



CDSBEO Celebrates **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION DAY**

Wednesday, May 5th, 2021

Skyworld: "We Come from the Stars..."

RESOURCES & SUGGESTIONS FOR
LEARNING: GRADE 11–GRADE 12

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INDIGENOUS EDUCATION DAY 2021

- Consider:
 - Using Inquiry-based questions that engage the learner with Indigenous perspective
 - Raising awareness of Indigenous content, Indigenous history and Indigenous perspectives in our own communities
 - "Moving to Action" as we learn true history and acknowledge present-day issues

Look Up with Wilfred Buck!



Moon Teachings of the Anishinaabe

"According to the teachings of the Anishinaabe culture of central North America, the first of all the mothers, Nokomis or Grandmother Moon, dwells in the heavens near her daughter, Mother Earth. From there, Nokomis keeps watch over her children, gently leading them through the night. Mother Earth nourishes and cares for all her children in the plant, animal, and human worlds. Just as life comes from Mother Earth, it returns to her, completing the circle of life. Each day, Grandfather Sun, the "one who brings morning", gives light and warmth to his children. Together, Mother Earth and Grandfather Sun provide the gift of life to all. The heartbeat of Mother Earth is echoed in the drumbeat of the Anishinaabe. Even Wolf, who sings to the Moon, bids us not to forget our beginnings with Nokomis, our Grandmother."

Mohawk Moon Teachings

"According to the teachings of the Haudenosaunee, May is the month of flower moon—the fifth moon of Creation. It is where all plants display their Spirit sides for all the world to see. This life-giving energy is one the most powerful healing medicines on Mother Earth. During this moon we are encouraged to explore our Spiritual essences."

Moon Teachings: Radio & Video Introductory Information (Educator PD & Context Building)

- "Inuit Moons": *CBC Unreserved* interviews Michael Kusugak, an Inuit author who has named 4 moons surrounding Saturn. Read and hear his story!
- Moon Teachings: *CBC Unreserved* highlights Sherry Copenace of Ojibways of Onigaming First Nation as she shares teachings on the Grandmother Moon and specifically, May's "Flower Moon" or, known in Anishinaabe as: Waabigoowene.
- Renewing the Relationship with Elder Renee Thomas-Hill: a short video from Indigenous Students Health Sciences Department at McMaster illustrating moon phases according to a Mohawk perspective and our symbolic and significant relationship with Grandmother Moon and Skyworld.

Achakapis: Little Spirit by Wilfred Buck

Watch and listen to Wilfred Buck as he speaks of Achakapis (Little Spirit) who resides on the full moon. Achakapis reminds us to treat others and our world with inclusion and respect.



CHAKAPIS

Achakapis Little Spirit



Suggestions for Learning: Grades 11-12

ONCORE

- Oral History and Astronomy The oral histories of Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas include references to the sun, moon, stars, and planets.
- First Indigenous Man in Space is the journey of John Herrington and chronicles his trip to space.
- The Hunt and the Dance is a video that connects the Buffalo jump to the moon, stars and the Sun Dance.

Suggestions for Learning: Grades 11-12

Ways of Knowing is a link to an online interview with Wilfred Buck and focuses on Indigenous astronomy and science as part of Reconciliation.

Final Questions to Consider:

- What did you learn from this inquiry? What surprised you about the content in this document?
- What did you/do you have to unlearn? Did you discover the "Eurocentric" perspective in your original thinking?
- Why is it so important to appreciate the Indigenous perspective?
- Can you see the connection between Astronomy and Science to Reconciliation? Where can you go from here?



Fun Facts for the Moon in May!

- Keep watch after sunset on May 15th where there will be a conjunction between the waxing crescent moon and Mars. Just after 11:00pm, you can view the moon and Mars very close together in the sky!
- The full moon on May 26th will be a SUPERMOON! A Supermoon happens 3-4 times per year, where the disc of the moon is 14% larger than normal.
- Get up early on May 26th to view a partial lunar eclipse! At 4:48 am the eclipse will begin - the sun will only be partially locked, so it is called a Penumbral Eclipse. A piece of the moon will appear darker during this time - like someone has taken a bite out of it!



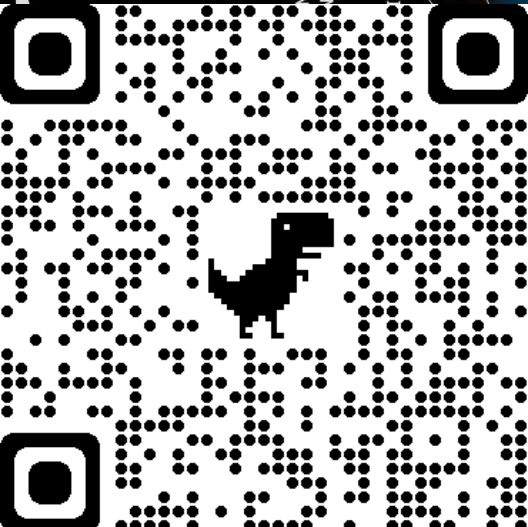


Some Extra Info on the Sky, Science and the Indigenous Perspective:

- The following article outlines Wilfred Buck's journey, and includes a link to a short interview on [CBC Radio](#)
- Article on the relationship between Indigenous studies and science education here: [Living Knowledge](#)
- A short video on the [Cycle of the Moon](#)
- [Indigenous Astronomy](#) is a thorough and fascinating article through Ontario Parks that reinforces the reasoning behind the resurgence of astronomy from an Indigenous perspective.



Find Wilfred
Buck's Official
Site here:



A Reminder of Wilfred's work on the Stories of the Stars

Atchakosuk: Ininew Stories of the Stars

Jennifer West (U. Manitoba), Ian Cameron (U. Manitoba), Wilfred Buck (Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc.)

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Story of Assini Awasis, the Stone Child

A young man named Tikoom went in search of his seven uncles whose spirits had been captured and transferred into seven rocks by a mistapew (Giant). His uncles appeared to him in a dream and instructed him to construct a mahtootisan (sweat lodge) and perform a ceremony to release their spirits. The rocks were heated and brought into the centre of the domed structure. Tikoom sang, prayed, and splashed water on the hot rocks to release their spirits.

He saw the spirits of his uncles first as lights. The willow ribs of the domed lodge symbolize the womb of our mother and it was she who has the power to release and bring forth new life. For his determination, faith, and trust, the Creator gave to him a ceremony with which to heal and, by doing so, feed his people. He was also given a new name: Assini Awasis - Stone Child.

He would forever be remembered as the boy who brought the sweat lodge to the people. Today we see the sweat lodge in the night sky and at certain times of the night we can see the Sweat Lodge (Mahtootisan, Corona Borealis), the Altar (Keewatin, Polaris) and the Sweat Lodge Fire and rocks (Mahtootisan Assiniuk, Pleiades) all in the sky at once and be reminded of where to go for comfort, hope, spiritual sustenance, direction, and healing.



Tepahkoop Pinesisuk (The Seven Birds)

The big bear, Mista Muskiwa, (The Big Dipper) roamed the traditional lands, wreaking havoc wherever he went. The animals of the land decided to send their best trackers and hunters, Tepahkoop Pinesisuk (The Seven Birds, Corona Borealis) to drive the bear from the land. It is said that Mista Muskiwa and his pursuers were so fast that they flew into the northern night sky.



Mista Muskiwa (The Great Bear)

We are told Mista Muskiwa is placed in the sky as a reminder of how to treat those less powerful. Pipchew (the robin, and brightest of the 7 birds) was granted a special egg, it was the color of the sky and had speckles that represented the stars.



Wesakaychak (Trickster/Teacher)

The stars of Orion tell the legend of Wesakaychak.



Makisuk (Turtle)

The stars of Cepheus, the turtle, reminds us of the lunar calendar.



Atchakosuk (Star Woman)

The Pleiades stars tell the legend of the Star Woman, Atchakosuk.

Atimnah Atchakosuk (Dog Stars)

This constellation encompasses the stars of the little dipper and tells the legend of how True Dogs (wolf, coyote, and fox) gave humans the domesticated dog.



Abstract

The Ininew (Cree) people of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have unique perspectives of the constellations and stars that are prominent in the northern skies. The stars are believed to be spirit lights up above that are called atchakosuk. In an effort to help preserve this traditional knowledge and raise awareness in the wider astronomical community, we present some of the Ininew mythology as gathered from the Knowledge Keepers, Medicine People and honoured Elders by travelling to their communities.

Background

Many of the groupings of stars represented in Greek mythology and recognized by Western astronomy have counterparts in First Nations tradition.

We present some of these interpretations here in abbreviated form. The Ininew star stories have been gathered by Wilfred Buck, a member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation and Science Facilitator with the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. He has travelled to many First Nations communities, and met with Elders who have shared their knowledge and stories. The artwork presented here, was commissioned to Edwin Bighetty of Mathias Colomb First Nation, Manitoba, and illustrates some of the figures represented in these stories.

Further information can be found at:

<http://mfnerc.org/resources/first-nations-astronomy/>
<http://creeliteracy.org/2016/01/15/astronomy/>

Noka (Goose)

This constellation encompasses the stars of Cygnus and tells the legend of how geese (and other migratory birds) use the Milky Way as a guide when migrating.



Seesekwun (Rattle)

This constellation includes the five major stars of Cepheus as well as Polaris. The term Seesekwun 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 Seesekwun, the sound of spring.

Film Preview:
Legends of
the Northern
Sky

2020-2021 Indigenous Theme: Skyworld

Click on the **stars** below for links to our
Skyworld resources!



Stay tuned for
Atima Atchakosuk: The Dog Stars in June!