

## Integration of Indigenous Culture

### March Focus: Appreciation and Connection with the Land Around Us

#### What is Indigenous Pedagogy?

*It is a holistic practice of teaching that incorporates Indigenous worldviews throughout all components of our learning environments, including how we interact with children and families, how we develop our daily routines, how we set up our physical spaces, and how we intentionally engage children in learning opportunities. Educators are viewed as active learners and researchers alongside children, and role the learning process.*



*Some Indigenous world views we have explored to date include the respect for the environment, animals, and each other, the interconnectedness of all living things, oral traditions, land-based teaching, the appreciation for the wisdom provided by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Cultural*

*Advisors, and spiritual wellbeing. We will now circle back and touch upon these worldviews in more detail.*

Our next series of activities will focus on the following:

#### Appreciation and Connection with the Land Around Us

“Indigenous peoples are caretakers of Mother Earth and realize and respect her gifts of water, air and fire. First Nations peoples’ have a special relationship with the earth and all living things in it. This relationship is based on a profound spiritual connection to Mother Earth that guided indigenous peoples to practice reverence, humility, and reciprocity...Everything is taken and used with the understanding that we take only what we need, and we must use great care and be aware of how we take and how much of it so that future generations will not be put in peril.”

<https://www.afn.ca/honoring-earth/>

## Activity

### 1. Connecting with the Land Around Us

In the middle of a poster board, print the question, “What do you love about the land you live on?”. Be sure to document all the responses of the children and print the responses in a web format stemming out from the question. Educators should include their own thoughts. Be sure

to steer them to think about the natural attributes of the land on which they live. Try to include elements of nature characteristic to the areas in which you live in such as:

- Rivers, lakes, streams
- Mountains
- Forests
- Meadows
- Parks
- Hills
- Groves
- Gardens



Hang the poster within your learning space, and as the week goes on, try to engage the children in deeper conversations about why they love these land characteristics. For instance, perhaps there is a favourite memory, an activity they enjoy doing, or animals they have observed there. The goal is to form a positive, specific connection to their land, recognizing that the land we are on shapes who we are.

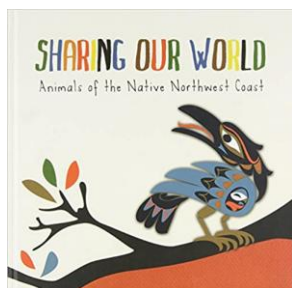
## 2. Photo Display of Connecting with the Land Around Us

Ask families to send in photos of their children engaging and interacting within the natural spaces of their local communities, referencing the above elements of nature. Invite children to help glue these photos onto a poster board, engaging them in conversations that help you to document their personalized captions below each. Try to guide children to remember attributes of the natural spaces that encompassed the moments. Title your photo display, "Why We Love the Land We Live On". Allow children to decorate accordingly.

### Book Suggestion:

#### "Sharing Our World: Animals of the Native Northwest Coast" by:

Ian Reid (Illustrator), Ryan Cranmer (Illustrator), Doug Lafortune (Illustrator), John Nelson (Illustrator), Francis Horne Sr. (Illustrator), Paul Windsor (Illustrator), Corey Bulpitt (Illustrator), T.J. Young (Illustrator), Ben Houstie (Illustrator), Eugene Isaac (Illustrator), Corey W. Moraes (Illustrator), Terry Starr (Illustrator), Rosie Elsie John (Illustrator)



"Respecting animals and their habitat as taught by our elders allows us to connect as a co-inhabitant of the forests, oceans, and our entire planet." - Paul Windsor, Haisla, Heiltsuk