

Canada's First People and Physical Geography Unit

Unit Rationale

This unit combines elements from the First Nations and the physical geography unit of the Social Studies 9 IRP. Both of these units can be integrated together for the purpose of demonstrating that the physical geography of North America had a tremendous impact on the way of life of First Nations. This unit could be used as the beginning unit of the Socials 9 curriculum. This unit is particularly important in the Socials 9 curriculum as it sets the stage for the historical context of the course. Namely, the growth of the fur trade, the American Revolution and the growth of British North America are important historical contexts of the Socials 9 IRP. On that note, the diverse physicality of North America is synonymous with the diverse nature of First Nations groups in North America.

The focus of this unit will be to examine the ways in which the divergent physical geographic nature of North America affected First Nations groups in profound ways. As a result of these considerations, it will be clear that the physical environment influenced First Nations groups in terms of their diet, their cultural rituals, and the organization of their social structures. The result of this analysis will demonstrate that the development of First Nations groups in North America is inextricably linked with an interrelationship with the physical environment. In understanding First Nations society, it is imperative to understand the ways in which the physical environment played a determining role in the development of these societies.

By examining the different ways in which First Nations interacted with their environment students will understand that this culture was both dynamic and complex. By studying the dynamism of First Nations culture, students will recognize that there were marked differences between First Nations groups. These differences, in turn, relate to the different geographic features where various First Nations groups resided.

Students will be required to be critical in evaluating how First Nations were affected by their environment. Students will be required to use primary and secondary sources in evaluating the impact that the physical environment had on the development of First Nations societies. In this way, students will come away with a clear understanding how First Nations developed distinct, complex, yet unique societies by closely interacting with their environment.

Prescribed Learning Outcomes

From this unit students will come away with the following prescribed learning outcomes:

- students will construct, interpret, and use graphs, tables, grids, scales, legends, contours and various types of maps
- describe and compare North America's diverse geographical regions
- demonstrate understanding of the ways in which First Nations interacted with their environment
- compare and contrast First Nations groups in terms of their cultural attributes
- examine how the physical geography of North America presented various barriers to First Nations groups in terms of trade, travel, and language

Unit Question

How did the physical environment of North America influence First Nation societies?

Unit Goals

- 1) Students will recognize how the physical geography of North America influenced human development
- 2) Students will identify a problem and identify possible solutions
- 3) Using maps and legends in social studies as a way to represent various types of information
- 4) The ability to distinguish between primary and secondary sources

LESSON ONE: Origins

Title:

Was geography a factor in First Nations groups arriving in North America?

Objectives:

- 1) Students will be introduced to the various theories that explain how First Nations arrived on the North American continent.
- 2) Students will understand how the anthropological data suggests that First Nations arrived to North America over the Bering land bridge
- 3) Students will be introduced to how First Nations myth helps explain how Aboriginal peoples descended on the North American continent.

Body of Lesson (80 minutes):

Hook (5 minutes)

The class will begin with the teacher reading the myth of the Raven as a means for explaining the creation of the Haida peoples. The students will be asked to pay close attention to what the Raven represents within the context of First Nations spiritual beliefs.

Activity 1 – Myth as a key Element of First Nations history (10 minutes)

- students will be introduced to the myth of a key element of First Nations oral history.
- students will be divided into groups of 3 or 4 and must brainstorm how myths are used as a way to interpret history – students will be asked to focus on what function myths serve in the context of First Nations history
- each group will share its findings with the class

Mini-Lecture (15 minutes)

The mini-lecture will serve the purpose of describing the function of mythology in First Nations history. Students will be introduced to the notion that First Nations recorded their history orally, and thus there are no written records of these theories. Students will understand that the myth of the Raven is consistent with First Nations oral tradition.

Activity 2 – Alternative Theories for Understanding First Nations Creation (10 minutes)

In this activity students will be divided into groups of 2 or 3 and each group must come up with 3 alternative theories in explaining how First Nations arrived on the North American continent. Each group will discuss their findings with the class and must provide one piece of evidence in arriving at their conclusion.

Mini-Lecture: Introduction to Anthropology of First Nations (15 minutes)

This mini-lecture will serve to introduce students to the notion of anthropological inquiry. Students will be introduced to the anthropological evidence that suggests that First Nations arrived on the North American continent from Mongolia by way of the Bering land bridge. The theory will introduce students to the concept of **glaciation**, which suggests that First Nations were able to travel across the Bering land bridge, which connected present-day Russia with present-day Alaska. Thus, this theory provides evidence that suggests that geographic features played an important role in First Nations arriving in North America.

Activity 3 – Cultural Ethnography Assignment (20 minutes)

After students have been introduced to the concept of anthropology as a means of conducting historical inquiry, students will be put into pairs. Each pair of students

will have to do a cultural ethnography on one another. The assignment requires students to gather information about their partner, which will allow them to gain a

better cultural understanding of them. Thus, each student will interview one another. The worksheet for this assignment will consist of 5 questions that relates to culture and ethnicity. After each person has conducted an interview, each student will be required to write a half-page to a one-page synopsis of what they learned about their partner. The purpose of the assignment is to use oral testimony as a way of conducting historical inquiry. This assignment will due by the beginning on next class.

Closure (5 minutes)

Students will have the remainder of class to conduct their cultural ethnography interviews and start on their one page synopsis. Students will be reminded to focus on what they learned about their partner as a result of doing the activity. Students who finish early may read the chapter in *Crossroads* on The Native Peoples of Canada.

Assessment

Students will be assessed whether they understand the principles that are involved in utilizing oral history. Depending on their responses it will be discernable whether students understand how oral history can be a useful way of conducting historical inquiry. Another purpose of the assignment is to show one aspect of how anthropologists conduct their research without the use of written records.

Resources

- 1) *Crossroads*, Chapter 7
- 2) *Origins*, Chapter 2
- 3) *Indian Legends of Canada – Myth of the Raven (Haida First Nations)*
- 4) *Cultural Ethnography Worksheet*

LESSON TWO: The Environment

Title: In what ways were First Nations dependent on their physical environment?

Objectives

- 1) Students will recognize how the surrounding environment affected various First Nations' food source.

- 2) Illustrate how the topography and climate of the region influenced the choice of shelter, clothing, and rituals for First Nations groups.

Hook (5-10 minutes)

Students will be given a brief scenario whereby they must assume the role of a First Nations person living in two separate environments. The scenario will appear as follows:

Scenario 1

You are a First Nations person living on the west coast of North America. Your village is nestled within a deep rainforest where there are numerous old growth cedars. There is a major river that runs through your village. The climate of the region is moist and temperate. Taking these considerations in mind comment on how you adapt and interact with your environment.

Scenario 2

You are a First Nations person living on the plains of what is now present day Alberta. The region in which you live is mostly flat, with few trees. However, the landscape is covered with lush grass. There are many bison that inhabit the area in which you live. Describe the ways in which you and your people will be able to utilize the environment so that you and your people can flourish

Debriefing (10-15 minutes)

Each group will debrief their conclusions with the rest of the class. In the debriefing session students will be urged to compare the findings from other groups with their own groups. The conclusion that students should arrive at as a result of this activity is the fact that different First Nations differed from one another in very profound ways. This beginning exercise will act of the key differences that existed between First Nations groups in North America.

Mini-Lecture: First Nations and the Environment (15 minutes)

This mini-lecture will focus in on some key themes that differentiate various First Nations groups with one another. The whole class will brainstorm these various differences. The focus will be to connect the diverse nature of the geography of North America with the diverse nature of First Nations groups. The key themes that will be addressed will be availability of food sources, language, political organization, and spiritual beliefs. For the mini-lecture the comparison will occur between the Northwest

Coast First Nations and the Plains First Nation. This introduction will provide a good segue to the following activity.

Activity: Chart Activity of Major Elements of First Nations Groups of North America (35 minutes) *(see attached resource sheet)*

The following activity will require students to fill in information on the class handout on the major elements of First Nations culture. The chart will involve the following categories: Location, Environment, Food Source, Language, Political Organization, and Spiritual Beliefs. Students will have to fill in these categories on the following First Nations groups: Northwest Coast, Plateau, Plains, Eastern Woodlands/Iroquois, and the Arctic.

Students will find the information to complete this assignment in Crossroad Chapter 7, *The Native Peoples of Canada*. The students will have the remainder of class to work on the assignment and the remainder must be completed for homework and submitted next class to be marked.

Closure (5 minutes)

In closing up the lesson students will be evaluated with regards to their progress on the chart assignment. It will be reiterated that the chart is due next class and is for marks. The chart will serve the purpose of providing notes on the various First Nations groups in North America. The finished chart will be necessary for students to complete the summative assessment at the conclusion on the unit.

Resources

- 1) Crossroads, Chapter 7
- 2) First Nations scenario worksheet
- 3) First Nations spreadsheet worksheet

Assessment

Students will be assessed on the responses that they give to the scenario exercise. The responses will demonstrate whether the students recognize the diverse nature of various First Nation groups in Canada. The chart exercise will be evaluated for marks and it will be determined whether students have the required information as per the prescribed categories. This assignment needs to be satisfactory for the final summative assessment of the unit.

LESSON THREE: First Nations as a Diverse Cultural Entities

Title: To what extent were First Nations groups in different from one another?

Objectives:

- 1) Students will understand the concepts of homogeneous and heterogeneous
- 2) Differences of First Nations groups rested with differences in geography, social structure, and custom
- 3) Students will recognize that there were differences between First Nations groups themselves

Hook (15 minutes)

The class will begin with viewing the first 10 minutes from the first volume in *Canada: A People's History*, which introduces students to the diverse and sophisticated nature of First Nations societies. Students will be asked to make two columns in their notebook: one for similarities and one for differences. After viewing the video there will be a short debriefing of the key points that the students came up with. This discussion will provide an excellent segue into the mini-lecture.

Mini-Lecture: Homogeneity v. Heterogeneity(15 minutes)

The focus of the mini-lecture will be to introduce students to the concept of homogeneity and heterogeneity. A chart will be placed on the board that examines the similarities and differences of First Nations groups. The key topics that will be covered will include diet, language, political organization and spiritual beliefs. This exercise will be a good opportunity to assess the students understanding of the chart that they worked on and completed last class.

Activity 1: Video Presentation and Worksheet (25 minutes)

After the mini-lecture students will view the next 15 minutes of the *Canada: A People's History* video on the dynamic nature of First Nations societies. The accompanying worksheet will ask students probing questions, which will require students to evaluate the diverse aspects of First Nation societies. After the video presentation, the worksheet will be debriefed and a discussion of student responses will ensue.

Activity 2: Take Home Worksheet (15 minutes)

For the remainder of the class students will have the remainder of the class to work on the homework assignment, which requires students to answer a series of short answer questions, which focuses on the diverse nature of First Nations groups in Canada.

Closure (5 minutes):

Students will be advised that this assignment is for homework, and will be taken up in class next day. However, it will not be turned in for marks. Students will be advised to read Chapter 6 in *Crossroads*, as next class will focus exclusively on the physical geography of North America.

Assessment

While the take home assignment will not be collected for marks it will be checked to see if it is completed. Students will be assessed on whether they understand the concepts of homogeneity and heterogeneity as it relates to the diverse nature of First Nations groups in Canada. Also, student responses will be evaluated during the video debriefing. The take home assignment will be taken up first thing next class and will be debriefed. This assignment will provide students with a good synopsis of the material already covered in the unit. Students will be able to utilize this assignment when completing the summative assessment for the unit.

Resources

- 1) *Canada: A People's History, vol. I* – video
- 2) First Nations Worksheet on First Nations Diversity

LESSON FOUR: Physical Geography of North America:

Objectives:

- 1) Students will understand the diverse nature of North America is impacted by different geographical factors.
- 2) Students will be introduced to the different sub-disciplines within the study of geography – spatial, physical, and human.
- 3) Students will understand that the diverse nature of the North American continent in turn reflects the diverse nature of First Nations groups in North America.

Review of In-Class Worksheet (5-10 minutes)

Before the geography section is introduced the in-class worksheet on homogeneity and heterogeneity will be taken up in class. Due to the fact that the questions are broadly stated it will be useful to compare answers from different students in order to get multiple perspectives. By fully analyzing each question, students will come away with a firm understanding of the learning objectives from the previous lesson.

Hook (10 minutes)

In order to introduce students to the geography component of the unit, students will be put into groups of 3 and asked to brainstorm their current thoughts of what the study of geography entails. Each group will report its findings to the class and some general conclusions will hopefully be made. At the end of this activity students will be made aware of the key three strands of the study of geography: spatial, physical, and human. This initial activity will provide an excellent transition into the mini-lecture on the principles of physical geography.

Mini-Lecture : Introduction to Physical Geography (15 minutes)

After debriefing the initial activity on students thoughts about geography the mini-lecture will focus on the key elements of physical geography. It is expected that students have read Chapter 6 in *Crossroads*, so that they have some prior knowledge of the study of geography. Three key topics will be addressed as they relate to the study of physical geography: topography, climate, and vegetation. The focus of the mini-lecture will be to show students that differences in physical geography are a result of variations in these features. The mini-lecture will provide students with a firm basis of the various factors that influence the diverse geographic nature of the North American continent. On that note, the mini-lecture will serve as a prelude to the activity, which will require students to fill in a chart on the major geographic regions of North America. This activity will be very similar to the previous chart assignment that students had to complete on the various First Nations groups.

In-Class Activity: Physical Geography Chart (45 minutes)

For the duration of the class students will be able to work on the geography chart assignment, which requires students to fill in information according to the following categories: location, climate, topography, and vegetation. Students will find the information for this chart in Chapter 6 in *Crossroads*. Students will need to fill in the above categories for the following regions: Western Cordillera, Appalachian Region, Coastal Plains, Great Lakes –St. Lawrence Lowlands, Interior Plains, Canadian Shield, Intermountain Region, the Arctic. Since this assignment is quite lengthy students will have some time (about 20 minutes) next class to work on the assignment as well. Therefore, the assignment will be due in two classes and will be graded for marks.

Closure (5 minutes)

Students will be reminded that they will be given time to work on this assignment next class. Students will also be advised that all the information that they need for the assignment will be found in Chapter 6 in *Crossroads*. If students work diligently, they will be able to get a good portion of the assignment completed.

Assessment

Students will be assessed on the information that they provide in each category for each region. This assignment used in tandem with the First Nations spreadsheet assignment will provide students with a cumulative basis in completing the summative assessment assignment at the end of the unit. The assessment of the physical geography chart will demonstrate whether students have a firm understanding of the diverse geographical regions of North America.

Resources

- 1) Chapter 6, *Crossroads*
- 2) Physical Geographic Regions of North America Spreadsheet

LESSON FIVE: Physical and Cultural Barriers

Title: What geographical barriers presented obstacles to First Nations groups?

Objectives

- 1) Students will understand that there were a number of geographical barriers that prevented different First Nations groups from interacting with one another: some of these barriers included: mountain ranges, bodies of water, and distance
- 2) Students will understand that cultural barriers also presented obstacles to First Nations in interacting with other groups: namely, language, tribal customs, and social hierarchy

Hook (5-10 minutes)

A map of First Nations settlement c. 1500 will be put onto the overhead projector. Students will be divided into groups of three, whereby they must brainstorm the various obstacles that prevented First Nations from interacting with other groups on a continuous basis. Students will get about five minutes to brainstorm their ideas, and then each group will share their findings with the rest of the class. The results will hopefully point to physical as well as cultural obstacles. This will provide a transition into the mini-lecture on the physical and cultural barriers that First Nations had to endure.

Mini-Lecture (15 minutes)

The mini-lecture will consist of two parts: one, coming up with examples of where physical features presented obstacles to First Nation groups. Some examples might be how the Rocky Mountains presented a physical obstacle between the Plateau and the Plains First Nations. Other examples will demonstrate how bodies of water and distance

presented physical obstacles in different groups interacting with one another. Two, in terms of cultural barriers, students will be introduced to such aspects as language, spiritual beliefs, and political organization.

Activity: Group Role Play (25-30 minutes)

For the next activity students will be divided into six groups, whereby each group must assume the identity of one of the 6 main First Nations groups: Northwest Coast, Plateau, Plains, Northern Hunters, Iroquois Nations, and the Arctic. Each group must identify what specific physical and cultural obstacles faced their groups. Then, each group must find ways to overcome those obstacles by only using elements of their physical environment. Thus, the question requires students to come up with ways First Nations can form a larger community as opposed to a loose connection of separate nations. Students will have approximately 15-20 minutes to work on their answers in this exercise. Students will be able to use their completed First Nations worksheets in brainstorming their ideas. Each group will discuss their findings with the rest of the class, and comparisons will be made between groups.

Closure (25 minutes)

For the remainder of the period students will have the opportunity to complete their geography chart assignments. If students finish they may hand in their assignment. Otherwise, all assignments will be due at the beginning of next class. Students will also be informed that they have a quiz next class on the physical geographic regions of North America. The quiz will consist of the elements that students should have in their geography charts. Thus, the quiz will be drawn from Chapter 6 of *Crossroads*.

Assessment

Students will be assessed on the group role-play, and whether they have made the connections between the effects that physical geography had on various First Nations groups. The activity requires students to not only assess information about specific First Nations, but requires them to be critical in how they go about using it. Good responses require students to use high-level processing skills whereby they foresee possible implications in combining various pieces of information together.

Resources

- 1) *Crossroads*, Chapter 7
- 2) *Native American Peoples Map*, Longman American History Atlas

LESSON SIX: Using Maps in Social Studies

Title: What purpose do maps serve in social studies?

Objectives:

- 1) Students will be introduced to how maps are a good source in representing various types of information
- 2) Maps are more than visual tools representing data, instead they help tell a historical story
- 3) Students will be introduced to the idea that maps are secondary sources that can give greater understanding to primary sources

Hook (5 minutes)

Introduce First Nations map c. 1500 on overhead. Ask students to quietly ponder what this particular map is describing or trying to get across to the viewer. Then, break students into groups of 3 or 4 and have them discuss the benefits that maps have in social studies.

Activity 1: Why Use Maps in Social Studies (10-15 minutes)

Break students into groups of 3 or 4 and have them discuss the benefits that maps have in social studies. Give students about 5 minutes to brainstorm ideas and then bring the class back together. Write on the board the various reasons that students come up with. Evaluate each student response by way of an example. Compare and contrast the variety of student responses. This activity provides a natural transition to a mini-lecture on 4 key uses of maps in social studies. There may of course be some over lap from the student responses.

Mini-Lecture: 4 Uses for Maps in Social Studies (10-15 minutes)

After reviewing the student responses, 4 reasons to use maps in social studies will be given by way of examples. The four uses will be as follows:

- 1) Maps are a good way to summarize various pieces of information into a concise whole.
- 2) When used in tandem with a primary document or text, maps give us a better understanding of the topic being discussed.
- 3) Maps are much more than ways just to record data – they are interactive sources that help tell a story.

- 4) Maps require students to be critical and analytical about the topic being covered. Namely, maps are subjective documents that reveal a certain perspective or predisposition.

Activity 2: Steps in Creating a Map (5 minutes)

Students will be instructed to form into groups of three again and discuss the elements that are required in a map. Students will have 5 minutes to brainstorm their ideas, and

then each group will discuss their findings with the rest of the class. The findings from each group will be written on the board.

Mini-Lecture: Steps in Creating a Map (10 minutes)

After each group has shared their findings, a mini-lecture will be given on the key elements on creating a map. The key elements of the mini-lecture will be as follows:

- 1) Every map must have a title – the title defines the focus and scope for the map
- 2) A map must have a legend which clearly defines what each symbol on the map represents
- 3) Maps must be clear and unambiguous – that is, a map must be labeled neatly and accurately so as to not confuse the reader

These three elements will be referenced by the *Native American Peoples Map, c. 1500*. (This map is included as part of the resource package).

Activity 3: Administering of the Physical Geography Quiz (20 minutes)

The next part of the lesson will be the administering of the physical geography quiz. This will serve as another assessment strategy in addition to the performance assessment at the end of the unit. The quiz will be worth 10 marks (5 multiple choice and 5 fill-in-the-blank). There is also a two-mark bonus question. Students will have 15 minutes to complete the quiz and then the quiz will be marked in class.

Closure (5 minutes)

The class will mark the quiz and return the quizzes to the teacher to be entered in the mark book. Also, students will be told that they are doing a mapping assignment next class, and thus they are reminded to bring the appropriate supplies (pencils, erasers, rulers, pencil crayons).

Assessment

The purpose of the lesson was to introduce students to the basic underpinnings in creating a map. The students will require this requisite knowledge in completing the performance assessment for next class. The geography quiz was another tool that assessed students'

understanding of their geography charts. The quiz is a good evaluative tool as it will determine whether students have a sufficient level of understanding as to the physical geographic regions of North America.

Resources

- 1) *Native American Peoples Map, Longman American History Atlas*
- 2) Physical Geography Quiz (self-creation)

LESSON SEVEN: Performance Assessment

The following lesson is a work period for students whereby they complete the summative performance assessment for the unit. This assignment has two components: a mapping component and a written component. The mapping component requires students to map out the North American continent by focusing on major First Nations groups, major bodies of water, and major mountain ranges. The written component requires students to choose **one** First Nation group and briefly describe how that group interacted with the environment. A more detailed description will occur in the assignment outline.

Here is a list of **learning objectives** that the performance assessment is evaluating:

- 1) Do students have a firm spatial knowledge of where the various First Nations groups in North America are situated?
- 2) Have students included the necessary information in the creation of their map? Ie. title, legend, clear and unambiguous symbols?
- 3) Have students made the connection between the interrelationship between First Nations and the physical geography of North America?_

Part I: Mapping Assignment:

In the study of social studies we are faced with many different concepts that require us to summarize information in a clear and straightforward way. One of the ways we are able to accomplish such a goal is through the use of maps. Maps not only allow us to summarize information concisely, but they also give a visual representation of that information. Furthermore, maps are also highly interactive sources of information, because they also help tell a story, which in turn will give us a better degree of understanding of the topic involved.

Assignment: Mapping Out the North American Continent

For this part of the assignment, your task will be to construct a map that focuses on three key aspects of North America; major bodies of water; major mountain ranges; and major First Nations groups that existed prior to Europeans arriving on the North

American continent. In this assignment you must include the following information in your map:

Bodies of Water

- 1) The Hudson's Bay
- 2) The Great Lakes – Superior, Michigan, Ontario, Huron, Erie
- 3) The Saint Lawrence River
- 4) The Mississippi River
- 5) The Strait of Georgia

Mountain Ranges

- 1) The Appalachian Mountains
- 2) The Rocky Mountains
- 3) The MacKenzie Mountains
- 4) The Selkirks
- 5) The Coast Mountians

First Nations Group – c. 1500

- 1) Northern Hunters
- 2) Northwest Coast
- 3) Iroquoian Nation
- 4) Plains
- 5) Plateau
- 6) Arctic

Attached with this sheet is a map of the major First Nations groups in North America at around c. 1500. As you can see, these groups vary not only by size, but also by their methods of acquiring food. This data indicates that the physical environment played a predominant role in how First Nations groups were able to survive and develop as a distinct people.

Criteria for Assignment

In evaluating this assignment I am most interested in 3 components:

1) Your Map Must Have a Title

- in constructing a map, the title is the most important component, because it gives anyone who views the map a frame of reference with respect to the topic of the map.

2) You Must Construct a Legend for Your Map

- the legend of a map clearly defines the symbols that are to be used in the map
- by clearly defining the symbols, the viewer is absolutely clear as to what each symbol represents
- for this assignment, you must incorporate rivers, mountains, and First Nations groups into your map; no matter how you go about this, make sure you are crystal clear how you go about constructing your legend

3) Artistic Merit is Not as Important as Clarity and Presentation

- even though I urge you to use colours in labeling your map, you are not being judged on how artistic you are in completing your map
- what I am most concerned with is how you are able to present the information; that is:

Do your symbols correlate well with your legend?

Are the various components in the right spots?

Is it clear where a differentiation between the regions exists?

Some Tips for Completing the Assignment

- 1) In constructing your legend use symbols that are easily distinguishable from one another. For example, a symbol for mountains could be a series of mountain peaks that looks like the following:

^
^^
^^^
^^^^

Also, a body of water can be illustrated simply through a blue line or shading.

- 2) In constructing the First Nations regions it might be a good idea to trace the regions first in pencil before shading them in. If you make any mistakes, it is a lot easier to correct in pencil as opposed to pencil crayons.

Rubric: Holistic Scale

Excellent

- title clearly represents all the entities being represented
- map includes all necessary criteria; all mountains, bodies of water, and First Nations Groups are correct
- legend is articulated; complete and well-layed out; excellent detail
- neat, concise, and well-thought out presentation; shows extensive effort
- shows a definite understanding of different geographical regions of North America

Satisfactory

- title reflects on some of the entities, but not all
- map has all criteria, but some things may be misplaced or incomplete
- legend is fairly clear, but could be detailed better; a bit ambiguous in spots
- neat for the most part, but some parts are a bit sloppy
- shows some understanding of geographical regions of North America, but lacks in others

Poor/Not Satisfactory

- title does not reflect entities at all
- map is missing most of the criteria; many entities are misplaced
- legend is convoluted and is not discernable
- very sloppy; reflects little to no effort put into assignment
- shows lack of understanding on geographic regions of North America; no assessment can be made on student's understanding

Part II: Written Component

Using your knowledge of the interconnection between the physical geography of North America and the development of First Nations societies, choose **one** of the First Nation groups that we have studied and write a 1-2 page analysis of them. Your written analysis should adhere to the following two objectives:

- 1) Describe and give examples of the ways in which this group adapted and interacted with their physical environment. Be as specific as possible
- 2) Describe and give examples of the ways in which the physical environment created obstacles for this particular group. In providing your reasons use specific examples as much as possible.

Rubric: Holistic Scale:

Excellent

- shows clear understanding of the way the particular group interacted with their environment
- examples are excellent in that they are specific enough to support the points being argued for
- clearly outlines the obstacles that the physical environment presented to this group
- examples are specific and clearly bolster points being argued for

Satisfactory

- shows good understanding of how particular group interacted with their environment, yet there examples are too broad and not specific enough
- good outline of obstacles that faced particular group, but examples are not clear enough to show clear understanding of relationship between First Nations and the physical environment
- leaves some ambiguity in assessing their understanding in terms of the relationship between the physical environment and the development of this group's society.

Poor

- shows no or little understanding of relationship between the particular group and environment
- examples are either incorrect, irrelevant or absent in supporting key points
- shows no or little understanding of the obstacles that the physical environment forced upon the particular group
- examples in order to support points are irrelevant, erroneous, or completely lacking

Note

Both Part I and Part II will be marked separately and then a cumulative mark will be given

Learning Objectives

1) Describe and Compare North America's Diverse Geographical Regions

This assignment requires students to have a firm understanding of the geographic regions of North America in completing their map. This assignment

will force students to recognize that the physical features of North America presented various obstacles to the various First Nation groups in North America.

For example, students will be able to recognize that that North America is comprised of many different regions that impact the environment in different ways.

2) Demonstrate the Ways in Which First Nations Interacted with Their Environment

Through this assignment students must assess ways in which First Nations groups interacted with their environment. Hopefully, students will recognize that due to the vastness and dynamic nature of the North American landscape, First Nations had to have an intimate relationship with their environment. As a result, First Nations groups had different ways of interacting with the environment. For example, the

Northwest Coast First Nations were primarily fishers, whereas the Plains First Nations hunted buffalo. Furthermore, the physical geographic features forced First Nations to react to their environment in unique ways.

3) Using Maps to Summarize Information Visually – (as opposed to a text based summation)

Finally, this assignment will assess whether students have an understanding of the basics in constructing a map. The purpose of the assignment is to see if students can represent information visually in a straightforward and concise manner. The students are given much latitude in how they create their map, legend, and title. It has been suggested that they use pencil crayons in completing their map, but it is not necessary. The focus of the assignment is to see if students can correctly summarize various pieces of information by way of a map. Thus, the assessment will be on whether the students have created a visual representation of the material; it is not being judged on its artistic merit.

Closure

Students will have the entire period to work on the assignment, but it is unlikely that most will finish in the specified time. Students will have to have the entire assignment completed and ready to hand in by next class. Students will be made aware of these considerations and as such there will be no surprises.

Resources

- 1) *The Canadian Oxford Desk Atlas*
- 2) *First People Map, Canada Revisited*
- 3) Mapping and Written Assignment Criteria
- 4) Blank Map of North America

Resources Page

LESSON ONE: Origins

1) *Haida Myth of the Raven*

"In the beginning, before the creation of the world, the earth was completely covered by a vast ocean and the sky was all gray clouds. The cloud kingdom was ruled by the great Sha-lana. Sha-lana's Chief servant was Raven."

"One day Raven enraged his master and was cast out into the ocean world. He flew over the ocean for a long period of time until he became weary. Unable to find a place to rest, Raven became angry. He began to beat his wings upon the water until the water rose up and touched the clouds around him."

"When the water receded back into the ocean there appeared rocks upon which Raven rested. These rocks grew and stretched across the ocean. The rocks turned into sand and after a short period of time trees began to grow on the sand. After many moons the sand had turned into beautiful islands, which we know today as the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii)."

"Raven enjoyed his kingdom, yet he became bored and lonely. He decided he needed someone to help him. So one day he gathered two large piles of clam shells upon the beach and transformed them into two human females. These two women complained saying that they should not have both been created as women. So to make them happy Raven threw limpet shells at one and turned her into a man, creating the Haida Gwaii people."

Clark, E., *Indian Legends of Canada*, McClelland and Stewart: Toronto, 1991.

The myth of the Raven is good example of how oral history can be used as a primary source. Also, this myth is important for students, because it is an interpretation of First Nations creation. I would use this to open up the unit as it is a moving story that will engage students.

Cultural Ethnography Assignment

Your task in this assignment is to become an amateur anthropologist. Below you will see five questions, which you will ask your partner. Write your answers down on the sheet, as well as any other observations that you might think are important. After both of you have conducted an interview,

Cranny, Michael. *Crossroads: A Meeting of Nations*, Prentice-Hall: Toronto, 1998, 181-210.

Chapter 7 provides a good overview of the different First Nations groups in Canada and how they are distinct from one another. The chapter does a fine job in demonstrating how First Nations were connected with the surrounding physical environment.

McFadden Fred, Ed. *Origins: A History of Canada*, Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd.: Markham, Ontario, 1995, 26-45.

Chapter 2 in *Origins* describes the evidence in favour of the Bering land bridge thesis. However, it is also a good source as it accounts for First Nations creation myth. Thus, since it incorporates multiple perspectives it is a very appealing source.

First Nations Scenario Worksheet

In the scenarios that follow, you are to assume that you are a First Nations person living within a community of your people. Your task in this assignment is to answer both scenarios as to how your people would relate and interact with the environment. Focus in on how the 2 environments differ markedly. The role you assume in each environment should be very different.

Scenario 1

You are a First Nations person living on the west coast of North America. Your village is nestled within a deep rainforest where there are numerous old growth cedars. There is a major river that runs through your village. The climate of the region is moist and temperate. Taking these considerations in mind comment on how you adapt and interact with your environment.

Scenario 2

You are a First Nations person living on the plains of what is now present day Alberta. The region in which you live is mostly flat, with few trees. However, the landscape is covered with lush grass. There are many bison that inhabit the area in which you live. Describe the ways in which you and your people will be able to utilize the environment so that you and your people can flourish

LESSON TWO: The Environment

First Nations Spreadsheet Worksheet

Categories	Northwest Coast	Plateau	Plains	Iroquois	Inuit
Location					
Food Source					
Environment					
Language					
Political Organization					
Spiritual Belief					

LESSON THREE: First Nations as Diverse Cultural Entities

Canada: A People's History Worksheet

Answer the following questions from the information presented in *The Crossing*

- 1) What do the differing creation myths of the Iroquois, Blackfoot, and Haida suggest about First Nation groups?

- 2) What allowed the 'First Peoples' to travel from Asia into North America?

- 3) What evidence is there to suggest that the 'First People' did not originally descend from North America?

- 4) What evidence suggests that there were inhabitants in what is now Newfoundland, some 7000 year ago?

First Nations Diversity Worksheet: Similarities and Differences

- 1) Define homogeneous and heterogeneous.

- 2) Explain how these terms relate to the similarities and differences between North America's First Nations.

- 3) Briefly describe the environment and the native people of the following geographic regions:
 - a) Iroquois/ Eastern Woodlands
 - b) Arctic
 - c) Plains/Prairies
 - d) Northwest Coast
- 4) Native people believed that all living things have souls. How does this belief affect their view of their relationship with the natural environment around them?

- 5) Read *Origins* pp. 42-43 to explain the difference between Christianity's view of nature and First Nations beliefs.

Worksheet borrowed from Michel Mey – Point Grey Secondary

“When the World Began,” *Canada: A People's History*, One Hour, CBC Video, 2000, videocassette

This video is a terrific visual resource in complementing this lesson as it clearly demonstrates how First Nations were indeed different. This demonstrated through the different creation myths that different First Nation groups had. The video also clearly illustrates how different First Nation group interacted with their environment in very different, yet profound ways.

LESSON FOUR: Physical Geography of North America

Cranny, Michael. *Crossroads: A Meeting of Nations*, Prentice-Hall: Toronto, 1998, 158-180.

Chapter 6 in *Crossroads* provides students with an excellent overview as to the various geographical regions that make-up the North American continent. The chapter is very thorough in describing the differences between regions, as well as the various geographical factors that are at play. This chapter will be an excellent resource for students in completing the chart assignment that is a component of this lesson.

Physical Geography Comparison Chart of North America

Regions	Location	Climate	Topography	Vegetation
Western Cordillera				
Interior Plains				
Canadian Shield				
Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Lowlands				
Appalachian Region				
Coastal Plains				
Intermountain Region				
Arctic				

LESSON FIVE: Physical and Cultural Barriers

Gerald A. Danzer, Ed. “*Native American Peoples, c. 1500,*” in Longman American History Atlas. New York: Longman Publishers, 1999.

This is a superb secondary source in demonstrating the numerous First Nations groups that existed in North America prior to Europeans arriving. It is excellent in that its colour scheme is clearly differentiated which makes it easy to decipher. The map clearly illustrates the various trade routes at the time, which suggests that some groups actively traded with other groups. Thus, this is an excellent resource in offering students a visual representation of how First Nations existed around 1500.

Cranny, Michael. *Crossroads: A Meeting of Nations*, Prentice-Hall: Toronto, 1998, 158-180.

LESSON 6: Using Maps in Social Studies

Physical Geography Quiz

This quiz serves as an additional assessment tool in addition to the performance assessment at the end of the unit. The quiz is fairly straight-forward in that it is assessing the accuracy of the geography charts that the students have already completed. It focuses on reinforcing the learning objectives that the chart assignment was aiming to achieve. Students can use the quiz as a resource in completing the performance assessment as well.

Gerald A. Danzer, Ed. “*Native American Peoples, c. 1500,*” in Longman American History Atlas. New York: Longman Publishers, 1999.

LESSON 7: Summative Performance Assessment

Part I: Mapping Assignment:

In the study of social studies we are faced with many different concepts that require us to summarize information in a clear and straightforward way. One of the ways we are able to accomplish such a goal is through the use of maps. Maps not only allow us to summarize information concisely, but they also give a visual representation of that

information. Furthermore, maps are also highly interactive sources of information, because they also help tell a story, which in turn will give us a better degree of understanding of the topic involved.

Assignment: Mapping Out the North American Continent

For this part of the assignment, your task will be to construct a map that focuses on three key aspects of North America; major bodies of water; major mountain ranges; and major First Nations groups that existed prior to Europeans arriving on the North

American continent. In this assignment you must include the following information in your map:

Bodies of Water

- 5) The Hudson's Bay
- 6) The Great Lakes – Superior, Michigan, Ontario, Huron, Erie
- 7) The Saint Lawrence River
- 8) The Mississippi River
- 5) The Strait of Georgia

Mountain Ranges

- 6) The Appalachian Mountains
- 7) The Rocky Mountains
- 8) The MacKenzie Mountains
- 9) The Selkirks
- 10) The Coast Mountains

First Nations Group – c. 1500

- 7) Northern Hunters
- 8) Northwest Coast
- 9) Iroquoian Nation
- 10) Plains
- 11) Plateau
- 12) Arctic

Attached with this sheet is a map of the major First Nations groups in North America at around c. 1500. As you can see, these groups vary not only by size, but also by their methods of acquiring food. This data indicates that the physical environment played a predominant role in how First Nations groups were able to survive and develop as a distinct people.

Criteria for Assignment

In evaluating this assignment I am most interested in 3 components:

4) Your Map Must Have a Title

- in constructing a map, the title is the most important component, because it gives anyone who views the map a frame of reference with respect to the topic of the map.

5) You Must Construct a Legend for Your Map

- the legend of a map clearly defines the symbols that are to be used in the map
- by clearly defining the symbols, the viewer is absolutely clear as to what each symbol represents
- for this assignment, you must incorporate rivers, mountains, and First Nations groups into your map; no matter how you go about this, make sure you are crystal clear how you go about constructing your legend

6) Artistic Merit is Not as Important as Clarity and Presentation

- even though I urge you to use colours in labeling your map, you are not being judged on how artistic you are in completing your map
- what I am most concerned with is how you are able to present the information; that is:

Do your symbols correlate well with your legend?

Are the various components in the right spots?

Is it clear where a differentiation between the regions exists?

Some Tips for Completing the Assignment

- 3) In constructing your legend use symbols that are easily distinguishable from one another. For example, a symbol for mountains could be a series of mountain peaks that looks like the following:

^
^^
^^^
^^^^

Also, a body of water can be illustrated simply through a blue line or shading.

- 4) In constructing the First Nations regions it might be a good idea to trace the regions first in pencil before shading them in. If you make any mistakes, it is a lot easier to correct in pencil as opposed to pencil crayons.

Part II: Written Component

Using your knowledge of the interconnection between the physical geography of North America and the development of First Nations societies, choose **one** of the First Nation groups that we have studied and write a 1-2 page analysis of them. Your written analysis should adhere to the following two objectives:

- 1) Describe and give examples of the ways in which this group adapted and interacted with their physical environment. Be as specific as possible
- 2) Describe and give examples of the ways in which the physical environment created obstacles for this particular group. In providing your reasons use specific examples as much as possible.

Pleva, E.G. ed., *The Canadian Oxford desk atlas of the world*. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1963).

Students will use this atlas as a resource in completing the mapping component of the performance assessment. Since students need to label mountain ranges and bodies of water, students will need to spatially locate these items. This will give students an opportunity at learning to use an atlas. This is a skill that they will require in future social studies courses.

