The paddle is held in great respect, so it is treated with great respect. A paddle is held without the blade touching the ground. Often, the handle is placed on top of the foot to rest.
7. When not in use, the paddle will be safely placed on a blanket or inside the canoe.
8. You must ask permission before touching/using someone else's paddle.
9. Why is it important to have a paddle if you are on the ocean or river?
 - a. A paddle can help take you to your goal/direction.
 - b. A paddle can keep you and your family safe and save you if you need it to.
10. If people need to change seats or maneuver the canoe, the paddle can be used to steady the canoe. Pullers would move the paddle backward, sideways, and forward, always keeping the family safe. The canoe, the people, and the paddles are a family together, taking care of each other. The whole family needs to work together, not as an individual.

11. People, paddles, and canoes together become a family – that work best together.
12. In a canoe family, everyone has a job.
13. Each seat has a responsibility to keep each other safe and do their part.
14. Depending on where you sit in the canoe your job may be different.
 - a. Seats at the front of the canoe will set the pace for all the pullers to follow. Each puller follows the paddle of the person in front of them.
 - b. Seats in the middle of the canoe help pull the canoe and are the ones who do safety moves for the family.
 - c. The back seats are nicknamed “The Engine”. They keep the canoe moving.
 - d. The last seat is saved for the Skip. They are the ones who think and speak for everyone. They use verbal commands to tell each seat which strokes they want them to use.
 - e. No seat position shows hierarchy over others. All are needed, all are important.
15. If things go wrong, the family must all listen to the Skip—they will guide them safely.
16. In a canoe family have lhetse thale (Letsa thalah - one heart). You work together and depend on each other.
 - a. Lets'emó:t
 - b. Lets'e th'āle
 - c. One heart, one mind
17. Many protocols must be followed when traveling or racing in a canoe. Not only for safety, but also for showing respect for the canoe, and the paddles, and taking care of others before yourself.
18. The canoe is cleaned and taken care of first. The paddles are secured before pullers take care of themselves. You are expected to take care of all your family's needs before you take care of your own needs.
19. If you get to watch a canoe race, watch how the families treat each other. Often before a race, they will be concentrating on their family and may not speak to others from outside the family until the race is done and the canoe is put away.
20. Becoming a member of a canoe family is a commitment that is taken seriously. War Canoe pullers are representatives of their whole community. They are taught to continually make healthy choices and continue self-discipline when not in the canoe too- year-round (spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental).

Teachings of the Cedar Tree:

21. Cedar trees are sacred, sometimes referred to as the “Tree of Life”
22. The canoes and the paddles are carved out from the wood of a cedar tree.
23. Traditionally a canoe was made from one Cedar log.

Coast Salish Art:

24. Play video: Q'walsius – Coast Salish Design Elements: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kc3K-MyH3xg>
25. Today we will be drawing a Salish Eye on one side of your paddle. These shapes will be in it.

Design a paddle:

26. Our unifying symbol will be the Coast Salish eye.
27. This shape is created by using traditional Coast Salish design elements using a circle and trigons.
28. To draw a Salish Eye, you can use the familiar geometric shapes of a circle, a square, and a triangle. The same mathematical principles apply.
29. Draw a circle



30. Using dots, form a square around the circle. Remember all the sides should be even.



31. Now add a third dot on each side to form triangles on either side of the circle



32. Look back on your sample sheet, can you see where the dots would be?



33. You can trace over the sample sheet to give you practice and when you are comfortable, use a pencil to draw a Salish Eye on one side of your paddle.

***Caution-The mini paddles are made of Cedar too. You can use Ultra Fine Sharpies to add color. They must be the Ultra Fine, NOT Fine Sharpies. The tips on the Fine Sharpies release too much ink.

34. On the other side of the paddle, you will add a personal symbol. Something that represents who you are or a trait that you would like to work towards.

35. Once you are satisfied with your paddle, you can add beads to the cord.

36. Slip beads onto each cord and tie a knot at the end to hold them on.

Closure:

37. Thank the class and the teacher for having you.