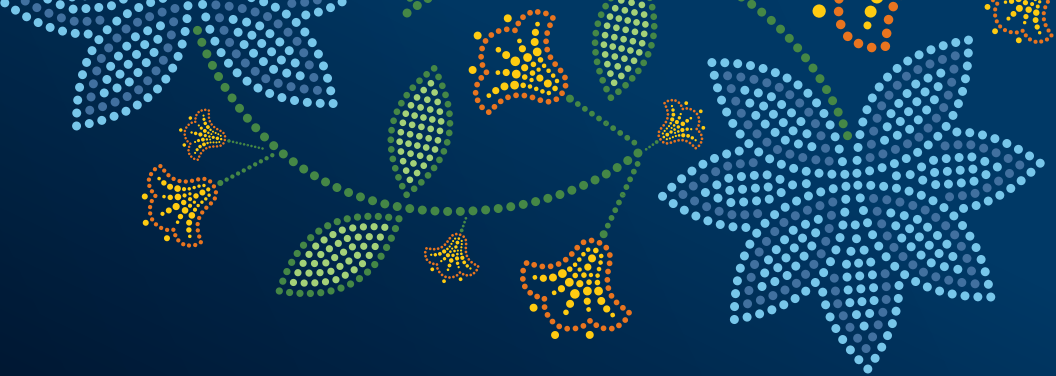


TRADITIONAL HARVESTING #1: THE WILD ROSE



Subject/topic

Language, Social studies, Harvesting

Overview/focus questions

Students will learn about the traditional growing and harvesting of plants important to the Métis, and will learn the names of these plants in Michif, with a focus on the wild rose.

Developed by

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Time

45-60 minutes

Grade level

Grades 1-4

Learning Goals

Students will:

- Be able to identify and describe the uses of the wild rose, using English and Michif terms.

Materials Needed

- *Traditional Harvesting* video
- Wild Rose colouring sheet (one per student)
- Métis Plant Harvesting image cards
- Michif Terms teacher card
- Colouring tools

Lesson Description

Teacher preparation and background information:

In Canada, there are three recognized groups of Indigenous Peoples: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The Métis Nation are self-defining people from a specific region (mainly the Canadian western prairies but also parts of British Columbia, Ontario, Northwest Territories, North Dakota, and Montana) with a unique culture, language, and history. The Métis are those who self-identify as Métis and are descended from Indigenous and European/Euro-Canadian people, and who acknowledge the conscious choice of their ancestors to identify as Métis because of a common history and past.

The official language of the Métis Nation is Michif, though there are other languages spoken by the Métis as well. Michif is spoken in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba, as well as Montana and North Dakota. Dating to the late 18th century, Michif is a hybrid language that blends together different languages, most commonly English, French, and Cree.

Michif is an oral language and, until very recently, had not been written down. There is no standardized orthography, and so spelling will vary depending on the speaker and region, as words are spelled phonetically. When learning Michif, the focus is not so much on the spelling and the writing of the words, as on the speaking. There are also other Michif languages, including French Michif and Northern Michif. As such, teachers will see words spelled in numerous ways throughout the lesson plans and videos in the Future of Michif project. The Michif primarily referred to and used in these lesson plans and through the online dictionaries and apps is known as Michif or Heritage Michif; however, you will see other spellings and pronunciations.

You will also hear some speakers in the videos use the term “Michif” to describe a people, and not only a language. The Michif are Métis who speak Michif, versus other languages spoken by the Métis, such as Cree or French.

The Métis traditionally obtained food through hunting, gathering, and farming. They lived according to the natural cycles of the land on which they lived or traversed. Métis hunted or trapped bison, wolves, deer, migratory ducks and rabbits (to name a few), with each season bringing different sources of food. Plants such as raspberries, Saskatoon berries and chokecherries were gathered or harvested. The late spring and early summer may have seen some people staying put on the land, growing wheat.

Prior to the lesson, teachers should watch the *Traditional Harvesting* video to learn about traditional Métis foods and harvesting methods and to become familiar with the terms for Métis foods.

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Connection to the Canadian Geography Learning Framework

Concepts of Geographic Thinking

- Patterns and trends
- Interrelationships
- Geographic perspective

Inquiry Process

- Evaluate and draw conclusions

Student Activities:

Minds on: Students will think about growing and harvesting by having a discussion about their own experiences with gardening. Students will learn about the importance of gardening and harvesting to the Métis.

Action: Students will watch the video *Traditional Harvesting* to learn about some of the foods grown and harvested by the Métis, and they will learn relevant terms in Michif. Students will participate in a discussion of the teachings from the video, such as about the uses of various plants and about Métis history.

Conclusion: Students will review the names of plants they saw in the video. They will then learn about the specific parts of the wild rose and colour the Wild Rose colouring sheet.

Lesson Implementation

Minds on

Engage students in the topic of growing and harvesting by having a discussion about their personal experiences with gardening. Possible discussion questions:

- Does your family have a garden or have you seen one? What do you grow and when?
- What types of things do you need to consider when starting and keeping a garden?
- Why do you think gardens are important? Why would gardens have been important to people in the past?
- Do you think wild plants are important? Why or why not?
- Have you ever harvested anything from your garden or the wild? What types of things did you have to consider when harvesting?

Explain to students that today, they will be learning about why growing and harvesting are an important part of Métis culture and history. The Métis have traditionally had a close relationship with the land (*la tayr*). Families worked together, with children learning about medicinal and edible plants and how to hunt and snare from their grandmothers (*noohkooms*), grandfathers (*mooshooms*), mothers (*maamaas*) and fathers (*baapaas*), so that they harvested only what was needed. They understood the life cycles of all of the natural resources they used and recognized the importance of proper harvesting to ensure sustainability for future generations.

Today, students will get the chance to learn about some of the foods grown and harvested by the Métis, and they will understand why the connection to the land is so important for the Métis.

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Action

Explain to students that they will be watching a video on traditional Métis harvesting practices. The first part will show them how one Métis person, Daryl, searches for and harvests different plants. Stop the video periodically to discuss with students what plants they see and why they are important. Discuss with students the importance of properly identifying plants and their suitability for consumption. Possible discussion questions:

- What do you notice about the landscape? How is it the same or different from where you live? How do you think landscape affects what can grow?
- What do you notice about where Daryl is looking? Does it look like a garden or the wild?
- Why is it important for Daryl to scatter the wild onion seeds? (*To ensure that a plant can continue to grow and provide for people and animals.*)
- The red and yellow flower Daryl shows us (the coneflower) attracts butterflies and birds. Why is that important? (*Pollinators help to grow our food; the flowers attract pollinators, feeding them, and the pollinators help plants to develop fruit and vegetables. Birds can help spread seeds and are important to the ecosystem.*)
- What does the wild rose look like and what is it used for?
- Why is the wild cacti important?
- How does the Saskatoon berry grow?
- Daryl explains that when it comes to making food, the limit is our imagination. What do you think is meant by this? (*Plants and other natural resources have many uses and it is important to have creativity when preparing food.*)
- Daryl talks about how to use the different parts of the bullrush (the lower part and the roots). Why do you think it is important to use multiple parts of a plant? How does this connect to the Métis relationship with la tayr? (*Things that are harvested are gifts, and should not be wasted. When we use as much of a plant as we can and do not waste, we are treating the resource with respect.*)
- Why is echinacea (coneflower) important?

The second part of the video follows Darlene on a tour of land in Crescent Lake, Sask. Here we see gardens which are used not only to grow food but to teach children about gardening. Darlene explains why gardening is important to the people who live at Crescent Lake, because it provides food and helps them survive through wintertime. Possible discussion questions for this section:

- How did the garden help the Métis survive the winter? (*They canned and preserved food from their gardens.*)
- Discuss the cycle of the garden and the foods harvested. (*Preparing, planting at different times, tending, harvesting at different times, canning.*)
- Darlene explains that Saskatoon berries are always ready to pick before the chokecherries. Do you think it is better to have these two different plants ready to pick at the same time or at different times?
- Darlene says that the chickens will be shared with the Métis community. How do you think this sharing affects the community? (*Sharing is an important value in the Métis community. By sharing chicken, Darlene is caring for others in her community and not keeping what she does not need.*)

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- Darlene mentions that the hazelnuts will be ready in August. Why is it important to know the life cycle of plants? *(You can plan what tasks you will need to do (harvesting/preserving), what you will eat, and it will also act as a clue for what will be ready to eat next. When you pay attention to the natural cycles of living things, you can better understand the natural world and how to live sustainably in the world.)*

Conclusion and Consolidation

Review with students the plants that they learned about today. Project or display the Métis Plant Harvesting image cards to remind students about three of these plants: the Saskatoon berry, the wild rose and the wild onion.

Hand out the Wild Rose colouring sheet to each student and instruct them to colour the rose as it appears in nature. Have students look at the wild rose and name identifying features: Most have pink flowers with five petals, a bushy yellow center, leaves that have “teeth” along the edge, and a stem with thorns. Have students colour the picture and write the name of the wild rose in Michif, *enn rooz*. Remind students to look at the projected picture of the wild rose for help in choosing their colours. Next, have students fill in the blanks to describe the uses of the wild rose. *(Petals were eaten as a snack. Wild roses have vitamin C.)*

For students that finish early, have them hand draw the other two projected pictures (the Saskatoon berry and the wild onion) or another plant that they learned about in the video.

Collect students’ work.

Extend your geographical thinking

- Create a Michif word wall.
- Use *Plants Growing Along the River (Plant Guide)*, published by the Gabriel Dumont Institute, to learn about plants that grow in and around the Métis community of Batoche, Sask.
- Use the resource *Medicines to Help Us* to learn and teach about the different plants found in Christi Belcourt’s painting and their uses.
- Go on a plant identification walk around the school yard and have students document what plants they see and their traits. Have students discover the Michif word for each plant, as well as uses (if any) and how each plant benefits the environment.
- Create a classroom or school garden and have students experience the life cycle and harvesting of different plants. Incorporate the teachings of the Métis relationship with the land and how to plant and grow for sustainability. Use the opportunity to talk about seed saving, preserving food, and using multiple parts of a plant.
- Invite a Métis Elder to speak to students about traditional growing, harvesting, and usage of plants.

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Modifications

- Bring in examples of some of the plants featured in the video for students to see, touch, and smell.
- Write the names of plants mentioned in the video in English and Michif on chart paper or a whiteboard for students' reference.
- Extension: Have students create a map of where certain plants featured in the video are found in their area or throughout Canada.
- Extension: Have students draw the wild rose by hand instead of using the colouring sheet.

Assessment Opportunities

- Assess student's ability to name the wild rose in Michif on their colouring sheet.
- Make observational notes of students' participation in the discussion of gardening and of the video.
- Assess students' ability to select the correct colours when colouring their wild rose.
- Assess students' ability to name two uses of the wild rose.

Sources and Additional Resources

- Metis Nation of Saskatchewan
- *Relatives with Roots* by Leah Dorian and translated by Rita Flamand
- Michif To Go (Google Play) or the Heritage Michif To Go (The App Store) apps
- *Medicines to Help Us* by Christi Belcourt with Rose Richardson and Olive Whitford, translated by Laura Burnouf and Rita Flamand
- *Plants Growing Along the River (Plant Guide)* from the Gabriel Dumont Institute
- Gabriel Dumont Institute Michif Dictionary
- Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada - Métis