

# DODEM – The Clan System

## **Grandfather Teaching: Minaadendamowin—Respect:**

Respect is accepting everyone & their ideas just they way they are. No one is better than anyone or anything else. Respect means that everything is equal because they have spirit. The Earth does not need us to survive. We need the Earth and each other to survive. Respect is how we conduct ourselves to make the world a better place.

~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 Caring Family Member who:*** attends to family, school, parish and the wider community.

## **Virtues Program**

**Virtue: Respect (February) is seeing the goodness in others.**

It helps us to see others as God sees them, to accept them as they are, and to treat them with dignity.

**Virtue: Empathy (October) is the ability to put oneself in another's shoes and the capacity to feel what the other person is feeling.**

# 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.

#### **Living in Solidarity**

LS1: Demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be made in God’s image both in our equality and diversity and explain why this is the source of our human dignity.

LS2: Focus: Human Dignity

Understand that as human beings made in God’s image we are social by nature and are called both as individuals and as a community to offer friendship and charity to all people.

### **GRADE 2**

#### **Living a Moral Life**

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding that God has established Laws to guide us (i.e. to judge) in deciding (i.e. choice) how to act and that when we act in ways that break God’s Law of Love we need to seek forgiveness from God and from the ones we have offended.

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.

#### **Living in Solidarity**

LS2: Focus: Option for the poor and vulnerable

Understand that we are responsible for the gift of our dignity as human beings and are to respect this gift in others (i.e. our neighbour) by following the example of Jesus who calls us to share (i.e. Eucharist) serving the needs of others.

### **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).

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding of the gift of freedom and responsibility that we have in the choices that we make in trying to live a good Christian moral life.

## **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**

A1. Appreciating God's Goodness: demonstrate an appreciation that humans have been created in the image of a loving 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.

### **Living in Relationship**

B1. Appreciating God's Goodness: appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by living in relationship with others.

B2. Exploring Human Nature: demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the bonds of family and friendship are central to human life and shape human identity and development.

B3. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing: apply an understanding of the role of relationships in shaping human identity and development 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.

### **Growing in Commitment**

D1. Appreciating God's Goodness: appreciate that humans are called to image the love of God by committing to faithful relationships.

D2. Exploring Human Nature: demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which humans grow in their ability to develop committed and trustworthy relationships.

### **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**

#### **Heritage and Identity: Our Changing Roles and Responsibilities**

- A1. Application: describe some of the ways in which people's roles, relationships, and responsibilities relate to who they are and what their situation is, and how and why changes in circumstances might affect people's roles, relationships, and responsibilities as well as their sense of self
- A2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some aspects of the interrelationship between their identity/sense of self, their different roles, relationships, and responsibilities, and various situations in their daily lives
- A3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding that they and other people have different roles, relationships, and responsibilities, and that all people should be treated with respect, regardless of their roles, relationships, and responsibilities

#### **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 2**

### **Heritage and Identity: Changing Family and Community Traditions**

A1. Application: compare some significant traditions and celebrations among diverse groups and at different times, and identify some of the reasons for changes in these traditions/celebrations

A2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some of the past and present traditions and celebrations within their own family and the communities to which they belong

A3. Understanding Context: describe some of the major groups in their community, including different types of families, and some of the ways in which traditions and heritage are passed on by such groups

## **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;

### **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;
2. Investigate how different types of energy are used in daily life;

## **GRADE 2**

### **Understanding Life Systems: Growth and Changes in Animals**

1. Assess ways in which animals have an impact on society and the environment, and ways in which humans have an impact upon animals and the places where they live;
2. Investigate similarities and differences in the characteristics of various animals;
3. Demonstrate an understanding that animals grow and change and have distinct characteristics.

## **THE ARTS**

### **DRAMA**

B1. Creating and Presenting: apply the creative process to dramatic play and process drama, using the elements and conventions of drama to communicate feelings, ideas, and stories;

B2. Reflecting, Responding, and Analysing: apply the critical analysis process to communicate feelings, ideas, and understandings in response to a variety of drama works and experiences;

B3. Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts: demonstrate an understanding of a variety of drama and theatre forms and styles from the past and present, and their social and/or community contexts.

**DODEM - The Clan System**  
**Activity: I Am Responsible**  
**Primary**

**Overview**

As described by Isaac in the video, the Dodem (clan) system teaches everyone his or her responsibilities. In the Fisher Story, there are four animals that displayed various characteristics and attributes.

In this lesson students will discuss the characteristics of the four animals in the Fisher Story. Students will then explore the characteristics of other animals and decide upon one animal that they relate to. It is suggested that students research the six classifications of animals (mammals, fish, insects, birds, amphibians, reptiles) and the various characteristics of these families as well as specific animals within each classification. Students will then develop a story around their chosen animal that demonstrates their characteristics and responsibilities. Teachers are encouraged to invite an elder or knowledge keeper into their class to discuss the clan system.

**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:**

Teachers may wish to refer to the section called Naaknigewin – Natural Law for further background knowledge.

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 Dodem – The Clan System. The transcription is also provided.

Have students identify the characteristics and attributes displayed by the four animals in the Fisher Story. Allow students to make connections between their characteristics and how these can be seen as responsibilities.

Included in the resource is a video [‘Animal Classifications Video’](#) that can serve as a provocation to an initial discussion around the six different classes of animals. Of course, teachers may wish to use and find their own resources for this purpose. A chart of the six classifications of animals has also been included, the ‘Animal Classifications Chart’.

**Action:**

Students will be asked to explore the question, “What does it mean to be responsible?” Through the inquiry process, students will gather information about various different animals that will serve to justify their choice of animal to represent themselves. Students are encouraged to keep in mind the important concept of responsibility within the clan system. What would their responsibilities be based on their animal’s characteristics? Students will then create a story on how their animal demonstrates their characteristics and responsibilities.

**Consolidation:**

Through various opportunities (oral presentation, multi-media presentation, dramatic representation) students will share with the class their understanding of responsibility as it relates to their animal through the story they created.

A suggested extension activity could be to create a declaration of responsibilities for their class, family, community, etc. based upon their collaborative strengths from the different animals discussed.

*Further Reflection Guiding Questions:*

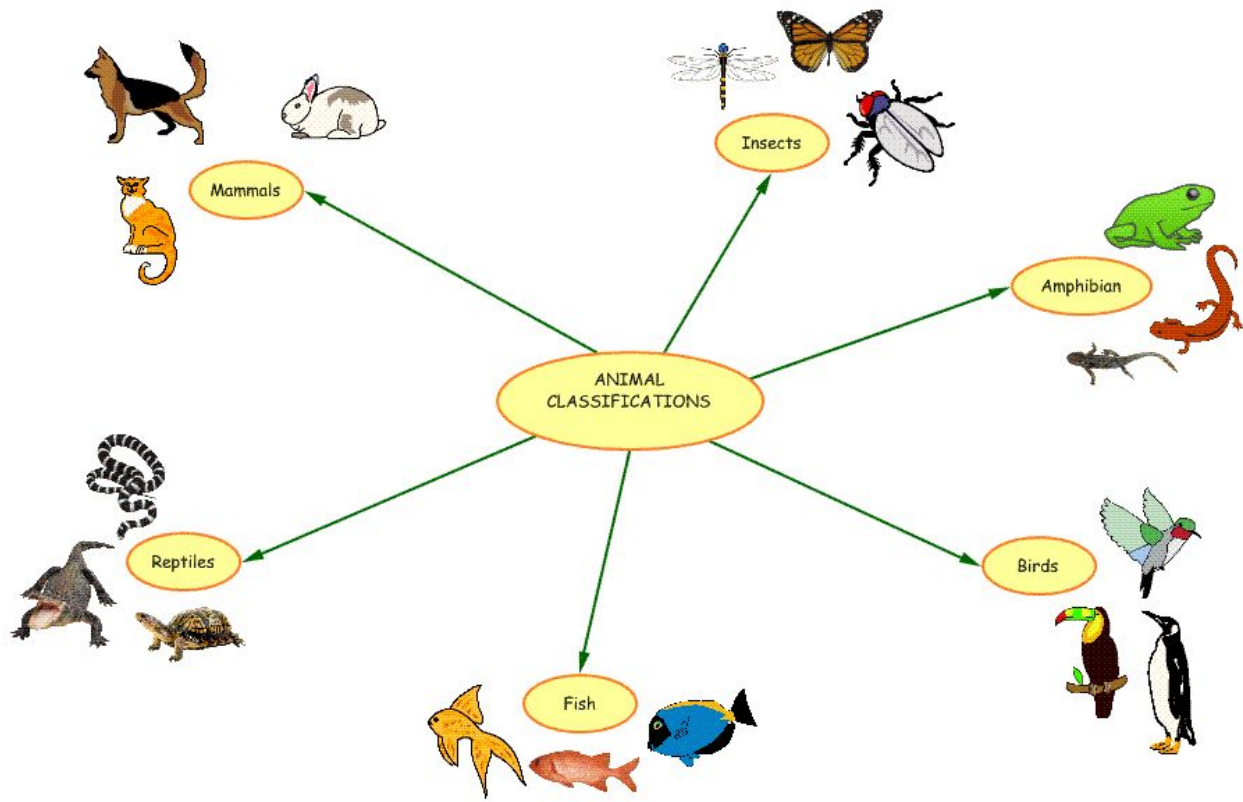
*Why is the clan system so important for the First Nations Peoples? Teacher Note: Highlight important concepts of governance, responsibilities.*

*The significance of the clan governance system is based on responsibilities rather than rights. How is this connected to the concepts of respect and empathy?*

*How are the values and teachings of the clan system reflected through our Catholic teachings?*

*How can we work together to improve our school, at home, and our community?*





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