

Grade 8 and Grade 9

Lesson 2: First Nations Career Changes

Generalization

The occupations and careers of Canada's First Nations have changed significantly over time.

Rationale

From the time of pre-contact, contact, and post-contact eras the occupations and careers of First Nations people have changed significantly based on a number of factors and influences. Students will be given the opportunity to learn how and why occupations and careers have changes as well as investigating and hypothesizing how they may continue to change in the future.

Objectives

Knowledge

- Students will identify historical roles and occupations of First Nations people prior to and at the time of contact
- Students will be able to discern between roles and occupations of men and women
- Students will recognize what factors influenced the change in First Nations occupations/careers at the time of contact and afterwards
- Students will hypothesize as to what First Nations careers/occupations will be in the future

Skills

- Students will interpret historical information and or oral histories to make general inferences as to First Nations roles and occupations
- Students will investigate modern/contemporary occupations of First Nations people in Alberta
- Students will develop a report that details the change of First Nations roles, occupation, and careers and identify possible future occupations
- Students will identify and list specific historical events/situations and recognize how they have impacted First Nations people roles, occupations, and careers in Canada or Alberta

Attitudes

- Students will continue to develop a sense of pride towards their culture and history

- Students will continue to develop increasing awareness of First Nations history and culture and their evolving roles in Canadian society

Teacher Information

Introductory Activity

Initiate a brainstorming session with the students in which you discuss roles and occupations of First Nations people prior to the contact period. You may want to write the students ideas down on the board or flip chart paper. What types of roles and activities do the students think First Nations people would have been doing? How would men and women's occupations/responsibilities be similar or different? What could some possible roles be at the time of contact and/or shortly after? Did their occupations stay the same or did they change/evolve? Do students think these were positive or negative changes? How have First Nations people occupations and careers continued to change over the years? Are these positive or negative changes?

Main Activity

Using the information from the brainstorming session, have students answer the following questions in complete sentences. Students may wish to consult the Student Zone section of the Edukit to search for information.

Exploring First Nations Roles, Occupations, and Careers

1. Find an example of a First Nations individual involved in politics both historically and currently? Describe their roles then and now.

2. Find an example of a First Nations artist from the past and the present (choose two individuals who use the same artistic medium such as painting or carving). Has the look or message of the art changed? Has respect, recognition, or significance of First Nations artists changed over the years? For the better or worse in your opinion?

3. Find an example of two First Nations leaders from traditional and contemporary times? How have their roles in their communities changed over time? Why and what has influenced these changes? What aspects have NOT changed over time? In your opinion why do you think some aspects or values towards these leaders have not changed?

4. What were the traditional roles of First Nations men and women? How do those roles/occupations differ from today or are there similarities? How have these roles and occupations evolved over time? List two factors that have effected men and women's roles today.

5. Discover and describe a First Nations owned business. Why was this business created? How does it benefit First Nations people? What First Nations principals, values, or beliefs are reflected in the organization and maintenance of the business? How would this differ if the business was owned by a non-Aboriginal person?

6. What are some of the contributions that First Nations people have made to the economy? List two examples and describe.

7. List two First Nations occupations that existed at the time of contact. Do these roles still exist in First Nations communities today? Have the occupations changed significantly?

8. Describe a historical and contemporary First Nations sports hero. What made them successful in your opinion?

9. What kind of occupations or careers do you think First Nations people may have in the future? Why do you think this?

10. What would your dream occupation or career be? What are some of the steps you will have to take to reach your dream?

Supplementary Lesson

As an important follow up to discovering past and present roles, occupations, and careers of First Nations people, you could have a career fair in your classroom or involve the whole school in the process. This is an excellent way for youth to be introduced to the variety of careers available and needed by First Nations people.

Following the steps below will help ensure success of your career fair. The information is taken from: <http://www.careerccc.org/products/getstart98/native.html>

1. Consult with community leaders. Show that achieving their community goals depends on the talents, skills and leadership of their own people. Involve First Nations Elders, chiefs and community leaders as consultants and participants in both planning and carrying out events.
2. Show the variety of possible careers. Plan activities showing that First Nations people belong to the whole range of occupations that run programs on the reserves for the Band and Tribal Council governments. For instance, reserves need managers, program administrators, health workers, forestry and agriculture specialists, teachers, engineers and architects.
3. Point out options in the public service. As well as explaining the Band and Tribal Council government and its services, there can be presentations on the role and activities of the Department of Indian Affairs, Human Resources Development Canada, Medical Services Branch, and provincial agencies in the life of First Nations communities. Stress that First Nations people are employed by these and other public service agencies.
4. Show the opportunities in business. Involve managers and workers from businesses on the reserve and from nearby municipalities. Show both the skills and commercial sides of the traditional First Nations occupations of trapping, hunting, fishing and craftwork.
5. Alert school principals to First Nations youth's needs. Since most First Nations high school students are enrolled in provincial schools, it is important that these schools take the special career opportunities available to First Nations people into account when planning career weeks.