



National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebrating Métis Culture



Aen shinihkatayk

Title:

Celebrating Métis Culture

Wiihtamakayhk kaykwy kaa kishkayhtamihk

Explaining what is being learned/overview:

Students will explore different Métis cultural traditions through interactive learning stations.

Kaykwy chi kii ishpayihk

Curriculum Connections:

SI 6.....

Analyze the importance of the preservation and promotion of First Nations and Métis languages.

CR 6.4.....

View, respond, and demonstrate comprehension of visual and multimedia grade-appropriate texts including traditional and contemporary texts from First Nations, Métis, and other cultures containing special features (e.g., the visual components of magazines, newspapers, websites, comic books, broadcast media, video, and advertising).

(b) View for a variety of purposes including to understand and gather information, to form an opinion, and to enjoy and appreciate.

IN 6.....

Evaluate and represent personal beliefs and values by determining how culture and place influence them.

(c) Give examples of the artistic expression of culture in Canada, including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and in a selection of countries bordering the Atlantic Ocean, and draw conclusions about the beliefs and values of the inhabitants in those regions.

Gashkihtaan

I can statements:

- I can understand that culture is shared through things like language, art, music, and traditions.
- I can explore each station and respond thoughtfully to the activities.

Niikaan lii kesyoon

Focus question:

- What can you learn about Métis people by learning about their culture?

L'aanii d'ikol

Year of school/grade:

Six

Ispray kaa piikishkwatamihk

Topic:

Métis Culture

Kaykwy kaa kishkayhtamihk

What is being learned/subject:

English Language Arts & Social Studies

Li taan

Time:

60 mins

Taanishi aen tipahamihk

Assessment:

Observe students as they work



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Lesson Description

taanishi aen ishi ooshihtaahk:

Prior Knowledge

Before the lesson, set up the 5 learning stations around the classroom (**appendix 1**).

***Teacher Note:** Photos are provided in lieu of physical items. If you have access to physical copies of the provided learning materials (examples: Métis sash, beaded pin, ribbon skirt, fiddle, etc.) please set those up as well!

Motivational Set: 5 Minutes

Ask students if they have heard of National Indigenous Peoples Day? When is it? What is the purpose?

Take student responses, and explain the following:

- National Indigenous Peoples Day is June 21st
- It is a time to celebrate Indigenous cultures.

Fun fact: It is celebrated on the June 21st because it's the longest day of the year, called the "Summer Solstice" and therefore culturally significant for celebrations.

In honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day, we will be looking at one Indigenous Group in particular, Métis people and their culture.

Main Procedures: 50 Minutes

In small groups, you will rotate through 5 learning stations, and do the activities at each one.

1. Traditional Clothing
2. Celebrations
3. Leaders
4. Art
5. Michif Language

Hand out the booklets (**appendix 2**) and assign each student group a station to start.

Closing: 5 Minutes

Give students a few minutes to finish up their booklets, including the wrap up section, before handing them in.

Lii zafayr poor chi ooshihtaahk
ooma

Things needed to do this/
materials needed.

- Appendices
- Technology (laptops, computers, or tablets)
- Colouring materials
- Writing utensils



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Appendix 1: Cultural Learning Stations Setup Guide

1. Traditional Clothing

Required setup:

- The traditional clothing writeup
- Colouring materials

2. Celebrations

Required setup:

- Celebration writeup
- Technology (Chromebook or iPad) with the videos opened and ready

Fiddling music video



Jigging video



Jigging tutorial



3. Leaders

Required setup:

- Leader writeup

4. Art

Required setup:

- Art writeup
- Colouring materials

5. Michif Language

Required Setup:

- Michif Language writeup
- Technology (Chromebook or iPad) with the Métis Gathering website, open to the flashcard page





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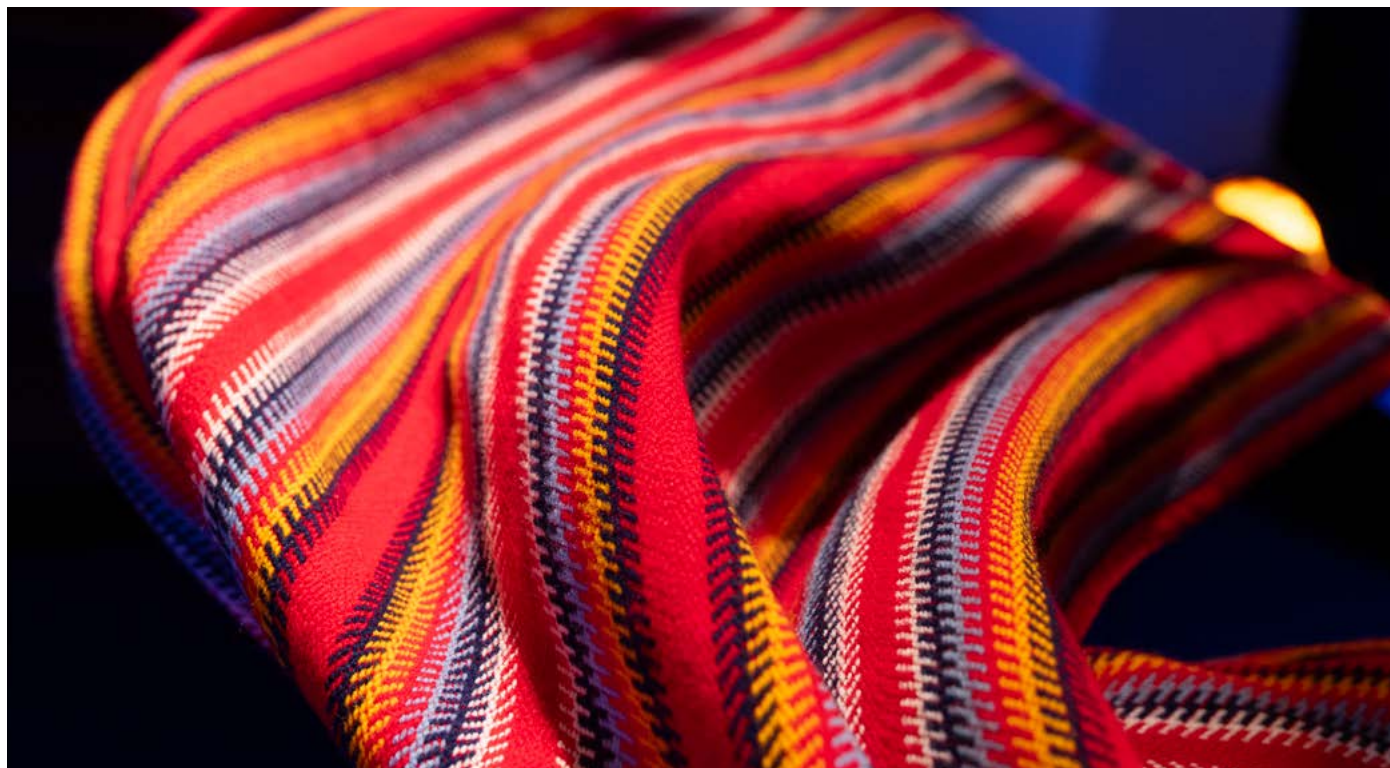
Traditional Clothing Writeup

Métis Sash

The Métis sash is a finger-woven wool belt that has become one of the most recognizable symbols of Métis identity. The sash was initially worn by Métis and First Nations voyageurs as early as the late 1600's. By the early 1800's, it had become a symbol of Métis pride in the Northwest, reflecting the Métis' deep involvement in the fur trade. Worn traditionally and ceremonially, the sash often measured around three meters long (sometimes up to six metres), and its design was unique. Specific patterns and colours on a sash could identify a person's family or home community.

There are many ways to wear a sash, each with its own meaning. The traditional ways the sash was worn were across the heart for women and across the waist for men. With new understandings of gender identity, individuals should wear the sash **in the way that best represents them**.

Beyond its cultural and symbolic values, the sash was practical. It served multiple functions, such as a belt to hold coats closed or carry tools, and even as an emergency sewing kit using fringe threads. It could act as a rope, towel, washcloth, sling, or saddle blanket. It could be used as a marker during buffalo hunts, and it could even be used to transport water. The sash also served mathematical purposes, functioning as a calendar to track the days of a long journey. The sash can also be used to help teach individuals to dance. When the sash is laid on the ground in an "X" formation, teachers can easily instruct on where to step around the sash (laying the sash on the ground in this context is not harmful or disrespectful to the sash).





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Traditional Clothing Writeup

Ribbon Skirt

Ribbon skirts tell stories; they represent the one who wears them. They can be any colour, usually people gravitate to the colours that they connect with.

Métis ribbon skirts are significant because the circle that the skirt creates around the feet of the one who wears it, represents the circle of life. In the old days, it was thought that as a woman, pants would disrupt the connection with Mother Earth, that is why ribbon skirts were usually worn at ceremonies, when the connection with Mother Earth was intensified.

The banded ribbon (ribbon that wraps entirely around the skirt) shows that we understand our place in the circle of life, whether that be as a child, adolescent, mother, or Elder, while the flying ribbon (a hanging ribbon) represents those who have passed on to the spirit world.

Ribbon Shirt

Ribbon shirts have similar meanings to ribbon skirts. When a ribbon shirt has flying ribbons, it represents the prayer flag, they represent the spirit world, and they represent offerings to those in the spirit world.

It's important to note these are understandings Métis people learned, share and borrow from our First Nation relatives. Not all Métis people have these same beliefs.





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Traditional Clothing Writeup

Capote

Made from Hudsons Bay blankets, capotes are long knee length coats, with a large hood to keep you warm in the wind. They were very warm, and often worn by hunters, voyageurs, and traders.





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Celebration Writeup

Back to Batoche Festival

The Back to Batoche Festival, now known as Back to Batoche Days, began in 1970. Back to Batoche Days is located in Batoche, Saskatchewan, an historic homeland of the Métis. For over 50 years, the four-day event has been an important opportunity to celebrate Métis culture.

This annual gathering, held near the national historic site of “The Battle of Batoche,” represents a movement toward reconciliation as approximately 10,000 people, Métis and non-Métis gather to share in the celebration of history, culture and language. Back to Batoche provides the opportunity to preserve and promote Métis culture through storytelling, fiddling, jigging, square dancing, traditional food, music, Métis artists, traditional land use teachings, voyageur games, chuck wagon racing, sports, contemporary games, and indigenous language.



Kitchen Party Celebrations

A kitchen party is a gathering, with good company, good food, and good music. At these parties, jigging and fiddle music were central, followed by a good meal.

Fun fact: It is called a “kitchen party” because traditionally the gathering would happen in someone’s kitchen, and household furniture would be moved to the side to make room for music, dancing, and a meal.

Watch the videos to learn more about Métis music and dance during celebrations.



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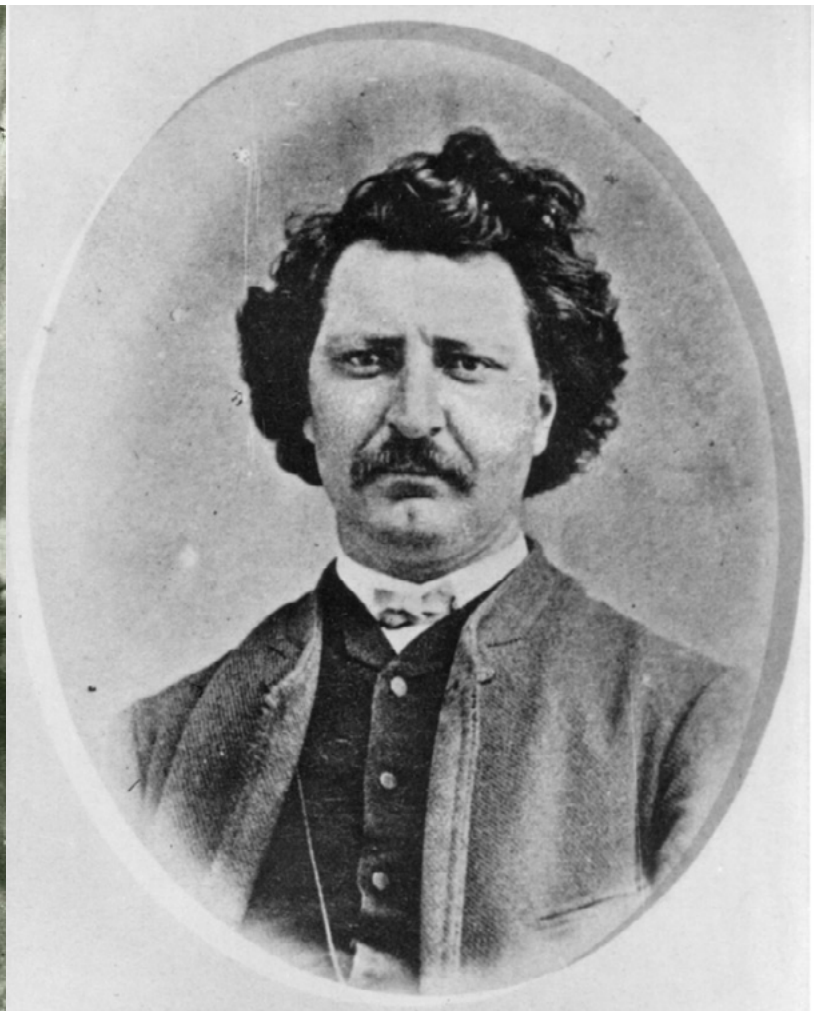


Métis Leader Writeup

Louis Riel

Louis Riel was an important Métis leader who worked to protect the rights of Métis people. He helped create a government at the Red River Settlement and spoke up when Métis land and culture were being threatened. Riel believed that Métis people should have a voice and be treated fairly.

He is remembered for standing up for his people, even when it was difficult. Today, Métis people see him as a hero who helped shape Canada.





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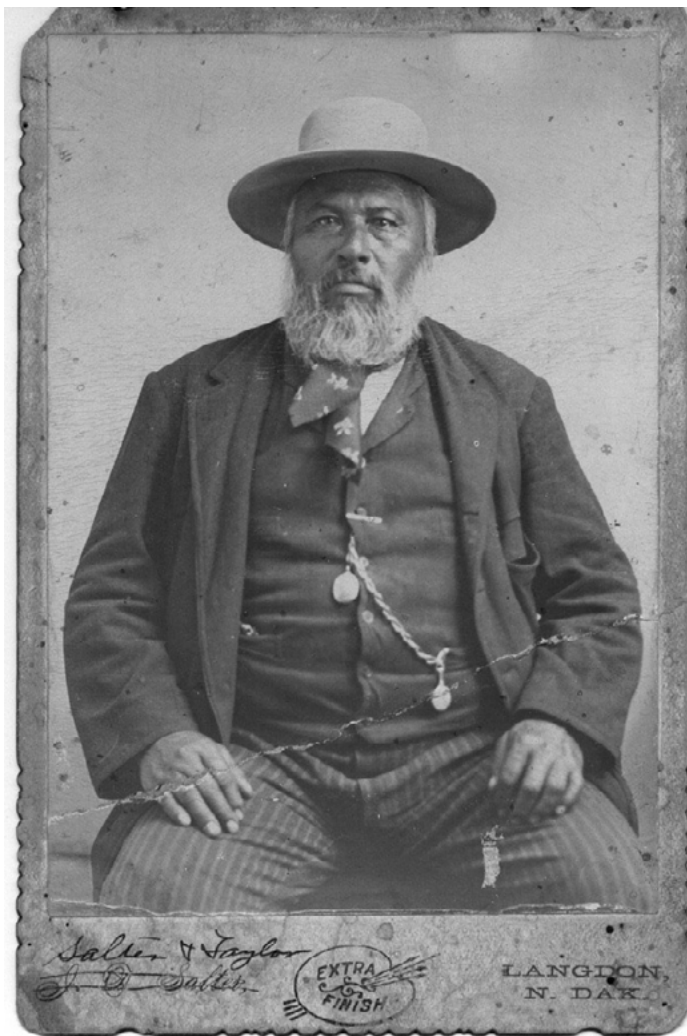


Métis Leader Writeup

Gabriel Dumont

Gabriel Dumont was a Métis leader, hunter, and skilled military commander. He worked closely with Louis Riel and helped lead the Métis during times of conflict. Dumont was known for his bravery, leadership, and deep connection to the land.

He played an important role in protecting Métis communities and supporting their way of life.



Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont are important because they:

- Stood up for Métis rights
- Helped protect Métis land and culture
- Showed strong leadership during difficult times



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Métis Art Writeup

Beadwork

Métis style beadwork is the pride of the Métis Nation. Through it we express our identity to the world. Our many beautiful floral patterns show our connection to the land and to each other. Due to this, Métis people are often called “The Flower Beadwork People”.

A five petal flower is a common design in Métis beadwork. It represents nature, beauty, and connection to the land.

Mouse tracks are small patterns that represent the tracks of a mouse. These can symbolize life’s journey.

Sometimes artists include Spirit Beads, one bead that is slightly out of place or a different colour. It is meant to show that the artist is humble before God or the Creator and to show that nothing is perfect, and that is okay. Can you find the Spirit Bead in this picture?



Beadwork is often used to decorate clothing, moccasins, bags, and other items.



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Métis Art Writeup

Dot Art

Dot art is a style of artwork made using small dots of paint to create patterns, shapes, and images. In Métis-inspired dot art:

- Artists use dots to form flowers, animals, or cultural symbols
- Colours and patterns can represent stories, identity, and connection to land
- The process takes patience and care, just like beadwork



Artwork by: Christi Belcourt



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Métis Art Writeup

Other Métis Art

Leah Dorion is a Métis artist from Saskatchewan. Her artwork often includes:

- Bright colours
- Nature (flowers, animals, sky)
- People and community

Her art tells stories about Métis culture, identity, and belonging. She creates paintings, books, and murals to help share Métis knowledge with others, especially young people.





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Métis Language Writeup

Métis people have always spoken more than one language. Long ago, they spoke the languages of the people they lived and traded with, as well as their own. This helped them communicate, work together, and succeed during the fur trade.

Today, language is still an important part of Métis identity and culture. You may have heard of Michif, a special language connected to Métis people. There are actually three different Michif languages:

- Heritage/Southern Michif
- Northern Michif
- Michif French

These are separate languages, not just different versions of the same one. Each Michif was spoken in different parts of the homeland.

Michif languages are called "*contact languages*." This means they were created when different groups of people came together.

- They include parts of:
 - French
 - Cree
 - Ojibwe

For example:

- Heritage Michif mixes French nouns with Cree verbs

Where Were They Spoken?

- **Heritage Michif:** Southern Saskatchewan and the Prairies
- **Northern Michif:** Northern Saskatchewan
- **Michif French:** Central parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta

Michif languages are important because they:

- Connect people to their culture and history
- Carry stories and knowledge
- Help keep Métis traditions alive



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Appendix 2: Cultural Learning Station Booklet

Name: _____

Station: Traditional Clothing

1. Read the traditional clothing writeup
2. Use this space to design your own sash, ribbon shirt, or ribbons skirt. Include colours and symbols that represent you! It could be things that represent your family, your culture, or your identity.

3. Respond to the questions.

What colours and symbols did you use?

What does your design represent?



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Station: Celebrations

1. Read the celebration writeup.
2. Watch the fiddling video.



3. Watch the jigging video.



4. Watch the jigging tutorial, and try to learn the steps!



5. Respond to the question.

How does music bring people together?

Station: Leaders

1. Read the leader writeup
2. Pick one leader of the two leaders and respond to the question.

Name of leader:

How did they show leadership?



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Station: Art

1. Read the art writeup.
2. Use this space to create a Métis inspired design:

Respond to the question.

3. What story does your design tell?



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Station: Michif Language

1. Read the language write up

2. Pick 5 flashcards, each one from a different category.

A) Word: _____ English Translation: _____

B) Word: _____ English Translation: _____

C) Word: _____ English Translation: _____

D) Word: _____ English Translation: _____

E) Word: _____ English Translation: _____

Practice saying each word out loud!

Wrap up: To be completed after you have visited all 5 stations.

What is one new thing you learned about Métis culture today?

What makes Métis culture unique?



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Appendix 3: Heritage Michif Pronunciation Guide

English	Michif	Pronunciation
<i>Title</i>	aen shinihkatayk	ay SHIN-ick-a-TAKE
<i>Grade ("year of school")</i>	l'aanii d'ikol	la-KNEE dee-COL
<i>Subject ("explaining what is being learned")</i>	Kaykwy kaa kishkayhtamihk	cake-WHY kah kish-KAY-tuh-MICK
<i>Topic ("specifically what we're talking about")</i>	ispray kaa piikishkwatamihk	iss-PRAY kah PEEK-ish-KWAH-tuh-MICK
<i>Overview ("talking about what is being learned")</i>	wiihtamakayhk kaykwy kaa kishkayhtamihk	wee-TUM-a-CAKE cake-WHY kah kish-KAY-tuh-MICK
<i>Assessment ("How it will be measured")</i>	taanishi aen tipahamihk	taan-SHIH ay tip-AH-ha-MICK
<i>Time</i>	li taan	lih TAH
<i>Curriculum Outcomes ("what should happen")</i>	kaykwy chi kii ishpaiyhk	cake-WHY chih KEY ish-pah-YICK
<i>I Can Statement ("I can do it")</i>	Gashkihtaan	Gahsh-kih-TAHN
<i>Materials Needed ("Things needed to do this")</i>	lii zafayr poor chi ooshitaahk ooma	lee za-FAIR pohr chih oh-sh-TAHCK oh-MA
<i>Focus Questions ("primary questions")</i>	niikaan lii kesyoon	knee-KAHN lee kess-YONE
<i>Lesson Description ("How to do it")</i>	taanishi aen ishi ooshihtaahk	taan-SHIH ay ishih oh-sh-TAHCK

*Capital letters indicate stressed syllables