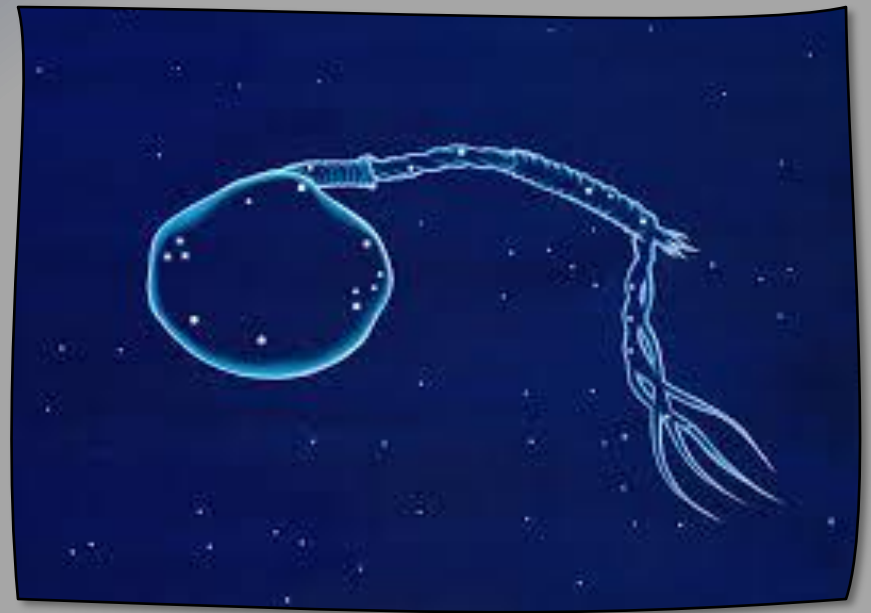


INDIGENOUS THEME 2020-2021: SKYWORLD TEACHINGS

March: Sisikwun, The Rattle

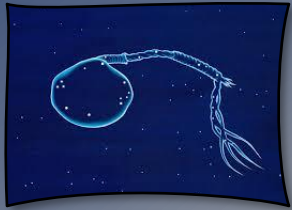


WHY SEE THE STARS THROUGH AN INDIGENOUS LENS?

Watch Wilfred Buck speak to his own learning journey about Skyworld and the importance of continuing this focus.



- 100 Word Song



MARCH STAR SIGHTINGS

Spring is in the air! Sisikwun, or the Rattle, is a sign of Spring, of new life and renewal. It is seen in the Eastern part of the sky and connected to Keewatin (Polaris). Though it is not the simplest to see, Sisikwun (or SeeSeekwun) does not have a Greek counterpart. It is a constellation that remains special to First Nations people.

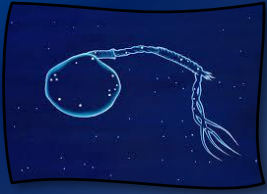
Seeseekwun (Rattle)

This constellation includes the five major stars of Cepheus as well as Polaris. The term Seeseekwun comes from the root word, "seekwun", meaning the spring season.

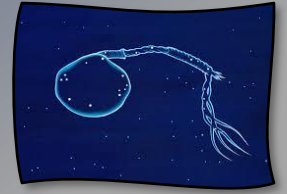
In the Spring, ice begins to melt from the bottom up, not from the top down. The water crystallizes the ice and the blowing wind rubs these crystals together making a soft rattling sound. This sound reawakens all sleeping life and signals a new life cycle to begin. We, humans, try to imitate the sound when we make rattles called See-seekwun, the sound of spring.



"Just before the sun comes up, the sun exudes energy and the earth absorbs this energy,"
Wilfred Buck

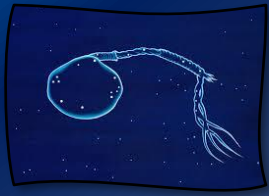


THE STORY OF SISIKWUN



Watch [Tipiskawi Kisik](#) and learn as Wilfred Buck tells the story of Sisikwun as a sign of Spring approaching!

Fun Fact:
"Sikwan" means spring. "Sisikwun"
means Spring is Coming.

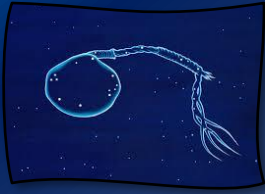


HOW CAN I FIND SISIKWUN?

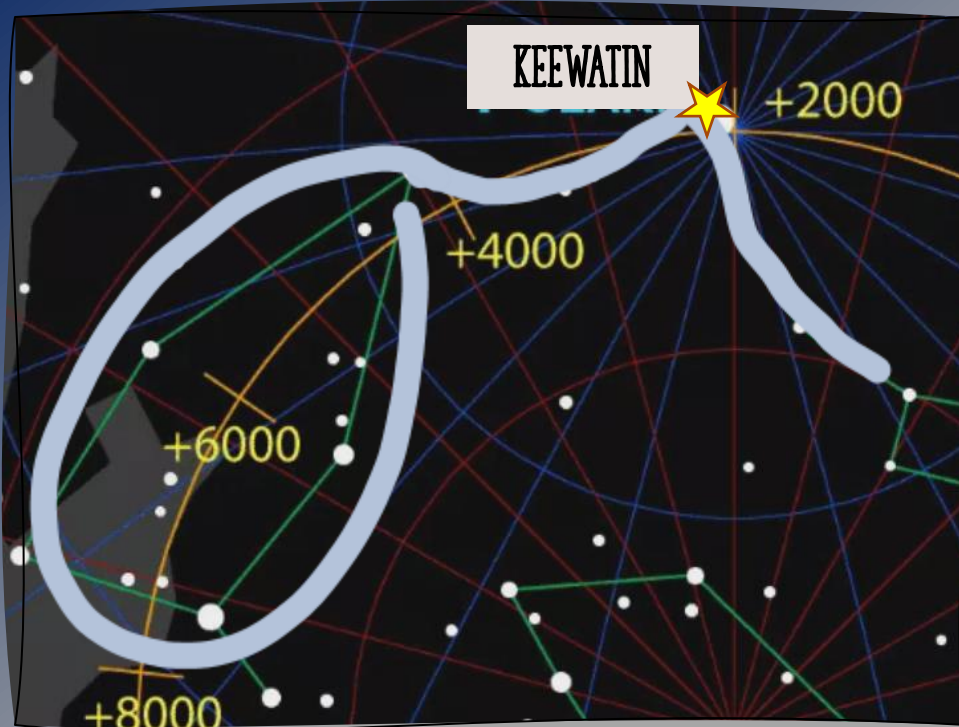
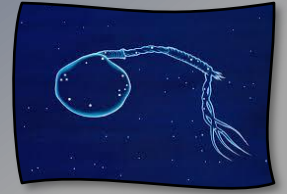


Remember Makinak (the Turtle)? Well, Sisikwun is located within these stars! It is anchored by Keewatin (Polaris, or the North Star), and the rattle shell wraps around the stars of the Turtle.





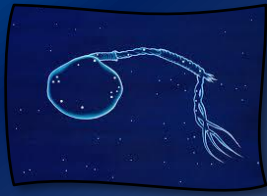
SISIKWUN ADDITIONAL INFO



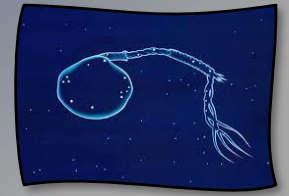
The following interview illustrates the importance of the Rattle to the Cree People. The interview is posted verbatim, and discusses how Rattles are made, why they are made, who makes them and for what purpose. Click on [The Rattle: An Interview](#) for the full article.

There is great potential for activities with older students here as reading and discussing interview style writing is wonderful literacy prep.

- What traditional components exist here?
- Did they surprise you? Did you discover a "Eurocentric" perspective in your thinking?
- What is the "take-away" from this interview?
- Why is it so important to consider the Indigenous perspective?



CROSS-CURRICULAR RESOURCES



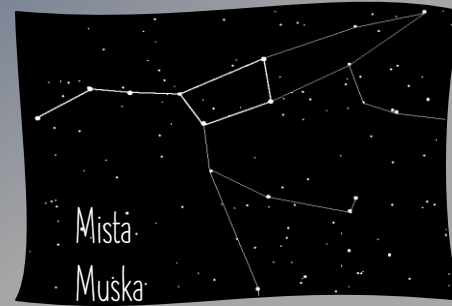
- Extend this conversation! Click [Extending Sisikwun](#) for a few tasks and opportunities for your students. The points would be appropriate for grades 2-6 as the specificity and choices would vary between levels.
- A reminder about [*Math Meets Astronomy](#) for some ideas on how to use constellations to teach angles! (Grades 3-4)
- Coding reminder! This link: [*Coding the Stars](#) asks students to create images and understand astronomical data with coding. Following a scaffolded set of activities that would be appropriate for grades 6+.

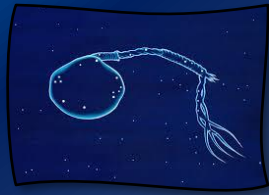
* Please Note: These links do not contain Indigenous content but are intended as ideas to naturally integrate Sisikwun (and other constellations) to your classroom.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

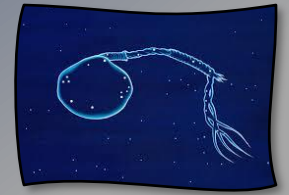


Please let the Indigenous Education team know how your class is using the Skyworld resources! Please email celine.langevin@cdsbeo.on.ca with any artwork, work samples, stories or pictures of student work. Thank you for your continued support!





WORKS CITED



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