

BAGIJIGAN - Offerings

Activity: The Gift of Giving

Overview

As described by Isaac in the video, the central theme of *bagijigan* is giving offerings. In particular, he speaks of the need to give an offering back to Mother Earth, thanking her for all that we have, and for providing everything for all mankind. He referenced the story in which the *two legged* became very greedy and selfish and how this is very representative of our world today.

In this lesson students will examine the concept of *offerings* and giving back to Mother Earth for all that she provides. Students will begin by watching *The Sacred Fisher Story* followed by Isaac's lesson on *bagijigan* or offerings. Using this as an initial provocation, students will then go for an outdoor nature exploration taking note of the various things that are present in the outdoor world and how these things provide for us everything that we have. Students will then have an opportunity to inquire into the many ways that Mother Earth provides our food, shelter, water, clothing, etc. what *giving back* or making an *offering* to Mother Earth could look like.

Assessment:

Assessment for, as, and of learning is developed through the co-creation of learning goals and success criteria with students, based upon chosen overall and specific expectations. Teachers are encouraged to choose focus areas from the overall expectations listed in relation to this lesson.

Minds on:

Watch The Sacred Fisher Story as told by Isaac Murdoch. Teachers are also encouraged to use the transcription of the story as a shared reading lesson.

Watch the video discussing the concept of Bagijigan - Offerings. The transcription is also provided.

Discuss with students the many things that we receive from Mother Earth (food, water, shelter, clothing, etc.).

Ask students, "What do you think we are given from the earth? What does the earth offer to us?"

With this in mind, take the students outside and ask them to notice deeply the many things that are present in the natural world and how these things provide for us.

Action:

Having returned from their nature walk (quite likely this would be day 2 of the activity) continue the discussion of all the things that the earth provides for us.

Working in pairs, ask students to consider one thing that they have in their lives that is special to them. Using the Social Studies Inquiry Model, direct students to find out more about how that special item was made, what materials were needed to make it, and what happens when that item is no longer needed, wanted, or just doesn't work.

Consolidation:

Ask students to share their information about the special item that was the focus of their inquiry.

Once students have completed sharing with their peers, ask them to reflect upon the focus of the lesson which was giving back or making an offering to Mother Earth.

Within Indigenous teachings the concept of seven generations is very important, as each generation needs to look backward seven generations for teachings and wisdom, and forwards seven generations to ensure that life is kept in balance and sustained.

With this in mind, ask students the question of, "If Mother Earth provided what was needed to make _____ (insert item), what did you give back to Mother Earth?"

Teachers are encouraged to chart these student responses and integrate this conversation into an ongoing inquiry as to how we can give back to the earth in order that the lives of all living things are sustained and kept in balance.

Scripture Reflection:

Job 12:7-10

But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.

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Grandfather Teaching: Dabaadendiziwin—Humility:

To be humble is to listen and to not interfere. To listen is to also learn, which is the point to all these teachings. To be humble is to try to live in balance with the Earth and to recognize where we sit in creation. Part of doing this is through offerings, by giving without expecting anything in return. Humility is knowing that we are all a sacred part of Creation and that we are equal, no better than anything else. Humility is to be practiced with all of Creation. It is to live in service to others. Knowing that you cannot know everything.

The opposite of this is ego.

~Nancy Rowe

Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

The Ontario Catholic Graduate School Expectations provide a set of overriding principles that serve to guide Catholic students through their Catholic education faith journey. The expectations serve as a continuous reminder of the behaviours that are to be exemplified throughout their lives.

Connected Expectation:

A Discerning Believer: *formed in the Catholic Faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection, and moral living*

Virtues Program

Virtue: Faith (September) is an attitude which encourages us to involve God in our lives and helps us to maintain and develop our relationships with God and with others both when things are going well and when they are not.

Possible Connections to Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum Documents

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

GRADE 1

Living a Moral Life

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding that we are created in the “image of God” and that this gift calls us to live in a way which reflects this truth.

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding that we are able to think (i.e. use our reason) about our actions and to know that they affect our relationship with God, other people, and ourselves.

GRADE 2

Living a Moral Life

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding that God wants to help us through the gift of His grace to live a Christian life and that we can respond to this gift by the way we live our lives.

GRADE 3

Living a Moral Life

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding of how God teaches us to be good and to reflect this goodness in our actions (i.e. Moral Law – revealed in Scripture e.g. Old Law – Ten Commandments, New Law – Law of the Gospel).

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of sin and our human capacity to choose to commit actions which do not show love for God or neighbour (i.e. personal sin, and social sin).

Living in Solidarity

LS1: Understand that the Holy Spirit assists us to develop and strengthen our relationship with Jesus and one another through our participation in society (i.e. human community / Body of Christ).

LS2: Focus: Human dignity

Understand that God created all persons in his one image; equal in their human dignity yet diverse in their being (i.e. male and female, weak and strong, diversity of race, colour, creed, charisms, talents) and this equality and diversity is to be respected.

FAMILY LIFE

Created and Loved by God

A2. Exploring Human Nature: demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans are both unique and share a common human nature with each other.

A3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing: apply an understanding of the unique and shared aspects of human nature in personally relevant contexts.

Created Sexual: Male and Female

C1. Appreciating God's Goodness: appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by creating, protecting, and sustaining life.

Living in the World

E1. Appreciating God's Goodness: appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by caring for all of God's gifts of creation.

E2. Exploring Human Nature: demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans participate in society and fulfill the responsibility to care for and build God's world.

E3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing: apply an understanding of the global dimension of human nature in personally relevant contexts.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Oral Communication

1. Listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes;
2. Use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes;

Reading

1. Read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, graphic, and informational texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning;
2. Recognize a variety of text forms, text features, and stylistic elements and demonstrate understanding of how they help communicate meaning;

Writing

1. Generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience;
2. Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience;

SOCIAL STUDIES

GRADE 1

People and Environments: The Local Community

B1. Application: describe some aspects of the interrelationship between people and the natural and built features of their community, with a focus on how the features of and services in the community meet people's needs

B2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some aspects of the interrelationship between people and different natural and built features of their local community, with a focus on significant short- and long-term effects of this interrelationship

GRADE 3

People and Environments: Living and Working in Ontario

B2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some of the environmental effects of different types of land and/or resource use in two or more Ontario municipal regions, as well as some of the measures taken to reduce the negative impact of that use

SCIENCE

GRADE 1

Understanding Life Systems: Needs and Characteristics of Living Things

1. Assess the role of humans in maintaining a healthy environment;
2. Investigate needs and characteristics of plants and animals, including humans;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic needs and characteristics of plants and animals, including humans.

Understanding Structures and Mechanisms: Materials, Objects, and Everyday Structures

1. Assess the impact on people and the environment of objects and structures and the materials used in them;

Understanding Matter and Energy: Energy in Our Lives

1. Assess uses of energy at home, at school, and in the community, and suggest ways to use less energy;

GRADE 2

Understanding Structures and Mechanisms: Movement

1. Assess the impact on society and the environment of simple machines and mechanisms;

Understanding Matter and Energy: Properties of Liquids and Solids

1. Assess ways in which the uses of liquids and solids can have an impact on society and the environment;

Understanding Earth and Space Systems: Air and Water in the Environment

1. Assess ways in which the actions of humans have an impact on the quality of air and water, and ways in which the quality of air and water has an impact on living things;

GRADE 3

Understanding Life Systems: Growth and Changes in Plants

1. Assess ways in which plants have an impact on society and the environment, and ways in which human activity has an impact on plants and plant habitats;

Understanding Earth and Space Systems: Soils in the Environment

1. Assess the impact of soils on society and the environment, and of society and the environment on soils;