Grade 4- Teacher Zone
Topic B: Alberta–Its People in History

Lesson Plan 3: The Aboriginal Legacy

Generalization
Throughout the history of the province, Albertans have contributed to the Aboriginal legacy.

Rationale
It is essential that students recognize the many different groups of people who worked together to contribute to Alberta’s heritage. Aboriginal People have impacted a significant portion of Alberta’s heritage and their legacy is apparent in many communities today. Students have the opportunity to discover how Aboriginal People and European fur traders and settlers interacted with one another and how they shared information and customs. The rich history of Aboriginal and European relations is the foundation for the province of Alberta, as we know it today.

Objectives
Knowledge
- Develop an understanding of Alberta’s history and how many people and communities contributed to its development
- Make connections between the items and information that Aboriginal and European people shared
- Define key terms and concepts in relation to Aboriginal People and cultures in Alberta

Skills
- Find relationships between Aboriginal and European fur traders and settlers
- Categorize facts and information gathered from electronic sources
- Express in writing the contributions of Aboriginal People to the development of communities in Alberta
- Develop mapping skills and understanding of scale and relativity
- Contribute to in-class and group discussion as active participants in the learning process
- Work efficiently with a partner to create a finished product

Attitude
- Cooperate with others who hold differing opinions
- Learn respect, admiration and understanding of Aboriginal culture

Materials
- Blank overhead map of Alberta
- Teacher guide map
- Blank student map worksheet of Alberta
- Overhead projector
Introductory Activity
Using an overhead projector, display a blank map of Alberta on the wall or a screen. Begin by marking important landmarks such as Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Banff and Jasper, so students can have a place of origin and a sense of scale to work from. Following the teachers’ map guide, plot the names of towns, parks, etc. that have Aboriginal origins. Students may pull the names out of a hat or box, and be asked to try and guess where they belong on the map. Students will also have a blank map on which to plot places for their own notes.

Teacher Information
There are many communities today in Alberta whose names are derived from an Aboriginal word or meaning. Some received their name as a result of an important event near the community. It is important that students learn the heritage behind a variety of communities in Alberta.

Main Lesson
Pair-up students to work on a research project involving the name and origin of an Albertan town or community. Students must work together to answer the following questions

- What does the town name say about the people who developed it?
- Why was the town given that name?
- What is the significance?
- How many people lived in the town when it originated?
- How many live there now?
- What is something unique about the town?
- Was there an important event that happened in or around the town?
- What special and unique celebrations or ceremonies does the town have?

The teacher may decide to allow students to choose any town in Alberta, or they can narrow the field by assigning students a town from the following list of communities where Aboriginal culture had a major influence:

1. Frog Lake
2. Heart River
3. Lac La Biche
4. Good Fish Lake
5. Fort Edmonton
6. Saddle Lake
7. Onion Lake
8. Beaver Hills House
9. Bonnyville
10. Calgary
11. Fort Saskatchewan
12. Lacombe
13. Wetaskiwin
Students may want to visit the website www.ourfutureourpast.ca which contains a link to Place Names of Alberta as well as the Origin and Settlement Student Zone: Homework Help section.

Students will gather information and present what they have discovered in written form on a single sheet of paper to be mounted in the classroom. A discussion should ensue that allows students to understand the scope of influence that Aboriginal Peoples had on the development of many towns and communities in the province. Discuss with students other historic sites in Alberta such as Head-Smashed-In-Buffalo-Jump and Writing On Stone Provincial Park. Ask students to explain why these areas are important to Alberta’s heritage.

Supplementary Lesson
Distribute a list of biographies of important Aboriginal leaders in Alberta. The list can be compiled by downloading the information from the Student Zone, Homework Help: Biographies section of the website or CD-ROM. Have students take turns reading, and then review why it is important to be aware of the contributions of these early leaders. Pictures may also be downloaded from the site so that students can access a visual aid.

Teacher information
Prior the fur trade, most Aboriginal People were nomadic hunters whose diets consisted mainly of meat, supplemented by berries and roots. They depended upon stone, wood, leather and bone to develop and craft tools, utensils, housing, containers and clothing. Stone was used to craft hammers, knives, scrapers and drills. Wood was used to construct tipi poles and containers. Aboriginal People also used bone for personal ornaments (jewelry), handles and drills. Animal hides were used for clothing, containers, tipis and many other things. Plants were harvested not only for food, but also for medicine. Once the fur trade began, European settlers and traders began to infuse Aboriginal culture with European ideas and practices, resulting in many significant cultural shifts.

It is important that student to be able to identify objects that are Aboriginal in origin as well as those items that Europeans introduced that did make life easier in many ways for Aboriginal People. Imagine—it took much less time to boil water in a kettle (which was a very valuable trading good) compared to boiling it in a buffalo stomach.

Lesson
Distribute a list of items to the students. Beside each item, have them write down if they think the item is Aboriginal or European in origin and then discuss the correct answers. Initiate a discussion on how each group shared items and knowledge with each other.

Items on the work sheet could include the following (answers in brackets):

Hair Pipe (Aboriginal)
Pipe Bag (Aboriginal)
Moccasins (Aboriginal)
Horses (European)
Beads (European)
Flusher (Aboriginal)
Pemmican (Aboriginal)
Lobstick (Aboriginal)
Parfleche Bag (Aboriginal)
Travois (Aboriginal)
Guns (European)
Kettle (European)
Copper Utensils (Aboriginal and European)
Awl (European)
Stroud Cloth (European)
Red River Cart (Aboriginal)