



Empire of the Wild Lesson:

Land Displacement

Grade 9 English — ENL1W

Land Displacement

The Learning Goals:

Students will be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of colonization on Métis land titles and the environment
- Use critical thinking to consider historical and modern perspectives on the connection with land usage.

Success Criteria

- Create a media text based on the Métis perspective on land using various sources and for a specific purpose and audience.

Curriculum Connections:

Overall Expectation(s): A3., B3., C2., D1., D2

Specific Expectation(s): A3.2, A3.3, A3.7, C2.3, C2.5, C3.1, D1.1, D2.1

Theme(s): Land Dispossession of the Historic Georgian Bay Métis Community.

Teacher Background Information

Métis author Cherie Dimaline highlights the ongoing contemporary and historical struggles of Métis families and communities to acquire and preserve their historical territories. Her book *Empire of Wild* tells the story of a woman named Joan who is connected to the Historic Métis Community of Georgian Bay, Ontario. While many of the place names are accurate, the fictional location of "Arcand" is reflective of the real-life community situated on the west side of Penetangushene Bay, Ontario. The prologue sets the stage; "At first they were fine on their own, already flush with blacksmiths and hunters, fishermen and a hundred small children to toss stones into Lake Huron. If they had known then how each square inch would have to be guarded, how each grain of sand needed to be held tight, perhaps they would have stacked the rocks instead of gifting them to the lake."

1. Historical Community of Georgian Bay Métis Background Information

The Georgian Bay Métis community historical information can be found at the following website:

<https://www.ontariometisfacts.com/all-articles/categories/georgian-bay-metis-community>

2. Métis Perspective on Land Usage (connection with the land, fur trade, fisheries, etc.)

Historically, the Métis way of life was one that was semi-nomadic and interconnected with the trade routes and waterways of Ontario. Harvesting could be practiced on the land through hunting large and small game, trapping small game, foraging for plants, berries, fungi and wood, and fishing. These harvesting practices were imperative to family survival physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally, but as "Children of the Fur trade," harvesting was also an economic pursuit.

Over time, some of the knowledge and ability to practice this way of life has suffered greatly due to discrimination and land loss. But today, governance and legal precedent (like the Powley Case) have ensured citizens of the Métis Nation of Ontario have the right and access to harvest on their traditional territories. In 2004, the MNO and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Fisheries signed an agreement

which created the Harvesters Card registry that aligned with the MNO Harvesting Policy and the Supreme Court of Canada's identification of Métis Rights Holders in R v. Powley. This framework agreement is the first of its kind, a display of how non-indigenous and indigenous governance systems can work to support the health and well-being of people, natural resources and ecosystems.

While much progress has been made, there is much work to do to reclaim lost knowledge, share that knowledge, and provide opportunities for younger generations to practice their culture and way of life as their ancestors once did.

* Also see the Community Culture Card Activity below

Minds On Lesson Opener: 5 minutes

What do students already know about the historic Georgian Bay area?
Display a modern-day map of the territory of the historic Georgian Bay Métis community, which includes Midland, Penetanguishene and its environs.

Discussion:

What do you know about the Georgian Bay area today?
What have you been taught? Told? Experienced?
Who lives there today?

* Common ideas/preconceptions could be cottage country, wealth, beaches, boating, farmers, French-speaking, Huronia, 6th Great Lake, First Nations, shipping

Materials Needed: Laptop, Smartboard/Projector

Lesson Activity: 60-75 minutes

Investigation – Challenging contemporary point of view of the Georgian Bay community.

Read the prologue of *Empire of Wild* by Cheri Dimaline, "A New Hunt," to the class. Have students consider the following questions:

Whose perspective is the author representing?

What is the connection to the land?

Show the Métis Nation of Ontario The Georgian Bay and Environs Historic Metis Community video on Youtube. (3 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPWzE6dExzY>

Action- Understanding the Métis perspective of land

Using the schoolyard, gymnasium or classroom, divide the space into 3 to represent the main geographical locations of the Georgian Bay areas

- Christian, Hope and Beckwith Islands (First Nations),
- Midland area (English)
- Penetanguishene and Lafontaine area (French-Canadian)

Divide the class into four groups. Each group is given a "Community Culture Card" and, with the information provided, decides how they are going to use the land. The Métis group will have to work with the other three groups to find land that they can use or access. As students work together, they must consider:

1. What type of land does their community need to practice their way of life and/ or sustain their communities?
2. Are they able to support the way of life of other backgrounds?
3. What is the impact of their community on the land they are living on?

Discussion/Debrief:

1. As a class, discuss what happened during the last activity. Consider the following questions:
 - a. How did colonization affect the historical Métis community in Georgian Bay?
 - b. Where can the historical rights-bearing Métis practice their way of life? How did they preserve their way of life and connection to the land historically?
 - c. How can they continue to practice their way of life and connection to the land today?
 - d. Has the economic use of land changed today?
 - e. Does the Métis perspective and land use benefit all people of various backgrounds living in the region?
 - f. Why are the following important? – Climate Change, Land Conservation, Economic Sustainability, Stewardship

Materials Needed: Community Culture Cards

Assessment

Students will choose **one** of the three options to demonstrate their understanding:

- Write a play and/or a dramatization of the story of the historic Georgian Bay Métis and the loss of their land.
- Advocacy Letter- Choose one environmental issue and explain how Métis' perspectives on land and land usage can support environmental solutions. (Water, Climate Change, Land Loss, Soil Erosion etc.)
- Create a visual representation using a medium of your choice to depict how you view the historic Georgian Bay Métis community. It must reflect the Métis' perspective on land use and their long history in the Georgian Bay area.

For all three choices, students must also provide:

1. The topic of their work
2. Audience (who is it intended for?)
3. Purpose (intended message)

Example: Students may reconceptualize a poster advertisement of Georgian Bay as "Cottage Country" to show how the Métis once used the land in the 1800s.

1. Topic- Experience Métis Hospitality
2. Audience: Seasonal tourists
3. Purpose: to expand awareness of the unique culture and land to be experienced, preserved and protected in the Georgian Bay area.

Community Culture Cards

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Georgian Bay Métis</u></p> <p>Historical Location: Penetanguishene Bay and north Tiny Township</p> <p>Modern Location: all of Ontario</p> <p>Land Use: Hunting, Trapping, Harvesting, Fishing (personal and commercial), guiding, small-scale gardening, water transportation of goods by canoe, forestry and lumber</p> <p>Vocations: Hunters, trappers, carpenters, tinsmiths, blacksmiths, voyageurs, interpreters, trade post staff, seasonal laborers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>English Speaking Settlers</u></p> <p>Historical location: "His Majesty's Naval Establishment on Lake Huron," now Discovery Harbour, Penetanguishene</p> <p>Modern Location: Midland and surrounding area</p> <p>Land Use: Railway and roads, Lumber, Defense, Shipping through the Great Lakes,</p> <p>Vocations: Lumber and land owner Barons, Military, shipping, surveyors, early government, business, mill operators, laborers, land speculators</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>French Speaking Settlers</u></p> <p>Historical Location: Lafontaine and surrounding areas</p> <p>Modern Location: Penetanguishene, Lafontaine and surrounding areas</p> <p>Land Use: Agriculture, forestry and lumber, land settlement programs</p> <p>Vocations: Farmers, craftsmen, builders, sawyers, seasonal labourers, clergy</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>G'Chimnissing Beausoleil First Nations</u></p> <p>Historical Location: Historically, the area between Midland and Orillia were relocated to Christian Island (see Williams Treaty Settlement)</p> <p>Modern Location: Christian, Beckwith and Hope Islands and off-reserve</p> <p>Land Use: Hunting, Fishing, Forestry, Huron-Wendat farmers</p> <p>Vocations: Subsistence farmers and hunters, commercial fishermen, lumber and charcoal, harvesting labourers off-reserve</p>

Note: These locations are generalizations for the purpose of this activity based on the geographical and historical significance and are not inclusive of members living in other communities.

Empire of Wild

Métis perspectives on Land and Land Displacement in the Historic Georgian Bay area

Due: _____

Empire of Wild by Cheri Dimeline, is set in the Historic Georgian Bay Métis Community. While it takes place in the modern-day, it highlights the challenges that the Métis people have had throughout history to preserve and maintain their connection with the land.

Using what you have learned about the Historic Georgian Bay Métis Community, your task is to reimagine this area, choosing one of the three media forms below to demonstrate your understanding of the Métis' perspective on land and land loss.

- a) Write a play and/or dramatization of the story of the historic Georgian Bay Métis and the loss of their land.
- b) Advocacy Letter- Choose one environmental issue and explain how Métis' perspectives on land and land usage can support environmental solutions.
- c) Create a visual representation of how you view the historic Georgian Bay Métis community. It must reflect the Métis' perspective on land use and their long history in the Georgian Bay area.

Accompanying your piece, you must also provide a brief explanation of the following:

- 1. The topic of work
- 2. Audience- Who is it intended for?
- 3. Purpose- What is the Intended message?

Métis Perspectives on Land and Land Displacement -Media Text Assignment

Category	Level 1 (50-59%)	Level 2 (60-69%)	Level 3 (70-79%)	Level 4 (80-100%)
Knowledge & Understanding	<p>Demonstrates limited understanding of the Métis perspective on land and the historic Georgian Bay Métis Community</p> <p>Demonstrates limited understanding of audience and purpose.</p>	<p>Demonstrates some understanding of the Métis perspective on land and the historic Georgian Bay Métis Community</p> <p>Demonstrates some understanding of audience and purpose.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a solid understanding of the Métis perspective on land and the historic Georgian Bay Métis Community</p> <p>Demonstrates an understanding of audience and purpose with ease.</p>	<p>Demonstrates thorough and insightful understanding of the Métis perspective on land and the historic Georgian Bay Métis Community</p> <p>Demonstrates an understanding of audience and purpose with ease and consistency.</p>
Thinking & Inquiry	<p>Uses a central idea that is too unclear or simplistic to focus</p> <p>Uses planning skills with limited effectiveness</p> <p>Has difficulty recognizing alternative viewpoints</p>	<p>Uses a central idea that is clear (but conventional)</p> <p>Uses planning skills with some effectiveness</p> <p>Anticipates some simple alternative viewpoints</p>	<p>Uses a central idea that is clear and thoughtful</p> <p>Uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness</p> <p>Adequately anticipates viewpoints</p>	<p>Uses a central idea that is insightful and fresh, as well as clear and thoughtful</p> <p>Uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness</p> <p>Anticipates in insightful ways alternative viewpoints</p>
Communication	<p>Communicate ideas as a series of randomly organized thoughts.</p> <p>Occasionally uses conventions correctly; several major and minor errors are evident and</p>	<p>Communicates ideas deliberately and in a typical way</p> <p>Frequently uses conventions correctly; a few major and minor errors are evident and occasionally interfere with the audience's understanding</p>	<p>Communicates ideas clearly and with some creativity</p> <p>Frequently uses conventions correctly; some minor errors are evident but do not interfere with the audience's understanding</p>	<p>Communicates ideas clearly and with great flare</p> <p>Usually uses conventions correctly; a few minor errors are evident but do not interfere with the audience's understanding</p>

	often interfere with the audience's understanding			
Application	<p>Uses the writing process (Including drafting/rough work, and editing & revision) with limited competence</p> <p>Makes connections with supporting sources with limited effectiveness</p>	<p>Uses the writing process (including drafting/ rough work and editing & revision) with moderate competence</p> <p>Makes connections with supporting sources with some effectiveness</p>	<p>Uses the writing process (including drafting/ rough work, and editing & revision) with considerable competence</p> <p>Makes connections with supporting sources with considerable effectiveness</p>	<p>Uses the writing process (including drafting/ rough work, and editing & revision) with a high degree of competence</p> <p>Makes connections within and between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness</p>

Extension

Students can investigate how the Métis' connection to land and way of life, connect to the Youth Climate Change Lawsuit and Sustainable Communities initiatives highlighted by the David Suzuki Foundation (see Suggested Resource.)

Additional Resources and References

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