



# Canada: The Rich & Vibrant History of Indigenous Peoples

## FACILITATOR SLIDE GUIDE

Kory Wilson & Tami Pierce | March 2025

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## SLIDE 1

*Canada: The Rich & Vibrant History of Indigenous Peoples***TIME:** 5 minutes**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- This workshop is intended to provide a brief history of Indigenous Peoples of Canada.
- Some of us may not have learned this history before today, some may have heard a slightly, or vastly, different story.
- It is important to know the facts about the original inhabitants of this land.
- Indigenous nations have been on these lands since the beginning of time.
- Participants can learn more about where Indigenous communities are located and more about how long they have been here by visiting community websites.

**RESOURCES:**

- Dickason, O. (2001) *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (3rd Edition). Oxford University Press.
- Daschuk, J.W (2019) *Clearing the Plains*. University of Regina Press.
- Leroux, D. (2019). *Distorted Descent: White Claims to Indigenous Identity*. University of Manitoba Press.

*Artwork throughout by Alano Edzerza.*

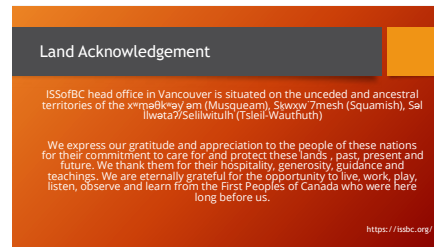
## SLIDE 2

### Land Acknowledgement

**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Read ISSofBC's land acknowledgement (noting this is for the head office in Vancouver).
- Share the locations of the ISSofBC Centres outside of Vancouver (as per the additional information on ISSofBC's webpage).
- Explain that a land acknowledgement is different than a protocol welcome. A protocol welcome can only be offered by a member of the local nation, whereas, a land acknowledgement can and should be offered by everyone.
- A land acknowledgement is typically offered at the start of a meeting or event where only your group or organization members are in attendance.
- A protocol welcome is typically offered when the organization or group is hosting a large event or meeting that includes invited guests or is open to the public. Remember, a member of the local nation is the person offering the protocol welcome.



#### You can also:

- Write and present your own land acknowledgement. If you live and work on lands belonging to more than one nation, be sure to note it.
- Explain that offering a land acknowledgement is a way of recognizing the history of the local nations and demonstrates respect and appreciation to the original Peoples of these lands.
- Land acknowledgements are offered by people not from the local nations (people representing other ethnic groups and Indigenous people from other Indigenous nations).

#### RESOURCES:

- George, R. (2024). *It Stops Here: Standing Up for Our Lands, Our Waters, and Our People*. Penguin Canada.
- Sampson, T., Cross, V., Gensaw, E., Point, S., Point, G., Harry, G., Harry, W., Wilbur, C., Solomon, R., Grinell, E., Charlie, A., George, A., Shippentower, N., Charles, N., de los Angeles, A., James, J., Moses Sr. K., Morris, R. (2023). *Jesintel: Living Wisdom from Coast Salish Elders*. University of Washington Press.
- Johnson, EP., Capilano, Chief J., Capilano, MA (2023) *Legends of the Capilano* (A.Shield, Ed).University of Manitoba Press.

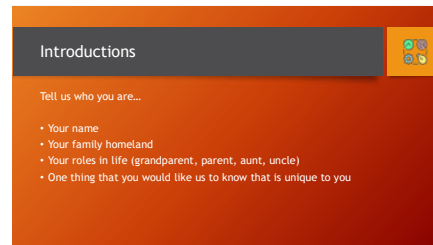
## SLIDE 3

### Introductions

**TIME:** 10-20 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- This length of this activity will depend on the number of participants.
- Guide the participants through the introductions using the questions on the slide.



- The term “Indian” is no longer used when referring to an Indigenous person, in fact, most Indigenous People find it an offensive colonial term.
- The term “Indian” is used only in legal names or titles, Musqueam Indian Band or Indian Act are examples.

**Facts:** (based on 2021 census)

- More than 1.8 million people in Canada self-identify as Indigenous.
- Approximately 290,000 people in BC self-identify as Indigenous.
- Approximately 634 different First Nations in Canada.
- Approximately 60 different Indigenous language groups.

#### RESOURCES:

- Government of Canada. (2021, October 7). *COW-Section 35 of the Constitution Act 1982 – Background – June 10, 2021*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/transparency/committees/cow-jun-10-2021/section-35-constitution-act-1982-background.html>
- Government of Canada. (2023, October 25). *An Update on the socio-economic gaps between Indigenous Peoples and the non-Indigenous population in Canada: Highlights from the 2021 Census*. <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1690909773300/1690909797208>
- British Columbia Institute of Technology (ND). Indigenous Awareness. <https://www.bcit.ca/courses/indigenous-awareness-mooc-0200>

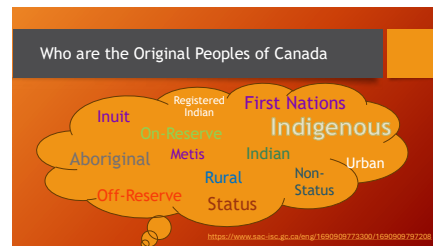
## SLIDE 4

### Who are the Original Peoples of Canada

**TIME:** 10 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act states “Aboriginal Peoples of Canada” includes the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.
- Encourage the participants to think about how they identify and how others identify them. For example, do you identify as Canadian, do you identify as another ethnicity?
- The terms on the slide are terms that are used to describe an Indigenous person or a term used when introducing oneself, if Indigenous, eg. “I am First Nations,” or “I am a status Indian,” or “I am a non-status Aboriginal and grew up off-reserve.”
- Terminology has changed over the years.



## SLIDE 5

### *First Nations*

**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- This term was introduced in the 1980s.
- It simply reflects Indigenous nationhood i.e. they are Nations and they were the first in Canada.
- Federal Government defines who belongs to this group.
- First Nations people existed prior to contact.
- Remind the group that “Indian” is not a term they should use.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- British Columbia Institute of Technology (ND). *Indigenous Awareness*. <https://www.bcit.ca/courses/indigenous-awareness-mooc-0200>



## SLIDE 6

### *Inuit*

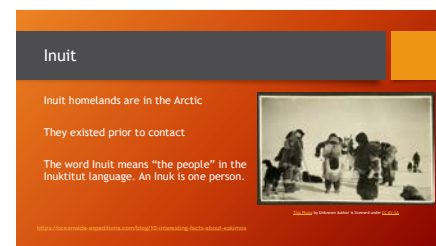
**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- People of the north—Canada, Greenland and Alaska.
- Previously referred to as Eskimo, which is no longer an acceptable term.
- Not defined by the Federal Government.
- Inuit also existed prior to contact.
- Greenland's population is primarily Inuit.
- Inuit means “the people,” so saying Inuit people is saying “The People People.”

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Wallace, M. (2015). *An Inusuk Means Welcome*. Owlkids.
- Freeman, M.A. (2015). *Life Among the QALLUNAAT*. University of Manitoba Press; Critical Edition.
- Watt-Cloutier, S. (2016) *The Right to Be Cold: One Woman's Story of Protecting Her Culture, the Arctic and the Whole Planet*. Penguin Canada.
- British Columbia Institute of Technology (ND). *Indigenous Awareness*. <https://www.bcit.ca/courses/indigenous-awareness-mooc-0200>



## SLIDE 7

### Métis

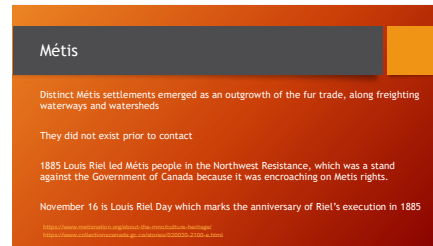
**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Indigenous people that are distinct from First Nations and Inuit.
- Did not exist prior to contact.
- Métis represent descendants of people born to First Nations women and European men.
- The Métis flag is the infinity symbol, which represents mortality of the nation, in the centre of a blue field represents the joining of two cultures.
- The brightly colored Métis Sash, one of the most prominent symbols of the Métis Nation.

#### RESOURCES:

- Métis Nation of Ontario. (2025). *Symbols and Traditions*. <https://www.metisnation.org/about-the-mno/culture-heritage>
- Library and Archives Canada. (2009, June 18). *Voices of Métis*. <https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/stories/020020-2100-e.html>
- Oster, B., Poitras, A., (2021). *Stories of Métis Women: Tales My Kookum Told Me*. (Lizee, M. Ed). Uproot Publishing.
- Dorion, L.M., (2011) *Relatives with Roots*. Gabriel Dumont Institute.



## SLIDE 8

### Our Creation Stories

**TIME:** 30 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Each nation has its own creation story.
- Share the creation stories with the group.
- Break the class into 3 groups and have the groups find a creation story from another nation (First Nation, Inuit or Métis).
- Each group will present their creation story back to the larger group and identify differences, if any.
- **Ensure each group is presenting a different story.**

#### RESOURCES:

- Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes. (2015, August 12). *The Salish Creation Story*. [http://www.educatingexcellence.com/uploads/1/2/3/2/12327484/salish\\_creation\\_story.pdf](http://www.educatingexcellence.com/uploads/1/2/3/2/12327484/salish_creation_story.pdf)
- Bird. (2018, October 27) *The Haida Creation Story* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f\\_fkZ3tW3U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f_fkZ3tW3U)



## SLIDE 9

### *Territories & Regions*

**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Prior to colonization BC and Canada were divided by nations not by provinces, territories, or state lines.
- At one time there were no borders, Indigenous Peoples were free to move around the country and were known as being nomadic.
- They shared, bartered, and traded, as each nation was rich in its own way. For example, communities along the Pacific Northwest coastline were rich in seafoods, berries and venison. Whereas interior nations may be rich in larger venison, different berries, and lake fish.
- Point out the region you are located on the maps.
- The last bullet below shows the Indigenous nations in Canada before borders.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Government of Canada. (2012). *Welcome to the First Nations Profiles Interactive Map*. <https://geo.sac-isc.gc.ca/cippn-fnpim/index-eng.html>
- British Columbia Assembly of First Nations. (2025). *First Nations Communities in B.C.* <https://www.bcafn.ca/first-nations-bc/interactive-map>
- Native Land Digital. (2024). *Native Land Map*. <https://native-land.ca>



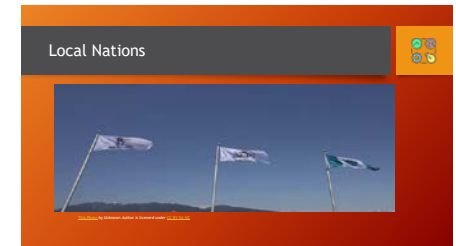
## SLIDE 10

### *Local Nations*

**TIME:** 35 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- These flags represent the 3 local Coast Salish Nations (Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish, and Musqueam)—if you are in a different region, change this slide out for symbols that represent the local nations in/around your community/city.
- As the participants to return to their previous groups. Each group will research one of the 3 nations (or number relevant to your region) and present what they have learned about the nation back to the group.
- Information they may want to look for: where is the nation located, and what are 3 important facts about the nation that others should know.



## SLIDE 11

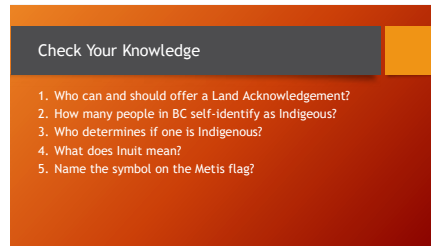
### *Check Your Knowledge*

**TIME:** 5-10 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

You can do the knowledge test in a few ways:

- You can have students answer the questions on their own and discuss the answers in a larger group or you can go through each question with the entire group and have volunteers answer.
- The answers are in the note section of the slide.



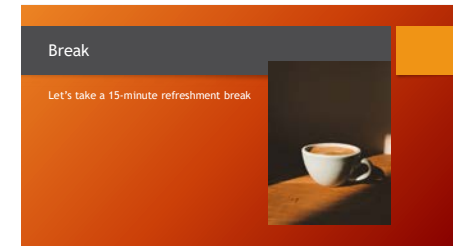
## SLIDE 12

### *Coffee Break*

**TIME:** 20 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- 15-minute break plus take 5 minutes after the break to hear from the participants (thoughts, comments or questions).





## SLIDE 13

*Laws & Policies***TIME:** 2 minutes**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- This is an intro slide, in the next section you will provide information on laws and policies that have and continue to impact Indigenous Peoples in Canada.



## SLIDE 14 &amp; 15

*Indian Act***TIME:** 25 minutes**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Watch the 11:24 minute video with the class. Be prepared to answer and/or ask questions.
- It is important to stress that this is a living document and applies to all Indigenous people.
- Of course, since it was created there have been some amendments made to the document.

**Common questions that are answered in the video:**

- What is enfranchisement?
- Why were children put in different schools?
- Why don't Indigenous people fight to eliminate the Indian Act?

**RESOURCES:**

- TVO Today. (2024, July 31). *The Indian Act: It's Ongoing Impact on First Nations*[NDN POV [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUPUHIDHxRQ>
- Joseph, B. (2018). *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality*. Page Two.
- The Canadian Encyclopedia. (n.d). *Timeline: The Indian Act*. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/timeline/the-indian-act#:~:text=The%20Indian%20Act%20is%20the,power%20on%2012%20April%201876>
- Statistics Canada. (2022, September 21). *Map 1*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/mc-a001-eng.htm>

## SLIDE 16

### *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP)*

**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was established in 1991 and is a broad survey of historical and contemporary relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- Several recommendations were made, and many were not implemented.
- 5 volumes were released on November 21, 1996.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Doerr. (2006, February 7). *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/royal-commission-on-aboriginal-peoples>
- Library and Archives Canada. (2021, January 19). *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/royal-commission-aboriginal-peoples/Pages/introduction.aspx>
- Bora Laskin Law Library. (2024, October 23). *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. <https://guides.library.utoronto.ca/c.php?g=527189&p=3617127>



## SLIDE 17

### *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*

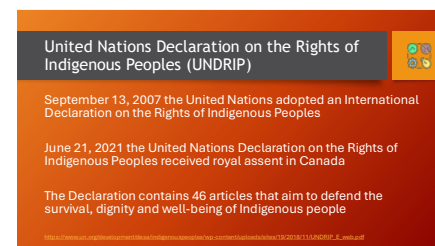
**TIME:** 30 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- September 13, 2007 the United Nations adopted an International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- June 21, 2021 the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples received royal assent in Canada.
- The Declaration contains 46 articles that aim to defend the survival, dignity, and well-being of Indigenous people.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- United Nations. (2007, September 13). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Booklet* [https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP\\_E\\_web.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf)



## SLIDE 18

### *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA)*

**TIME:** 10 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- The BC DRIPA Action Plan (2022) “is meant to help everyone in British Columbia understand the importance of reconciliation” (UVIC).
- DRIPA affirms the application of UNDRIP to the laws of BC, meaning that the province and public institutions must consider the human rights of Indigenous Peoples when determining how to act in accordance with BC laws, including in health.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Government of British Columbia. (2024, August 12). *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/new-relationship/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>
- Government of British Columbia. (2019, November 28). *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. Chapter 44*. <https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/19044>
- University of Victoria. (n.d.). *Our Response to the BC DRIPA Action Plan*. [https://www.uvic.ca/ovpi/\\_assets/docs/ourresponsetobcdripa.pdf](https://www.uvic.ca/ovpi/_assets/docs/ourresponsetobcdripa.pdf)



## SLIDE 19

### *Truth and Reconciliation*

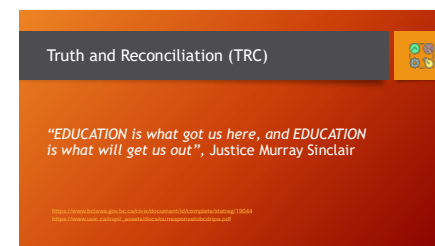
**TIME:** 45 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- The work of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission Canada began in 2008.
- Print the timeline of residential schools to share with participants (CBC doc below).
- Based on the interview results, 94 Calls to Action were released in 2015.
- These Calls to Action apply to every person, every sector, and every organization.
- 6,500 Interviews with witnesses directly and indirectly impacted by Residential Schools.
- 7 National events hosted by TRCC across Canada.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2012) *They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples and Residential Schools*. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- Niezen, R. (2017). *Truth and Indignation: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential School*. University of Toronto Press.



## SLIDE 20

### *Indigenous Self Government*

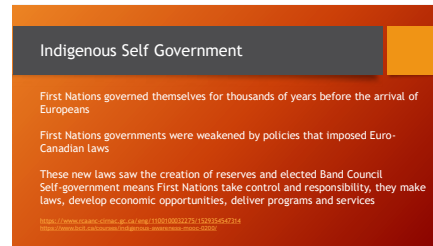
**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Discuss how Indigenous nations have governed themselves long before colonization.
- 2 examples are Nisga'a Nation (northern BC) and Westbank First Nations (Interior of BC).
- Ask participants to share what they think might be different between Indigenous Government and Provincial/Federal Government.
- It is important that participants understand that Indigenous people in leadership can be extremely different than non-Indigenous people in leadership, particularly in government. Indigenous governance is based on Indigenous values, beliefs, and ways of being, and can sometimes conflict with western contemporary governance.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- Hylton, J. (2008). *Aboriginal Self-Government in Canada*. (Belanger, Y. Ed). Purich Publishing.
- Wolf Collar, L. (2020). *First Nations Self-Government: 17 Roadblocks to Self-Determination, and One Chief's Thoughts on Solutions*. Brush Education.



## SLIDE 21

### *Check Your Knowledge*

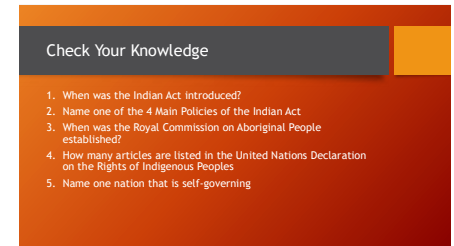
**TIME:** 5-10 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

You can do the knowledge test in a few ways:

- You can have students answer the questions on their own and discuss the answers in a larger group or you can go through each question with the entire group and have volunteers answer.

The answers are in the note section of the slide.



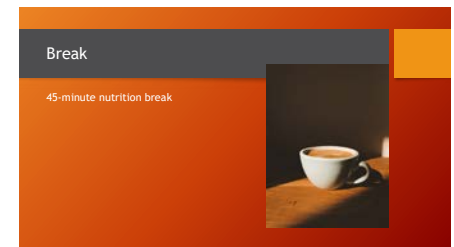
## SLIDE 22

### *Lunch Break*

**TIME:** 45 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

45 minutes + 5 minutes for quick debrief about Laws & Policies.



## SLIDE 23

*Stereotypes and Myths***TIME:** 30 minutes**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Before talking about Indigenous values, culture, and tradition, it is important to talk about the stereotypical beliefs and myths about Indigenous people.
- Recognize the harm of stereotyping, and think about these stereotypical beliefs and myths.
- “Indigenous people do not pay taxes,” “Indigenous people get free education,” “All Indigenous people are drunks,” “Indigenous people are lazy.”
- It is important to recognize where these originate. If we hear these from family members or friends, how do we put a stop to it?

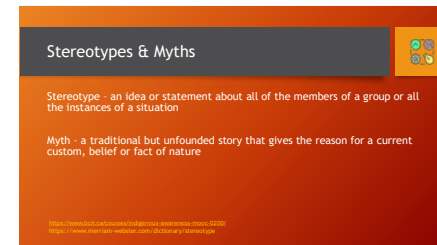
**Discussion:**

- What are some stereotypical beliefs or myths that you have heard about Indigenous people?
- If you have not heard stereotypical beliefs about Indigenous people, have you heard them about other groups?
- Where did you hear them?
- Why are these harmful?
- How can you put a stop to them or avoid perpetuating these beliefs?

**RESOURCES:**

“Stereotype.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stereotype>. Accessed 16 Mar. 2025.

British Columbia Institute of Technology (ND). *Indigenous Awareness*. <https://www.bcit.ca/courses/indigenous-awareness-mooc-0200>



## SLIDE 24

### *Reality: Indigenous Values*

**TIME:** 10 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Indigenous people are a proud, resilient people.
- Indigenous people respect and care for the land.
- Family, community, and nation are very important to Indigenous people.
- Show the YouTube video that demonstrates Indigenous peoples connection and care for the land.



## SLIDE 25

### *Tradition & Culture*

**TIME:** 3 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Introduce the next set of slides that are specific to Indigenous culture.



## SLIDE 26

### *A Rich Culture*

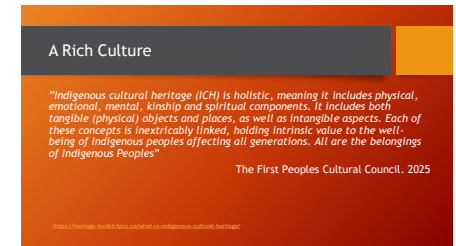
**TIME:** 20 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- Culture has meaning to each of us, it is taught, lived and experienced.
- All cultures, including Indigenous cultures are rich in many ways.
- Invite participants to think about their own culture, and ask, if you had to describe your culture what would you say?
- Ask participants to share one thing that is unique to them, that represents their culture or family tradition.

#### **RESOURCES:**

- First Peoples' Cultural Council. (n.d.). *What is Indigenous Cultural Heritage*. <https://heritage-toolkit.fpcc.ca/what-is-indigenous-cultural-heritage>



## SLIDE 27

### Cedar Tree

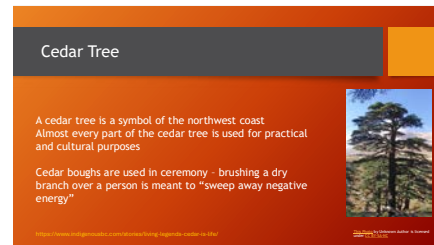
**TIME:** 10 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Cedar is known as the tree of life.
- There are 2 types of cedar trees, red cedar and yellow cedar.
- Cedar has numerous purposes.
- It is used in celebration and ceremony.

#### RESOURCES:

Indigenous Tourism BC. (2019, November 22). *Living Legends: Cedar is Life*. <https://www.indigenoustourismbc.com/stories/living-legends-cedar-is-life>



## SLIDE 28

### Oral Tradition

**TIME:** 35 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Indigenous history has been passed down through the generations and is essential to maintaining Indigenous identity and culture.
- Indigenous people repeat their stories to keep information alive over generations.
- Often it is the role of certain people in the community to memorize the oral history with great care.
- Sometimes stories are shared through song and dance, and the important stories are learned at a very young age.
- Some songs, names, symbols or dances belong to specific people or families and cannot be used, re-told, danced or sung without permission of the owner.

#### RESOURCES:

King, T. (2003). *The Truth About Stories*. House of Anansi Press.

British Columbia Institute of Technology (ND). *Indigenous Awareness*. <https://www.bcit.ca/courses/indigenous-awareness-mooc-0200>

Johnson. (n.d). *The Two Sisters*. <https://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/johnson/vancouver/vancouver-01.html>

Cultural Survival. (2024, January 3). *The Importance of Indigenous Oral Storytelling: Part 1*. <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/importance-indigenous-oral-traditional-storytelling-part-1>





## SLIDE 29

### *The Potlatch*

**TIME:** 10 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- This is an event that brings community together for a variety of reasons.
- Community potlatches today generally involve the entire community. This is an opportunity for children to learn the meaning and value in a potlatch.
- Others might refer to this as a potluck that we often see in workspaces, or small family functions.

#### **RESOURCES:**

British Columbia Institute of Technology (ND). *Indigenous Awareness*. <https://www.bcit.ca/courses/indigenous-awareness-mooc-0200>



## SLIDE 30

### *Making a Difference*

**TIME:** 2 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

Introduce this last section.



## SLIDE 31

### *Do Your Own Learning*

**TIME:** 10 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

- You have taken the first step in being a part of positive change for Indigenous Peoples.
- Learning the history is a good start, of course, this workshop is just an introduction.
- There are many ways that you can get to know Indigenous Peoples in your community.



## SLIDE 32

### *Get Involved*

**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### **ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

Share the list of events.

#### **RESOURCES:**

Eventbrite. (2025). *Indigenous Events in Vancouver, Canada*. <https://www.eventbrite.ca/d/canada--vancouver/indigenous/?page=5>





## SLIDE 33

### Check Your Knowledge

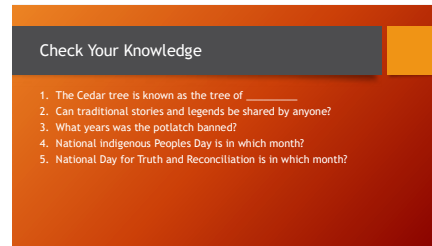
**TIME:** 5-10 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

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- You can have students answer the questions on their own and discuss the answers in a larger group or you can go through each question with the entire group and have volunteers answer.

The answers are in the note section of the slide.



## SLIDE 34

### Final Thoughts

**TIME:** 5 minutes

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Thomas King says, “history is in the stories we tell.”

Conclude the workshop with a sharing circle and ask participants:

- What will you take away from this workshop?
- What topics would you like to learn more about?
- What was not covered that you would like to learn about?

Offer your final thoughts and appreciation.

