

Zaagi'idiwin - Love

Activity: The Love of the Land

Overview

As described by Isaac in the video, the central theme of Zaagi'idiwin is love. He spoke of the different forms that love may take, particularly the type of love that has to do with caring and providing. Examples included the sun shining on flowers, the goodness of rain and the flowing rivers, and the love of a mother and father for their children. Isaac also spoke of the need to take the perspective of love in that it is “not what you get, but what you give”.

By many, love is described as the strongest of all human emotions. Love is a universal emotion that transcends all things in life, guiding our relationships with people, places and things. In this lesson, students will explore the various types and facets of love that they may experience - love for parents, a sibling, an animal, an activity, a food, a place, a partner. They will explore how the love of the land is a very strong emotion for all Indigenous Peoples and how this Love continues to be a driving force behind their values with regards to stewardship, environmental sustainability, and land that was once their home.

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:

Brainstorm with students the various types of love. You may wish to begin with unconditional love which was explored in the primary lesson. Discuss how various types of love can have similar yet different qualities.

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 Zaagi'idiwin - Love. The transcription is also provided.

As a shared reading activity, read the poem *My Heart Soars*, by Chief Dan George. Discuss the emotions and the love that is being shared by the author. Teachers may wish to have students work in groups and do a dramatic reading of the poem.

My Heart Soars

By Chief Dan George

*The beauty of the trees,
the softness of the air,
the fragrance of the grass,
speaks to me.*

*The summit of the mountain,
the thunder of the sky,
the rhythm of the sea,
speaks to me.*

*The faintness of the stars,
the freshness of the morning,
the dew drop on the flower,
speaks to me.*

*The strength of fire,
the taste of salmon,
the trail of the sun,
and the life that never goes away,
They speak to me.*

And my heart soars.

Following this, read the following quote by Chief Dan George.

*The time will soon be here when my grandchild will long for the cry of a loon,
the flash of a salmon, the whisper of spruce needles,
or the screech of an eagle.*

But he will not make friends with any of these creatures and when his heart aches with longing, he will curse me.

Have I done all to keep the air fresh?

Have I cared enough about the water?

Have I left the eagle to soar in freedom?

Have I done everything I could to earn my grandchild's fondness?

Following the reading of the second piece, discuss with students:

- How is this second reading similar to the first?
- How is the mood different between these two readings?
- What type of love is being demonstrated by the author?

Action:

On a national or international level direct students to inquire into the practices of resource extraction in various areas of the country and around the world. Direct them to ask questions of what the resources are, the reasons for the resource extraction, the particular region in which the resources are found, the effects on the environment, and why Indigenous Peoples are challenging these practices.

Direct students to prepare a presentation outlining the particular resource issue. Ask them to draw their own conclusions with regards to the actual reason(s) for the resource extraction.

Consolidation:

In the video for this teaching, Isaac described the sun, the rivers, the earth as giving unconditionally, continuing to give and give. Reflecting back upon the second reading by Chief Dan George. Discuss how this quote reflects the concept of giving back, and of the author questioning if they have done all they can do to save the environment for generations to come.

Discuss with students how our practices can give back to the environment and how our practices can have a positive impact on the generations to follow.

Extensions:

Read the following quote by Chief Dan George and discuss how this quote is connected to the earlier readings, ie. that the love of the land is so strong

among Indigenous Peoples that when that connection is lost, it is very difficult to maintain a strong spirit in order to love yourself, others, and the world around you.

Love is something you and I must have.

We must have it because our spirit feeds upon it.

We must have it because without it we become weak and faint.

Without love our self-esteem weakens.

Without it our courage fails.

Without love we can no longer look out confidently at the world.

Teachers may wish to extend this learning into an environmental poster campaign or challenge that could be included in the school's Ecoschool application.

Further Reflection Guiding Questions:

How does God provide for us?

How is God's love unconditional?

How does Mother Earth provide for us?

How is the love of Mother Earth unconditional?

What can we do to show our love for Mother Earth?

ONLINE LEARNING SUGGESTIONS

CONTENT:

Upload the video "Zaagi'idiwin - Love" from the website and provide a link to the page.

Provide poem *My Heart Soars*, by Chief Dan George

My Heart Soars

By Chief Dan George

*The beauty of the trees,
the softness of the air,
the fragrance of the grass,
speaks to me.*

The summit of the mountain,

*the thunder of the sky,
the rhythm of the sea,
speaks to me.*

*The faintness of the stars,
the freshness of the morning,
the dew drop on the flower,
speaks to me.*

*The strength of fire,
the taste of salmon,
the trail of the sun,
and the life that never goes away,
They speak to me.*

And my heart soars.

Provide the **quote by Chief Dan George.**

*“The time will soon be here when my grandchild will long for the cry of a loon,
the flash of a salmon, the whisper of spruce needles,
or the screech of an eagle.*

But he will not make friends with any of these creatures and when his heart aches with longing, he will curse me.

Have I done all to keep the air fresh?

Have I cared enough about the water?

Have I left the eagle to soar in freedom?

Have I done everything I could to earn my grandchild's fondness?”

DISCUSSION:

Suggested discussion questions:

What are some examples of unconditional love?

How does Mother Earth provide for us?

How is the love of Mother Earth unconditional?

What can we do to show our love for Mother Earth?

ASSIGNMENT:

Create

Select 5 pictures that display the concept of love. Describe the caring that you see displayed in the pictures. Identify who or what is providing the love and caring in each of the photos and who or what is benefitting from the love and care being provided to them. Discuss the concept of unconditional love, what it means, and some examples of this.

Create

Select a song that communicates the idea of unconditional love. Create a video for their song that is a visual representation of the concept of unconditional love. Media types might include Powerpoint, Prezi, iMovie, etc.

Summarize

Revisit the words from Isaac, "It's not what you get but what you give".

How is this related to unconditional love?

Share examples of how you can demonstrate unconditional love.

ZAAGI'IDIWIN - Love

Grandfather Teaching: Zaagi'idiwin—Love:

Love comes from our heart through our feelings. We should be encouraged to listen to our hearts. We need to trust our feelings. Too often we live in our minds which creates fear and anxiety. We no longer trust in that we will always be looked after by Mother Earth, that she provides us everything that we need. We must also show our love to Mother Earth through gratitude, giving thanks to creation and to acknowledge all things that came before us.

Love must be unconditional. To know love is to also know peace.

~Nancy Rowe, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

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 Collaborative Contributor: *who finds meaning, dignity, and vocation in work which respect the rights of all and contributes to the common good.*

Virtues Program

Virtue: Love (April) God wants us to serve and to see the goodness in everyone we meet.

Virtue: Conscience (November) is the voice of God within us. A developed conscience helps us make decisions that encourage and support truly loving relationships.



Possible Connections to Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum Documents

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

GRADE 4

Living a Moral Life

ML2: Explain how we are called, through the help of our consciences, to discover God's truth and obey God's will.

Living in Solidarity

LS1: Understand that there is a legitimate role and need for the charism of authority to ensure and promote the common good of society and that the Christian witness is a duty of obedience to the just laws (i.e. moral order) which promote the human community.

LS2: Focus: the common good and stewardship of creation

Demonstrate an understanding of how the gifts received as human beings invite us to be responsible stewards of creation (i.e. natural world created by God) and to bring about His reign in the human community (i.e. common good of societies and nations of the earth).

GRADE 5

Living a Moral Life

ML2: Demonstrate an understanding of conscience as a source of help in judging our moral actions and our responsibility for the results of our actions.

ML3: Explain the importance of the teaching role of the Church (i.e. Magisterium) in assisting society and individuals to reflect on moral issues and to respond in ways that promote the dignity of the human person and the call to holiness.

Living in Solidarity

LS2: Focus: Fundamental love for the poor and vulnerable

Understand that human solidarity in our Christian living, understood as "friendship", is reflected in the example of Jesus who calls us to act justly by putting the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

LS3: Demonstrate an understanding of Christianity as a religion that seeks unity within the experience of diversity.

GRADE 6

Living a Moral Life

ML1: Demonstrate an understanding of how the Natural Moral Law is the foundation for the Decalogue (i.e. Ten Commandments) and that they express the norms of reason for judging human morality and the building of the human community.

ML3: Demonstrate an understanding of the important personal responsibility that each person has to form their moral conscience as a sign of Christian maturity and a commitment to the call to holiness.

Living in Solidarity

LS1: Understand that each person is responsible for participation in society, to discern, to freely choose their vocation and to make a contribution in the world.

LS2: Focus: Principle of Rights and Responsibilities

Understand that by virtue of our human dignity, out of respect for equality and diversity of being and the common good, all human beings are to enjoy certain fundamental human rights (e.g. the right to life, liberty, religious freedom, food, shelter, health care, education, and employment).

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.

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 4

People and Environments: Political and Physical Regions of Canada

- B1. Application: assess some key ways in which industrial development and the natural environment affect each other in two or more political and/or physical regions of Canada (FOCUS ON: Cause and Consequence; Interrelationships)
- B2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some issues and challenges associated with balancing human needs/wants and activities with environmental stewardship in one or more of the political and/or physical regions of Canada (FOCUS ON: Perspective)
- B3. Understanding Context: identify Canada's political and physical regions, and describe their main characteristics and some significant activities that take place in them (FOCUS ON: Significance; Patterns and Trends)

GRADE 5

Heritage and Identity: First Nations and Europeans in New France and Early Canada

- A1. Application: analyse some key short- and long-term consequences of interactions among and between First Nations and European explorers and settlers in New France prior to 1713

People and Environments: The Role of Government and Responsible Citizenship

B1. Application: assess responses of governments in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments, to some significant issues, and develop plans of action for governments and citizens to address social and environmental issues (FOCUS ON: Interrelationships; Cause and Consequence)

B2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate Canadian social and/or environmental issues from various perspectives, including those of Indigenous peoples as well as of the level (or levels) of government responsible for addressing the issues (FOCUS ON: Perspective)

B3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of the roles and key responsibilities of citizens and of the different levels of government in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments (FOCUS ON: Significance)

GRADE 6

Heritage and Identity: Communities in Canada, Past and Present

A3. Understanding Context: demonstrate an understanding of significant experiences of, and major changes and aspects of life in, various historical and contemporary communities, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, in Canada (FOCUS ON: Significance; Continuity and Change)

People and Environments: Canada's Interactions with the Global Community

B1. Application: explain the importance of international cooperation in addressing global issues, and evaluate the effectiveness of selected actions by Canada and Canadian citizens in the international arena (FOCUS ON: Interrelationships; Perspective)

B2. Inquiry: use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some global issues of political, social, economic, and/or environmental importance, their impact on the global community, and responses to the issues (FOCUS ON: Cause and Consequence)

B3. Understanding Context: describe significant aspects of the involvement of Canada and Canadians in some regions around the world, including the impact of this involvement (FOCUS ON: Significance; Patterns and Trends)

SCIENCE

GRADE 4

Understanding Life Systems: Habitats and Communities

1. analyse the effects of human activities on habitats and communities;
2. investigate the interdependence of plants and animals within specific habitats and communities;
3. demonstrate an understanding of habitats and communities and the relationships among the plants and animals that live in them.

Understanding Earth and Space Systems: Rocks and Minerals

1. assess the social and environmental impacts of human uses of rocks and minerals;
2. investigate, test, and compare the physical properties of rocks and minerals;

3. demonstrate an understanding of the physical properties of rocks and minerals.

GRADE 5

Understanding Life Systems: Human Organ Systems

1. analyse the impact of human activities and technological innovations on human health;

Understanding Matter and Energy: Properties of and Changes in Matter

1. evaluate the social and environmental impacts of processes used to make everyday products;
2. conduct investigations that explore the properties of matter and changes in matter;

Understanding Earth and Space Systems: Conservation of Energy and Resources

1. analyse the immediate and long-term effects of energy and resource use on society and the environment, and evaluate options for conserving energy and resources;
2. investigate energy transformation and conservation;
3. demonstrate an understanding of the various forms and sources of energy and the ways in which energy can be transformed and conserved.

GRADE 6

Understanding Life Systems: Biodiversity

1. assess human impacts on biodiversity, and identify ways of preserving biodiversity;
3. demonstrate an understanding of biodiversity, its contributions to the stability of natural systems, and its benefits to humans.

Understanding Matter and Energy: Electricity and Electrical Devices

1. evaluate the impact of the use of electricity on both the way we live and the environment;

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;

VISUAL ARTS

D1. Creating and Presenting: apply the creative process to produce a variety of two- and three-dimensional art works, using elements, principles, and techniques of visual arts to communicate feelings, ideas, and understandings;

D2. Reflecting, Responding, and Analysing: apply the critical analysis process to communicate feelings, ideas, and understandings in response to a variety of art works and art experiences;

D3. Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts: demonstrate an understanding of a variety of art forms, styles, and techniques from the past and present, and their sociocultural and historical contexts.