

# ***The Forgotten People in the Forgotten War:***

## ***The Métis Involvement in the War of 1812***

The War of 1812 is an important part of Canadian history. Spanning 1812-1814, the war between the Americans and British created many of the boundaries between Canada and the United States that we know today. Had it not been for the Métis Voyageurs and other civilians who took up arms with the British in Canada's defence the Americans would have likely succeeded in defeating the British force. Today, Canada continues to celebrate the War of 1812 and the involvement of those who defended Canada, including the Métis.

History often focuses on the southern Ontario events of the War of 1812, in particular the battles and people that played important roles around the lower Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. Canada's fur trade and the Voyageurs who were involved played an equally important role in the outcome of the war and had influence on events and battles across Ontario from Fort Mackinac and into the Niagara, southern and eastern regions of the province.

In the early 1800's the fur trade was an important part of Canada's economy and trade. Métis voyageurs in Ontario, working primarily for the North West Company, were involved in transporting furs and other trade goods between the east and west of Canada. When war broke out in 1812 these Métis voyageurs became an important asset because of their mobility, knowledge of the land and resilient hardiness.

Métis voyageurs were involved in many battles and important events between 1812 and 1814. One of the largest contingents of voyageurs was The Corps of Canadian Voyageurs, a military group organized by the North West Company and led by William McGillivray. Others included the Commissariat Voyageurs and Caldwell's Western Rangers.

Though the Métis voyageurs were fighting alongside the British, they were far from the disciplined soldiers who wore red coats. The voyageurs continued to wear their own clothing and usually sold, traded or discarded the pikes, swords and pistols they were issued because the voyageurs could not see a purpose for them in the wilderness. McGillivray outlined the challenges of leading such men.

*"It was quite impossible to make them amenable to military law. They generally came on parade with a pipe in their mouths and their rations of pork and bread stuck on their bayonet. {...} On parade they talked incessantly, called each other 'pork eaters,' quarrelled about their rations, wished they were back in the Indian country again, and when called to order by their officers and told to hold their tongues one or more would reply, 'Ah, dear captain, let us off as quick as you can; some of us have not yet breakfasted, and it's upwards of an hour since I had a smoke.'" (The Voyageur, by Grace Lee Nute, New York: 1931 p. 164-165)*

## **The War of 1812**

### *Mackinac Island*

Fort Mackinac was an American Fort located near current day Sault Ste. Marie between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. Because of its location, it overlooked a crucial section of the waterways connecting the northern and southern Great Lakes. As a strategic outpost, the British organized a force at Fort St. Joseph with seventy war canoes and bateaus to overtake the Americans at Fort Mackinac.

The Americans at Fort Mackinac were taken by surprise on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1812 by the British and Métis fur traders who landed on the north shore of the island. The news of war had not yet reached the fort and the Americans surrendered to the British without a shot being fired.

The fort remained under British control for the remainder of the war despite an attempt by the Americans to reclaim the island in July 1814. As part of the *Treaty of Ghent*, signed to end the war, the Mackinac Island was given back to the Americans and the British and Métis relocated to Drummond Island.

### *Battle of Stoney Creek*

After the Americans, led by General Henry Dearborn, overran Fort George in late May of 1813 they regrouped and followed the British retreat into Stoney Creek. The British received word of the American advance and decided to attack the poorly defended American camp at night despite having less than a third of the men the Americans had.

Using the element of surprise, the British, with a handful of Métis voyageurs, closed in on the American camp. After the initial sentries were taken out the men let out a cheer that gave away their position. The Americans quickly took up arms and fired upon the British. Despite their small number, Lieutenant Colonel Harvey and his men managed to take advantage of several American mistakes and capture the American artillery as well as several high ranking American officers including General John Chandler.

Despite being the larger force, the Americans fell back to the Niagara River. Reinforcements soon arrived but the Americans did not advance towards Stoney Creek again.

### *Battle of Beaver Dams*

The Battle of Beaver Dams also follows the American capture of Britain's Fort George in May of 1813. This second force of American troops planned to continue on and surprise the British forces at their Beaver Dam outpost in early June. The famous Laura Secord heard of the Americans plan and ran to warn Lieutenant James Fitzgibbon, who commanded the British troops in the area.

The British staged an ambush on the American soldiers with help from their First Nation and Métis allies and defeated the Americans before they arrived at Beaver Dam taking nearly 500 American prisoners. This battle instilled fear in the Americans because of the ferocity of the First Nations warriors and few patrols were sent far from Fort George in the future.

### *Battle of Chrysler Farm*

In the fall of 1813, two large American forces made their way up the St. Lawrence River in an attempt to take Montreal and cut off British supply lines. The first part of the American force, led by Wade Hampton was defeated and turned back to the United States in the Battle of Chateaugay on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

The second force, led by James Wilkinson, was unaware of Hamptons defeat and continued on, battling small attacks by British forces. On November 10-11, 1813 the Americans turned to attack the smaller British force of about 1200 head on. The 4000 Americans were no match for the more experienced British. Led by Colonel Joseph Wanton Morrison, the British forces and their First Nations and Métis counterparts fought one of the bloodiest battles of the War of 1812.

Defeated, the Americans took over 500 casualties and retreated back to the United States.

### *HMS Nancy*

The HMS Nancy was a British schooner used during the Fur Trade to transport goods across the Great Lakes. During the war of 1812 the Nancy played an important role in transporting supplies, primarily between Fort Mackinac and the Nottawasaga River.

In September 1813, the Americans captured all the British armed vessels during the Battle of Lake Erie except for the HMS Nancy. The British managed to keep the schooner out of American hands for nearly a year until July 1814. With the advance of American ships, the Nancy's commander, Lieutenant Miller Worsley, hid the schooner two miles up the Nottawasaga River and built a defence with the help of Métis voyageurs and the Ojibwa to prevent the advancing Americans from taking the ship. The Americans stumbled across its hiding place and attacked. Worsley decided it was better to destroy the schooner than let it fall into American hands and sank the Nancy in the river.

The wreck of the HMS Nancy was discovered in 1911 and has since been recovered and put on display at Nancy Island in Wasaga Beach.

### *Prairie du Chien*

In the summer of 1814, a small American force traveled from St. Louis to Prairie du Chien to build a Fort that would protect the US from British advance into the US mid-west. Fort Shelby was occupied by mid June but shortly afterward the volunteer service contracts of many men expired and most traveled back to St. Louis.

A British force of about 600, including many First Nation warriors and Métis voyageurs, left Fort Mackinac to prevent the Americans from succeeding. Led by William McKay, the British force arrived in Prairie du Chien on July 17<sup>th</sup> before the Americans had completed the Fort's defences. The British and Americans exchanged fire for several days without effect before the Americans ran out of water and ammunition. Following the American surrender and withdrawal to St. Louis the fort was renamed Fort McKay. After the Treaty of Ghent was signed, the area was returned to the US and the fort was burned down by the British.

### ***The Roles of Métis Men and Women During the War of 1812***

As the fur trade developed and Métis communities established themselves in Ontario, Métis were able to focus on community instead of constant travel. Métis men and women were able to take on a variety of roles during the War of 1812 and support the defence of Canada. With experience in the wild and knowledge of the land, many Métis men would have joined the ranks of the local military or militia. The skills of the Voyageurs were sought after because they not only had the ability to survive but prosper in the North West.

The Métis who were involved in the War of 1812 are not always referred to directly as Métis. Métis were referred to by many names and so we do not find them identified as 'Métis' specifically in documents from this time period. We are able to follow Métis involvement through records that mention groups we know to be Métis including civilian groups, militia, soldiers, fur traders and the Voyageurs.

#### *The Role of Men*

Métis men became involved in the War of 1812 mainly because of their close ties to the fur trade and Canada's economy of the time. With their livelihood threatened by the war between Britain and the US as well as war between Britain and France, many Voyageurs gave their skills to the British military. Without the support of the Métis voyageurs, fur traders and Canadian Militia the British would have had difficulty defending Canada with their limited troops.

Many Métis men were involved in the War of 1812 as cargo-carrying Voyageurs. The Northwest Company transported important supplies and trade goods across the country and joined the war to help protect the supply chain and guarantee safe passage of their goods. The transportation of supplies was vital during the war. This was especially true on the upper Great Lakes where transportation of supplies

needed to be carried out by water. The resupplying of Fort Mackinac when the Americans controlled the waters of the upper Great Lakes was a difficult and dangerous activity. This is where the knowledge and skills of the Métis became extremely valuable.

In October of 1812, the Corps of Canadian Voyageurs was created by the North West Company. This was the militarized body of voyageurs that would ensure supplies continued to move between Montreal and interior trade posts under the command of William McGillivray. The Corps consisted of more than 400 voyageurs who often refused to wear the standard British uniform. Instead, voyageurs chose to wear their capote, toque, leggings and moccasins. The men were issued a sword, pike, and pistol that was often sold, traded or discarded in favour of tomahawks, knives or axes.

Voyageurs were usually short, stocky men who could paddle long distances while leaving more room in the canoe for goods. Working in the fur trade was a popular alternative for men who sought adventure and a lifestyle away from the family farm.

Having language skills in French, English and other First Nations languages allowed the Métis to work as interpreters for the Indian Department. The Indian Department was responsible for overseeing the relations between the United Kingdom in Europe and the First Nations in British North America. Métis were a valuable asset for the Indian Department because of their knowledge of and experience in working with both cultures.

Despite the American advantage in the Great Lakes area during the War of 1812, the voyageurs were able to keep British forts well supplied. Voyageurs also provided intelligence to British troops and shared their experience and knowledge of the land and waterways with their allies.

### *The Role of Women*

Métis women played many important roles during the War of 1812. Their most important role was to take care of their homesteads while their husbands were on expeditions for fur companies or the British military. Métis women who were married to soldiers may have found employment in military camps as seamstresses, nurse maids, laundry maids and scullery maids. Some enjoyed work in military hospitals where they were paid to comfort the sick, administer medicine as well as cook and clean. (The Soldier's Wife 207-208)

Women were an important part of the labour force at trading posts. Voyageurs often had a country wife who would live at the fort and help grind corn, make moccasins and snow shoes, chop firewood and stretch beaver skins. Métis women often advised on trading matters, as a trader who had an Indian or Métis wife would have better connections with First Nations tribes. With no formal education available, women learned other valuable skills from their husbands including the ability to speak English, French and other Native languages.

In the spring the women would collect maple sap that they would turn into maple syrup. Once the ground had thawed, the women would work the soil and plant gardens of potatoes, corn, and squash to

provide the fort with fresh vegetables. Women also collected and prepared spruce roots (wattap) and spruce gum for the construction and maintenance of canoes.

## ***Food***

Métis had to learn to cook with what was available during the War of 1812 time period. Knowledgeable in the harvesting, Métis collected berries and seeds, ate from their gardens (corn, beans, etc.) and sometimes raised livestock (cows, chicken etc.). Deer, squirrel, rabbits and other animals could be hunted or fished if resources allowed, however, very few enjoyed regular supplies of fresh meat.

The standard daily ration for a voyageur changed over time depending on where they were located. At the time of the War of 1812 each man was supplied with:

1 lb. of flour,  
1 lb. of fresh beef or 9 1/7 oz. of pork,  
1 3/7 oz. of pork or 6/7 oz. of butter,  
3/7 pint of pease, (peas)  
and 1 1/7 oz. of rice

By the 1800's it became known that eating fruits and vegetable offered some protection from disease and nutritional deficiencies. To take advantage of this, preserves were highly valued during the winter months and time would be spent preparing food to last until spring. Meat, including bacon, pork, ham, beef and fish was smoked, dried and salted for long journeys as well. Vegetables could be kept in a root cellar or pickled in a solution of brine and vinegar.

Voyageurs traveled light and relied on Pemmican; dried buffalo meat cut into strips and usually crushed with boiled buffalo fat and Saskatoon berries. Pemmican was eaten on its own, made into a soup or covered with flour and fried.

### *Pemmican Recipe*

Ingredients:

- 4 cups lean meat (buffalo, deer, beef, caribou or moose)
- 3 cups dried fruit
- 2 cups rendered fat
- Unsalted nuts and 1oz of honey

Instructions:

1. Meat should be as lean as possible and double ground from your butcher if you do not have your own meat grinder.
2. Spread meat out very thin on a cookie sheet and dry at 180 degrees F for at least 8 hours or until crispy.

3. Pound the meat into a powder using a blender or other tool.
4. Grind the dried fruit, but leave a little bit lumpy.
5. Heat rendered fat on stove at medium until liquid.
6. Add liquid fat to dried meat and dried fruit, and mix in nuts and honey. Mix everything by hand. Let cool and store. Can keep and be consumed for several years.

### ***Métis Clothing***

Historically, the Métis people of Ontario have been known to be a strong, independent, and colourful people. Traditional Métis clothing expressed these virtues while meeting the needs of the Métis peoples' active lifestyles in the wild Canadian environment.

Like many aspects of traditional Métis culture, the Métis style of clothing emerged from the intermingling of many cultures, including the Ojibwa, Cree, French, and Scot. Clothing was designed to ensure comfort and functionally for the Métis who worked and traveled in Canada's dynamic climate. As a result, the clothing used by the Métis evolved into a distinct cultural uniform that had elements from both First Nations and European populations.

Much like today, the clothing worn by an individual could vary greatly within a community based upon wealth, status, occupation, and gender.

Daily wear included practical and often beautifully beaded clothing made by the women of the community. Men wore loose fitting cloth shirts and corduroy pants tied at the waist with the brightly coloured sash. Women generally wore European inspired long dresses, blouses, and skirts, or colourful strap dresses in the summer.

### ***The Capote***

The capote, a knee length jacket sometimes made from dense and warm Hudson Bay Company blankets served the Métis people through the fall, winter, and spring seasons. The capote featured long sleeves, a hood, and covered the wearer to the knees. A capote was tailored to fit the wearer and could be tied around the waist with a finger-woven sash to conserve body heat. The long coat was designed to provide the wearer a great deal of warmth while retaining the ability to move quickly across terrain. Capotes could be decorated using colourful glass beads that could identify the wearer as belonging to a specific regional community or family group.

Métis beaded designs became so popular among First Nations and Europeans that the Métis became known as "The Flower Beadwork People".

### *The Sash*

The sash has come to be known as one of the greatest symbols of Métis culture in Canada. The brightly coloured, tightly finger-woven fabric has been used by the Métis people for generations as a beautiful accent to clothing, a useful tool, and an item of ceremonial and cultural importance. Traditionally, the sash was finger-woven using cotton of various shades of blue, red, green, and yellow and worn about the waist. In cold weather, the sash bound the capote tightly to the waist creating warm air pockets under the clothing. The Métis voyageurs utilized the sash in a number of ways as a tool for pulling heavy canoes during portage, bearing heavy loads on the back, or as a wash towel. The sash could also be used to store useful items during travel, including a knife, tobacco pouch, fire bag, or first aid kit.

### *Men's Clothing*

During the war of 1812, John Askin, a member of the Métis community around Fort St. Joseph, designed and produced the Mackinac Jacket, a short, double-breasted jacket designed to keep soldiers warm during the harsh winter siege at Fort Mackinac. Using warm woollen blankets, the Métis community of Fort St. Joseph was able to support the war effort by producing much needed winter clothing for the soldiers.

Interpreters of the British Indian Department, often Métis men, wore a scarlet coatee with green trimmings on the collar, lapels, and cuffs. They often wore the sash about their waists. They wore this uniform to identify themselves while in battle so they wouldn't be shot by their allies. While in the wilderness recruiting First Nations to fight on the side of the British, they would dress in clothing that would blend in so as to go unnoticed by American spies.

The most popular style of pant during this period was made of wide-wale cotton corduroy with front pockets and a large front panel. Type of clothing worn depended on the role, wealth and status of an individual as well. Métis men often wore buckskin leggings held up by garters, inspired by First Nation style, as well as hardy leather moccasins and heavy wool socks. Although most Métis wore moccasins, some depending on their position in society may have worn the uncomfortable shoe or boot of the period. Other clothing worn included a cotton shirt, gentleman's tailcoat, chemise and cravat.

Men wore a number of styles of hats, some for warmth and others for decoration. Woollen stocking caps, bandannas, and top hats decorated with feathers were all popular among Métis men of the period. In winter, the toque was worn to protect against the cold. Toques were produced from knitted wool in colourful hues of red or blue. It was not unusual for men and women to wear leather or fur-trimmed hats in the winter.

For those Métis that decided to join one of the military units, they would have dressed in the traditional red jacket and other accoutrements similar to the British soldier including white or grey trousers, suspenders, shako, cross belts with bayonet and ammo pouch or sword, depending on their rank.

Most of the clothing worn by Métis men were made by Métis women.



### *Women's Clothing*

Métis women produced their own clothing, drawing from both First Nation and European influences. Many women wore dresses and skirts influenced by the Fashions in Europe and by French Canadian Habitant women, including long cloth or wool dresses that flowed down to mid-calf. The Empire dress which was fashionable in Europe led to the creation of a Habitant dress of similar design. A loose-fitting blouse may have been worn on top with a drawstring at the neck for closing the collar.

The Ojibwa strap dress, called the maad-ji-go-di, or dress which hangs badly, was another popular style of dress. The strap dress, inspired by the traditional Ojibwa dress which would have been produced using leather, was made using cloth and beautifully coloured and decorated using silk ribbon, brooches, and glass beads arranged in floral patterns. Leggings reaching to the knee would be held up using garters to provide warmth and leg protection. Finally, the outfit would be completed with a shawl made with fitted shoulder dressings joined together at the back with a strap.

### ***The Métis Family***

The Métis people of what would become Canada lived lives that were hard, but also full of joy and celebration. Many men worked occupations that required incredible strength and endurance including the transport of goods, such as furs, across the country or hunting to supply the family with meat. Women maintained the home and family, working tirelessly to collect and prepare food, produce warm clothing, trap and clean animals, and tend to the children.

Children in Métis communities learned from their mothers and fathers, as well as from elders who passed on cultural teachings that would be important in the community. Most children received no formal education, instead they learned experientially under the guidance of community members. Lessons were passed by elders to the youth through storytelling. Métis myths and stories grew from the shared cultural connections of both the European and First Nations heritage.

Métis men engaged in work that would sometimes keep them away from home for long periods of time, such as trapping, guiding, trading, or as couriers of the first postal service. In many cases, survival depended on the ability to successfully hunt, gather, and prepare for the extremes of the environment – a task to which Métis men were well suited. The Cree called the Métis people “o-tee-paym-soo-wuk”, meaning “their own boss”, a moniker which expresses the Métis sense of independence.

Métis women became masters of medicine in their communities, creating herbal remedies that were integral in supporting the health and well-being of their families. Mothers also became the teachers of the young, passing language, spiritual knowledge, and cultural understandings on to the next generation.

In a Métis home, it was not unusual for many generations to share the same space. The extended family, including grandparents, parents, siblings (and their children) often lived side-by-side in the same

home, sharing the duties of the house. This large family unit provided a great support structure for each member of the family and encouraged cooperation among family members.

### ***Celebration and the Role of Culture in the early 1800s***

The Métis people are known to take part in celebrations, games, and other community events. Even during the period of the war of 1812, it was important to find opportunities for community activities that brought people together and strengthened inter-personal relationships.

Celebrations included games of chance and skill, jigging, fiddle music and feasts that could last for days. It was not uncommon for people to gather together in the home of a member of the community to celebrate with dance, food, and song for many days at a time.

Visiting friends and family was an important and fun recreational activity and it was expected that community members would open their homes to guests. This practice helped to build and shape community relationships and created a sense of belonging that reinforced Métis cultural unity.

The Métis developed many culturally unique activities, including children's games and sporting events for adult competitors. Children played hide and seek, tag, hop-step-and-jump and would make games out of bones, stones, buttons and other easily obtainable items.

A popular dance style called jigging, and an energetic style of fiddle music emerged from a blend of European and First Nations influences. Popular dances included "The Red River Jig", "The Rabbit-chase Dance", "The Broom Dance", and "The Sash Dance". Métis songs built upon the rich European and First Nation heritage of the singers, incorporating traditional French songs and Cree or Ojibwa chants into a unique style. Many songs were written in archaic French, or the Michif language.

For many, music was an integral part of daily life and was incorporated into most activities. Métis women sang while working in the home and used song to pass on their history and culture to their children.

Métis fiddle music can be traced back to its roots in the western European nations of Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and France, but is distinct from its forebears in its rhythms and sounds. Communities each developed their own trademark playing styles.

### ***Equipment & Tools***

Used by Métis voyageurs during the fur trade, the canoe was a versatile means of transportation that was light yet surprisingly strong considering the birch bark or animal hide materials used in its construction. The "six fathom" canoe could hold several thousand pounds of goods and as many as sixteen crew members. Often equipped with removable sails, these boats could quickly move people and freight from Fort William to Montreal in only a few weeks.

Mackinac boats evolved from the mighty canoe, and were larger and more stable with a mast and sail. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, this vessel was used in the fur trade throughout the upper Great lakes and the straits of Mackinac. By the 1830's, the Mackinac boat had become popular as a fishing vessel.

The bateau was another flat bottom boat made of wood that could be rowed or fitted with sails to move freight along the larger waterways and Great Lakes. The design was generally six and a half feet wide at the centre, and came to a point at both bow and stern.

During the 1812 period, men would carry a number of tools, including a knife with a leather sheath that was decorated with beaded patterns and leather fringe. Men would also carry a powder horn made of cow or buffalo horn slung over the shoulder in order to feed their flintlock musket or smooth bore rifle. Throwing knives and the tomahawk were other common edged weapons carried by men.

### ***Métis and Canada***

The Métis people of Canada have made a great impact on Canadian history and culture before, during and after the War of 1812. Métis people continue to thrive in Canada today and are the fastest growing Indigenous population in the country. Métis people are often overlooked in Canada's history, partly due to the few records that specifically reference Métis and in part due to the mobility of Métis communities and families.

As we continue to do more research and learn more about the Métis families and communities that existed and continue to exist in Ontario and beyond, we are able to investigate and demonstrate the connections between the Métis and the events that unfolded during the War of 1812. These connections help to establish the relationships with and among Métis in Canada and give a greater sense of identity to the Métis community.

## References

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# **GRADE 2**

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

*Ontario Curriculum 2018*

*Heritage and Identity*

- *Changing Family and Community Traditions*



### **LESSON – Celebrations and Games**

The Métis people are known to take part in celebrations, games, and other community events. Even during the period of the war of 1812, it was important to find opportunities for community activities that brought people together and strengthened inter-personal relationships.

Children enjoyed many games of skill and chance, some of which helped to improve skills that would become important as they grew into adulthood. Many games utilized items that were readily available, such as animal bones, buttons, sticks, stones, and thread. Children enjoyed toss-and-catch games and created buzzers made from buttons and strings.

Men and women enjoyed playing card games. Feats of strength and skill were popular amongst adult male members of Métis communities as well.

Rendezvous were popular social gatherings and would often include all members of a community, who would gather to sing, dance, and share in each other's company. Métis dance steps evolved from the blending of First Nations and European dance and are known as jigging.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Provide students with string, sticks, dice, and other materials and ask them to create engaging games with clear rules. Allow them to share their creations and challenge each other.
2. Divide class into groups of four and have each group learn a Métis dance. Each group will present their dance to the class.
3. Organize a potluck feast with the class, or consider preparing traditional dishes in class. Allow students to present and explain what each dish is to the rest of the class before enjoying your feast.
4. Discuss the importance of celebration in building and strengthening a community. Make connections relevant to each student's experience by asking what traditions and celebrations help strengthen their community.
5. Compare and contrast the celebrations and games of the Métis people with those of your family and community.

## **Overall Expectations**

*By the end of Grade 2, students will:*

- A1. compare some significant traditions and celebrations among diverse groups and at different times, and identify some of the reasons for changes in these traditions/celebrations
- A2. use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some of the past and present traditions and celebrations within their own family and the communities to which they belong
- A3. describe some of the major groups in the students community, including different types of families, and some of the ways in which traditions and heritage are passed on by such groups

## **Specific Expectations**

### *Application*

- A1.1 compare their family's structure and some of their traditions and celebrations with those of their peers' families
- A1.3 compare some of the past and present traditions and celebrations of different ethnocultural groups in their local community, and identify some of the main reasons for the change

### *Inquiry*

- A2.2 and organize information on some of the past and present traditions and celebrations within their family and the community to which they belong, using primary and/or secondary sources that they have gathered themselves or that have been provided to them
- A2.4 interpret and analyse information relevant to their investigations, using a variety of tools
- A2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about past and present traditions and celebrations in their own families and the communities to which they belong
- A2.6 communicate the results of their inquiries, using appropriate vocabulary

### *Understanding Context*

- A3.4 describe some significant traditions and celebrations of their families, their peers, and their own communities, as well as of some other communities in Canada
- A3.6 identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various community celebrations and events
- A3.7 identify some ways in which heritage is passed on through various family celebrations and practices

# GRADE 2 SOCIAL STUDIES

*Ontario Curriculum 2018*

*Heritage and Identity*

- *Changing Family and Community Traditions*



## **LESSON – Traditional Métis Clothing**

During the War of 1812 Métis people of Canada lived in rural communities all across Ontario. It was important that the clothing worn by the Métis was suitable for the environments in which the Métis people lived and worked (i.e. cold winters and warm summers). Other factors influencing the type and style of clothing worn during the War of 1812 included wealth, occupation, geographic location, and family background.

Métis clothing was made from fabric and cloth, as well as the hide and fur of animals. Garments were often decorated with beautiful coloured beadwork in floral patterns.

Some examples of traditional Métis clothing include the Capote, leather or corduroy pants, the sash, colourful leggings, and moccasins.

## **Teaching Strategies**

1. Research the uniforms of both the British infantry and the Métis voyageurs. Compare and contrast the benefits and limitations of each.
2. Using the information gained through their study, ask students to create posters highlighting what the Métis men, women, and children would have looked like during the time period.
3. Allow students to work in small groups in order to brainstorm, record, and illustrate possible uses for the sash during the War of 1812. Provide each group time to present their findings to the class.
4. Invite an expert into the classroom to demonstrate Métis flower embroidery or weaving. Allow students to experiment with these techniques.
5. Compare and contrast the Métis tradition of beading to other methods of decorating clothes in your own culture.

## **Overall Expectations**

*By the end of Grade 2, students will:*

- A1. compare some significant traditions and celebrations among diverse groups and at different times, and identify some of the reasons for changes in these traditions/celebrations
- A2. use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some of the past and present traditions and celebrations within their own family and the communities to which they belong
- A3. describe some of the major groups in their community, including different types of families, and some of the ways in which traditions and heritage are passed on by such groups
- B2. use the social studies inquiry process to investigate aspects of the interrelationship between the natural environment, including the climate, of selected communities and the ways in which people in those communities live

## **Specific Expectations**

### *Application*

- A1.3 compare some of the past and present traditions and celebrations of different ethno cultural groups in their local community, and identify some of the main reasons for the change

### *Inquiry*

- A2.4 and B2.4 interpret and analyse information relevant to their investigations, using a variety of tools

### *Understanding Context*

- A3.4 describe some significant traditions and celebrations of their families, their peers, and their own communities, as well as of some other communities in Canada



# GRADE 3 SOCIAL STUDIES

*Ontario Curriculum 2018  
Communities in Canada, 1780–1850  
Living and Working in Ontario*



## **LESSON – Equipment & Tools**

The Métis people of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century used a variety of equipment and tools to meet the specific needs of working and living in Canada. The Métis drew from both their First Nations and European backgrounds to create innovative new solutions to the challenges that they faced.

From their First Nations ancestors the Métis inherited knowledge of the natural environment, methods to create suitable shelter, medicine production, and travel by canoe.

The Métis people also made use of wheeled carts, flat-bottomed boats called bateaux, rifles, axes, knives, and metal cookware among other things.

## **Teaching Strategies**

1. Ask students to consider how specific tools made life better for the people of the era. How would life have been more difficult without them?
2. Compare and contrast the solution that the European immigrants and the First Nations people employed to survive in North America
3. Choose one tool and create a full-colour poster showcasing the item. Include an image, a description of the item, and some of the benefits of its use.
4. Based upon your research, create an image of a Métis man during the War of 1812. What would his uniform have looked like, and what tools would he have carried with him?

## **Overall Expectations**

*By the end of Grade 3, students will:*

- A1. compare ways of life among some specific groups in Canada around the beginning of the nineteenth century, and describe some of the changes between that era and the present day
- A2. use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some of the major challenges that different groups and communities faced in Canada from around 1780 to 1850, and key measures taken to address these challenges

## Specific Expectations

### *Application*

- A1.1 describe some of the similarities and differences in various aspects of everyday life of selected groups living in Canada between 1780 and 1850
- A1.2 compare some of the roles of and challenges facing people in Canada around the beginning of the nineteenth century with those in the present day

### *Inquiry*

- A2.1 formulate questions to guide investigations into some of the major challenges facing different groups and communities in Canada from around 1780 to 1850
- A2.2 gather and organize information on major challenges facing different groups and communities, and on measures taken to address these challenges, using a variety of primary and/or secondary sources
- A2.4 interpret and analyse information relevant to their investigations, using a variety of tools
- A2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about some of the major challenges facing different groups and communities in Canada during this period, and measures taken to overcome these challenges
- A2.6 communicate the results of their inquiries using appropriate vocabulary and formats

### *Understanding Context*

- A3.1 identify various First Nations and some Métis communities in Upper and Lower Canada from 1780 to 1850, including those living in traditional territory and those who moved or were forced to relocate to new areas in response to European settlement, and locate the areas where they lived, using print, digital, and/or interactive maps or a mapping program
- A3.3 identify some of the main factors that helped shape the development of settlements in Canada during this period

# GRADE 6

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Ontario Curriculum 2018

Heritage and Identity

- *Communities in Canada, Past and Present*

*the* Métis  
Nation of  
Ontario

### LESSON – Métis Lifestyle and Culture

During the War of 1812, European men journeyed deep into the land that would become Canada in search of furs and trade opportunities. Relationships developed between these men and First Nations women and gave rise to a new generation of mixed blood people. Over time a new culture would develop out of the influence of both the First Nations and European heritage. This group of people became the Métis.

Métis culture emphasized storytelling and teachings through experience. Children were educated informally, learning the skills and accepted behaviours valued by their parents, families, and communities as well as other important lessons from elders and mentors.

### Teaching Strategies

1. Create a short story from the point of view of a Métis child. Have your fictional character describe a day in their life.
2. Research the role of women in a Métis community and prepare a descriptive paragraph describing their responsibilities.
3. Create a map detailing the journey of a Métis voyageur through Ontario's waterways. Include rest stops, trading posts, and other important landmarks.
4. Create a visual representation of a Métis home based upon research. Include common features that would have been appropriate for the War of 1812 time period. Who would have lived in the home?

### Overall Expectations

*By the end of Grade 6, students will:*

- A1. assess contributions to Canadian identities made by various groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, and by various features of Canadian communities and regions
- A 2. use the social studies inquiry process to investigate different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experiences of two or more distinct communities in Canada
- A3. demonstrate an understanding of significant experiences of, and major changes and aspects of life in, various historical and contemporary communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in Canada

## Specific Expectations

### *Application*

- A1.2 analyse some of the contributions that various settler/newcomer groups have made to Canadian identities
- A1.4 explain how various groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, have contributed to the goal of inclusiveness in Canada and assess the extent to which Canada has achieved the goal of being an inclusive society

### *Inquiry*

- A2.2 formulate questions to guide investigations into different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experiences of a few distinct communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada
- A2.3 analyse and construct print and digital maps as part of their investigations into different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experience of communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada
- A2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experience of a few distinct communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada

### *Understanding Context*

- A3.1 identify the traditional Indigenous and treaty territory or territories on which their community is located
- A3.3 describe some key economic, political, cultural, and social aspects of life in settler/newcomer communities in Canada and identify significant ways in which the culture of settlers' places of origin influenced their ways of life in Canada and, where applicable, had an impact on Indigenous communities
- A3.4 identify various types of communities that have contributed to the development of Canada
- A3.5 describe significant events or developments in the history of two or more First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities in Canada and how these events affected the communities' development and/or identities
- A3.8 identify key differences, including social, cultural, and/or economic differences, between a few historical and/or contemporary communities, including at least one First Nations, Métis, or Inuit community, in Canada

# GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES

Ontario Curriculum 2018

Heritage and Citizenship

- First Nations People and European Explorers



## LESSON –Métis in the Fur Trade during the War of 1812.

The Métis played an important role in defending Canada from the United States in the War of 1812. Métis militia and voyageurs took part in many battles alongside the British regulars and were pivotal in transporting goods and supplies to military posts and forts in the Great Lakes and along the St. Lawrence River.

The War of 1812 had a significant impact on the fur trade and was the catalyst for many changes in North America including political, economical, and social changes. After the War of 1812 the fur trade began to lose momentum in North America and many Métis people relocated and helped to establish some of the communities we know today.

### *Important Métis people and groups*

- North West Company
- The Corps of Canadian Voyageurs
- William McGillivray

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Split the class into groups and have each group research one of the groups or people in the list above. Have students identify the connections between the topic they choose and the War of 1812.
2. Have students identify forts and outposts of the fur trade in the Great Lakes region. Why were these locations important during the fur trade? Why were they also strategic for military purposes during the War of 1812?
3. Ask students to create a storyboard of what it would be like for a Métis person at the outbreak of the War of 1812. How would this person's life change? Students can present their story as a skit, or through other forms of media.

## **Overall Expectations**

*By the end of Grade 6, students will:*

- A1. assess contributions to Canadian identities made by various groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, and by various features of Canadian communities and regions
- A2. use the social studies inquiry process to investigate different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experiences of a few distinct communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada
- A3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of significant experiences of, and major changes and aspects of life in, various historical and contemporary communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, in Canada

## **Specific Expectations**

### *Application*

- A1.2 analyse some of the contributions that various First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and individuals have made to Canada
- A1.4 explain how various groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, have contributed to the goal of inclusiveness in Canada

### *Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills*

- A2.1 formulate questions to guide investigations into different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experiences of a few distinct communities, including First Nations,
- A2.3 analyse and construct print and digital maps as part of their investigations into different perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experience of communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada
- A2.5 evaluate evidence and draw conclusions about perspectives on the historical and/or contemporary experience of a few distinct communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada

### *Knowledge and Understanding*

- A3.5 describe significant events or developments in the history of two or more First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities in Canada and how these events affected the communities' development and/or identities

# **GRADE 7 History**

*Ontario Curriculum 2018*

*British North America*



## **LESSON – MÉTIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR OF 1812**

The War of 1812 played a pivotal role in shaping Canada and establishing its borders and territories, especially in Ontario. The British, First Nations and Métis all helped to defend Canada and gave their lives to protect their communities.

Ontario Métis participated in many important battles during the War of 1812 including Mackinac Island and in the Niagara region. Métis Voyageurs were often responsible for quickly transporting equipment through little known Fur Trade routes and across the Great Lakes. Contributions from many courageous people, including Métis Voyageurs and commanders helped to fend off the Americans and pave the way for the creation of Canada.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Students will create a map of Ontario and identify the key battles and forts during the War of 1812. Determine what battles the Métis were involved in. (\*Teachers Note: Why are these areas important? How did each battle affect the outcome of the war?)
2. Have students examine a Métis leader and an American leader. Using Role-Play or a diary entry, students will present the character and their contributions to the War of 1812. (\*Teachers Note: What did this person do to affect the outcome of the war? If they had acted differently might the outcome have changed? What were the personal motivations for becoming involved in the war?)
3. Students will investigate how the War of 1812 affected their own community. Using primary and secondary sources they will determine the impacts of the War of 1812 on the local area. (\*Teachers Note: How would your community/Canada be different if the War had a different outcome? How has your community commemorated the War of 1812? What has Canada done to commemorate the War of 1812?)

## **Overall Expectations**

*By the end of Grade 7, students will:*

- B1. analyse aspects of the lives of various groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, in Canada between 1800 and 1850, and compare them to the lives of people in Canada in 1713–1800
- B2. use the historical inquiry process to investigate perspectives of different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada between 1800 and 1850

## **Specific Expectations**

*Application*

- B1.1 analyse social and political values and significant aspects of life for some different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, in Canada between 1800 and 1850
- B1.2 analyse some of the challenges facing individuals, groups, and/or communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals and/or communities, in Canada between 1800 and 1850

*Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills*

- B2.1 formulate questions to guide investigations into perspectives of different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada between 1800 and 1850
- B2.2 gather and organize information and evidence about perspectives of different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada during this period, using a variety of primary sources and secondary sources
- B2.4 analyse and construct maps as part of their investigations into some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada during this period, with a focus on exploring their spatial boundaries

*Knowledge and Understanding*

- B3.1 identify factors contributing to some key events and/or trends that occurred in and/or affected Canada between 1800 and 1850 and describe the historical significance of some of these events/trends for different individuals, groups, and/or communities, including Indigenous individuals and/or communities
- B3.5 describe significant interactions between different groups and communities in Canada during this period



# History: GRADE 7

*Ontario Curriculum 20018*

*British North America*



## **LESSON –Métis Roles in the War of 1812**

Métis men and women were heavily involved in the War of 1812. Gender roles were very prevalent at the time and while both men and women supported the British in the war, they did so in very different ways.

Men most often joined the ranks of the militia or military voyageur corps. Here they participated in many battles across Ontario and defended Canada from the Americans. Men were also involved as voyageurs transporting goods and supplies to British forts and military outposts. The knowledge the Métis had of the land and experience in the wild were an asset during the War of 1812.

Métis women supported the war by working in military camps or hospitals. Here they would tend to wounded soldiers, cook, clean and look after the camp. Looking after the homes and families of the British and Métis fighters was a top priority.

### **Teaching Strategies**

1. Have students conduct research on the Métis involvement in the War of 1812 specifically surrounding the roles both men and women played during this time period (teachers note: examples could be voyageurs, Indian department employees, clerks, nurses, fur traders, seamstresses, etc.).
2. Have each student pick one key person or occupation (fur trader, nurse), and write a narrative of a day or week in the life of their character based on research.
3. Using the narrative in number 2, students will complete a five minute soliloquy in character to explain their role in the War of 1812.

## **Overall Expectations**

*By the end of Grade 7, students will:*

- B2. use the historical inquiry process to investigate perspectives of different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada between 1800 and 1850
- B3. describe various significant people, events, and developments, including treaties between Indigenous nations and imperial powers, in Canada between 1800 and 1850, and explain their impact

## **Specific Expectations**

*Inquiry/Research and Communication Skills*

- B2.1 formulate questions to guide investigations into perspectives of different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada between 1800 and 1850
- B2.2 gather and organize information and evidence about perspectives of different groups and communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, on some significant events, developments, and/or issues that affected Canada and/or people in Canada during this period, using a variety of primary sources and secondary sources
- B2.7 communicate the results of their inquiries using appropriate vocabulary and formats appropriate for specific audiences

*Knowledge and Understanding*

- B3.1 identify factors contributing to some key events and/or trends that occurred in and/or affected Canada between 1800 and 1850

# GRADE 10: Hospitality and Tourism Technology

Ontario Curriculum 2009



## LESSON –Measurement and Safe Food Handling (Métis Cooking)

Métis voyageurs faced unique challenges when finding and preparing suitable meals for their long journeys across Canada. Food needed to be easy to prepare, lightweight and high in energy to fuel the men. Each voyageur received a daily ration and often looked forward to stopping at an outpost or community where a hot and fresh meal might be provided.

### Conversions of Period Measurements into Modern Measurement

A dash equal 1/8 teaspoon

A pinch equals ¼ teaspoon

A gill equals ½ cup

A pint equals 2 cups

A teacup equals ¾ cup

A porringer equals 3-5 cups

A pound equals 16 ounces about 3 cups but can be as little as 2 cups or as large as 4 ½

A quart equals 2 pints or 4 cups

### Teaching Strategies

1. Provide hand out with the attached period measurements and there modern translations (below). Have the students bring in a favourite recipe from home and convert it to 1812 measurement.
2. Create a display example of the standard daily rations a Métis voyageur or militia man would have received during the War of 1812.  
1 lb. of flour,  
1 lb. of fresh beef or 9 1/7 oz. of pork,  
1 3/7 oz. of pork or 6/7 oz. of butter,  
3/7 pint of pease, (peas)  
and 1 1/7 oz. of rice  
Have the class come up with 2-3 simple recipes that can be made from these rations.
3. Have a discussion around Voyageurs and the long distances they traveled between interior trading posts and Montreal. Brainstorm the types of food they would need to carry with them and how these items would be prepared. As a class prepare a modern day Pemmican and identify the reasons why this would be a useful food for the Voyageurs.

## *Pemmican Recipe*

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups lean meat (buffalo, deer, beef, caribou or moose)
- 3 cups dried fruit
- 2 cups rendered fat
- Unsalted nuts and 1oz of honey

### Instructions:

1. Meat should be as lean as possible and double ground from your butcher if you do not have your own meat grinder.
2. Spread meat out very thin on a cookie sheet and dry at 180 degrees F for at least 8 hours or until crispy.
3. Pound the meat into a powder using a blender or other tool.
4. Grind the dried fruit, but leave a little bit lumpy.
5. Heat rendered fat on stove at medium until liquid.
6. Add liquid fat to dried meat and dried fruit, and mix in nuts and honey. Mix everything by hand. Let cool and store. Can keep and be consumed for several years.

## **Overall Expectations**

*By the end of the course, students will:*

- A3. identify and describe common ingredients used in food preparation.
- B1. use tools and equipment in accordance with industry standards;
- B2. demonstrate the use of safe and correct culinary techniques in the preparation, cooking, and presentation of food, and demonstrate professional serving methods;

## **Specific Expectations**

*Knowledge and Understanding*

- A3.2 identify the origin or source of various food ingredients (e.g., geographical origin or source, type of plant or animal from which they come, raw materials used in their manufacture) and describe their use in the cuisine of various cultures
- B2.6 create simple meals from various culinary traditions, with appropriate garnishes

*Application*

- B1.1 select the appropriate tools or equipment for assigned tasks
- B1.2 use metric, US customary, and British imperial measuring tools (e.g., scales, measuring cups) correctly when following standardized recipes and baking formulas;
- B2.1 apply food preparation methods (e.g., thawing, cooking, freezing) appropriately and correctly;
- B2.3 use a variety of cutting techniques
- B2.4 apply a variety of cooking methods (e.g., dry heat, moist heat, combination) correctly when preparing food, using proper cooking temperatures as specified in provincial regulations;