

PLACE BASED LEARNING

By Sahara Lafferty

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- I would first like to acknowledge that the Thompson Rivers University campuses are on the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops campus) and the T'exelc (Williams Lake campus) within Secwépemc'ulucw, the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc people. Their region also extends into the territories of the Stat'imc, Nlaka'pamux, Nuxalk, Tsilhqot'in, Dakelh and Métis peoples. As we share knowledge, teaching, learning and research within this university, we recognize that this territory has always been a place of teaching, learning, and research.

THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM



What was the Residential School System?

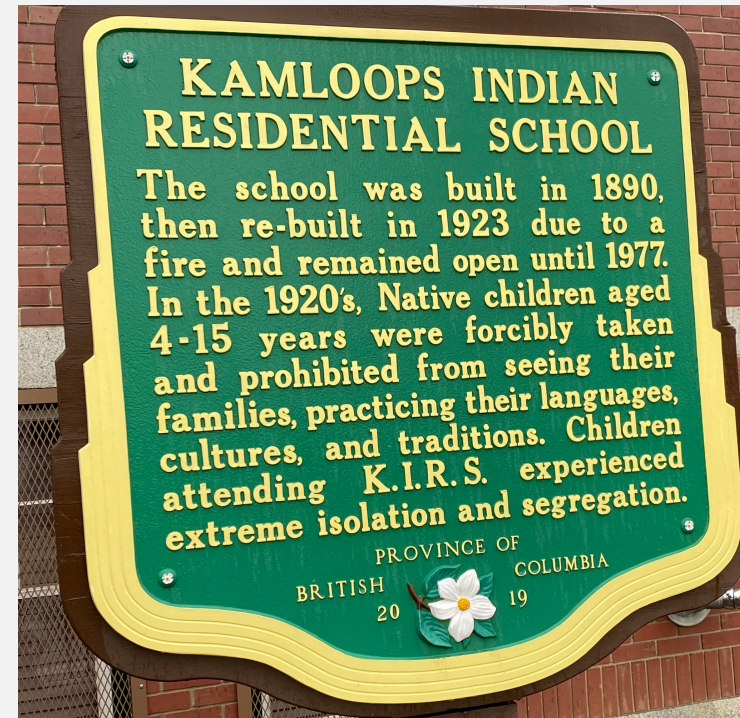
- Residential schools were a partnership between the Government of Canada and the mainstream churches.
- The two main objectives of the Residential schools were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their home, families, traditions and cultures and to assimilate the children into the dominant culture.
- Indigenous Children were forced to attend these schools for extended periods of time.
- At the Residential schools, the innocent children as young as five years old were stripped of their Indigenous identity, clothing, language and their long-braided hair that often had spiritual significance.
- The schools provided substandard education, living space, food and healthcare. The children were deprived, starved, overworked and abused for decades.

KAMLOOPS RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL



Brief History:

- Kamloops Residential school was only one of more than 130 schools that operated in Canada between 1874-1996.
- The school is located on the traditional territory of the Secwépemc peoples.
- Hundred of Secwépemc people and other First Nations children attended this school.
- Enrolment of the Kamloops residential school peaked in the early 1950's at 500.
- In 1969, the federal government took over administration of the Kamloops residential school from the church. The government operated the school as a residence for students attending local day schools.
- It closed it's doors in 1977



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO OUR TEACHING PRACTICES?

- Canada's true history with residential schools is a topic mandated in the B.C curriculum for K-12.
- As educators, we are giving the students the knowledge they need to build upon in further grades.
- To note that the residential schools are also stories of survival, resiliency and cultural revitalization.
- To help educate Canadians and move further towards reconciliation for the Indigenous people in our country.
- Indigenous students in the classroom today still deal with the intergenerational trauma caused by the residential schools.
 - Indigenous families may have different views of the school system and may approach things differently.
 - Indigenous students learn differently and may react differently than “normal” because of the trauma they still face.

BC CURRICULUM

Grade 4

Grades range k -12

Curricular Competency:

- [Make ethical judgments about events, decisions, or actions that consider the conditions of a particular time and place](#) (ethical judgment)
- *Identify key events and issues in First Peoples rights and interactions with early governments in Canada (e.g., the Indian Act, the establishment of the residential school system, potlatch ban, reserve system, treaties)*

Content:

- The impact of colonization on First Peoples societies in British Columbia and Canada
- The history of the local community and of the local First Peoples communities

Big Ideas:

- Interaction between First Peoples and Europeans lead to conflict and cooperation, which continues to shape Canada's identity.

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational.
- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

ACTIVITIES INSPIRED BY THE SITE

Activities:

- Local Elder, smudging, and stories if possible
- Read the monument out loud to the class and have a moment of silence for the survivors, the ones that didn't make it home and their families.
- Heart Garden
- Journal independently/sketch



INQUIRY

Questions for inquiry that would drive discussion:

- In what way does the residential school look different than our school? What looks the same?
- How did the moment of silence make you feel?
- Does it look like what you thought it would based on the stories we read?
- Can you connect to the characters in the books we read now that we are physically here?
- Would you feel comfortable coming to school here? Why or why not?
- Is there anything particular you notice about the residential school?
- What is reconciliation?
- Why is it important to remember history?
- What are some other ways we can show respect and recognize this history?
- What did you learn about Indigenous people today?
- How can you find out/learn more?
- What feelings came up throughout this field trip?

FIELD TRIP CONSIDERATIONS

Safety/supervision:

- Having enough supervisor to help with all of the students. 1 supervisor per 10 students. Parents if possible.
- Set ground rules before the field trip
- First Aid Kit on the bus
- Bus availability
- Let the people that work at the former residential school know that we are coming and the plan for the heart garden
- Time consideration
- Do not touch the monument

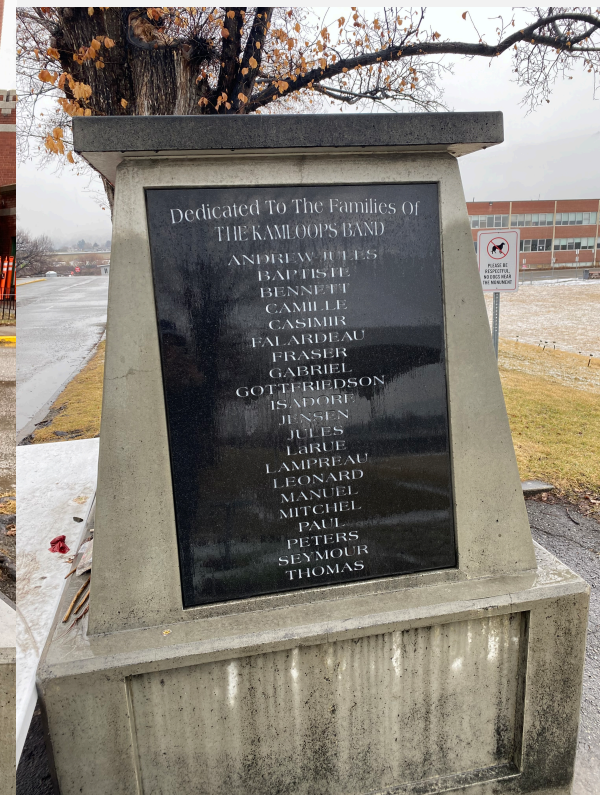
Elder/respect:

- RESPECT self, others, the elder, the land, the spirits and the ancestors
- Making sure the elder is comfortable being on the Residential school grounds as well as sharing some stories and smudging.

Difficult Topics/sensitivity:

- The discussion of residential school can be difficult for anyone and especially youth. A great way to have these difficult discussions and for the youth to connect to the topic is through art and stories.
- Send a letter home in advance explaining the discussion of this difficult topic and the possibility of triggers.
- Remind students that the feelings that come up throughout the field trip are okay and that we are there to support them
- Know the students and be aware of the Indigenous Métis students
- Remind students that we are working towards reconciliation and revitalization through learning about this difficult topic.
- Have resources available for after the field trip for the students future learning and/or mental health





REFERENCES

- <https://www.kamloopsthisweek.com/community/kamloops-history-the-dark-and-difficult-legacy-of-the-kamloops-indian-residential-school-4446093>
- <https://globalnews.ca/news/7955970/tkemlups-first-nation-residential-school-remains/>
- <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>
- <https://www.loom.com/looms/videos>