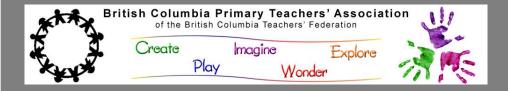
Adrienne Gear

# We Are All Connected

Exploring Self, Family, Community and Land through Aboriginal Picture Books



**BCPTA Conference 2018** 

#### We Are All Connected

"Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors" - First Nations Principals of Learning

This unit is designed to introduce concepts of aboriginal themes to students through the sharing of picture books. Each week, themes are introduced through a comparison of two picture books – one western culture and one aboriginal culture. Students respond to these books through a variety of written responses and lesson extensions. Reading Power strategies are integrated throughout the unit.

#### **Lesson 1 - Introduction**

- Themes "First Nations"
- Write the word "nation" on the board ask students what it means country that has people, citizens, government, etc.)
- What does "first" mean? discuss
- When I put both those words together "First Nation" what does it mean?
   (people who lived here first)
- Explain that we are going to be learning about First Nations People and how we are the same and how we are different
- FN belief: Everything is connected.
- Teacher draw a web "Me" in the middle add branches showing family, home, community, country – Explain that in our culture, we believe that we are the center of everything.
- On a different paper, teacher draws a circle Me in the middle outward circles
  of family, home, community, land
- Discuss how first nations people see themselves connecting to everything, while
  western culture often thinks of themselves as central, and everything else is an
  extension of them
- Students make circle (dart target 5 circles)

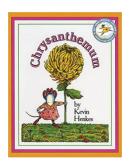
Brainstorm and model ideas for each circle:

- Me draw picture of yourself and add your name
- Family draw and label picture of family members
- Community draw and label things in your community school, store, library, etc.
- Land draw and label things in nature such as trees, wind, sun, river, mountains

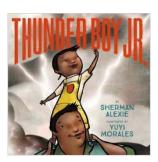


#### Connecting to Me

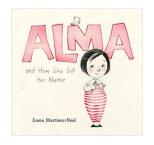
**THEME** – Name Origin and the story of your name



**Chrysanthemum** – Kevin Henkes



<u>Thunder Boy Jr.</u> – Sherman Alexie Alma and How She Got



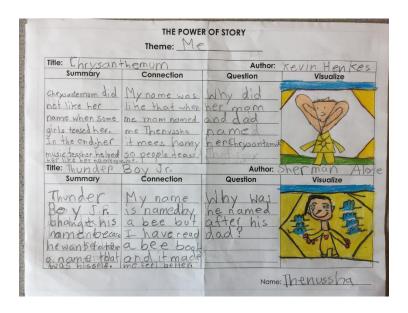
Alma and How She Got Her Names -Juana Martinez-Neal

#### **Student Pages** (connected to this bundle)

- We Are All Connected
- The Story of My Name

Teacher reads the first story and discusses names, origins of names, family names. Students talk about their own names. If they don't know, encourage them to ask their parents about their names.

Students complete the We are All Connected page and the Story of My Name page.





#### **Connecting to Family**

Themes: Family trees and Family totem poles. Two different ways we can tell the "story" of our family



My Family Tree and Me - Dustan Petricic



Sometimes I Feel Like a Fox - Danielle Daniel

#### **Student Sheets**

- Family Tree Frame
- Family Totem Plan
- Aboriginal Animal Sheet

- Brown construction paper rolled into a cylinder

#### Lesson

- Read My Family Tree and Me. Discuss the fact that in Western culture, a family tree is a way people can track their family history and tell the story of their family.
- Students create their own family tree with members from their immediate family. Students can use the frame or create their own. (see example)
- The next day, show a picture of a totem pole. Discuss that in aboriginal culture, family history and stories are told by carving animals that represent different family members
- Read Sometimes I Feel Like a Fox. Explain that First Nations people believe that



animals are connected to people through their behavior and personality: each animal represents different traits.

my pamily bree

LAURA

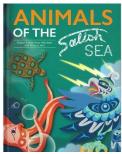
• On the Family Totem Pole plan, students make a list of their immediate family members, including themselves. (limit to 6). Beside each name, list the animal and character trait that they believe is the best match for each family member

- Using a rolled cylinder of brown construction paper, students will make their own family totem pole that tells the story of their family – matching animal with each family member
- Make copies of the Aboriginal animal sheet. Students select, cut and glue the appropriate animals onto the cylinders
- On the back, students can write the names, character traits and animal for each family member on their totem pole.

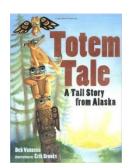




#### Additional Books to support this lesson:







Animals of the Salish Sea

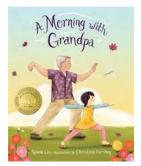
**Totem Poles** 

**Totem Tale: A Tall Story From Alaska** 

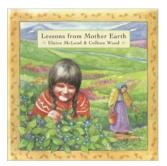
#### **Lesson 3 – Connecting to Grandparents**

Theme: Roles of grandparents and elders

Books



A Morning with Grandpa - Sylvia Liu



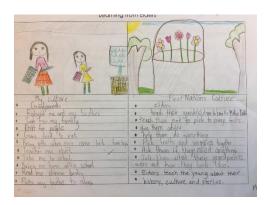
Lessons From Mother Earth - Elaine McCleod

#### **Student sheets**

- We Are All Connected Sheet
- Grandparents and Elders Sheet
- Learning from Elders Sheet

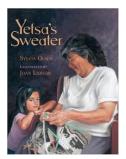
#### Lesson

- Brainstorm (make class web) things students do with their grandparents, grandparent roles.
- Discuss what things they have learned from their grandparents (Model: My grannie taught me how to knit).
   Invite students to share with a partner. Explain that grandparents are closely connected to them.
   Read A Morning With Grandpa (grandfather teaching granddaughter Tai Chi)
- Students can complete the top portion of We Are All Connected page.
- Next day Introduce term "elder" discuss the importance of elders in first nations community – to share oral stories, family and clan history, knowledge, wisdom, songs, dances,
- Read Lessons from Mother Earth or Yetza's Sweater.

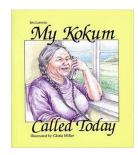


• Compare the two types of grandparents – create a class Venn (Grandparents and Elders) and/or have students complete the page

Additional books to be used with this lesson:







My Kokum Called Today - Irish Loewen

#### Lesson 4 – Connecting to Family Celebrations and Traditions

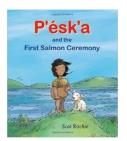
Theme – Exploring family celebrations in different cultures



Sona and the Wedding Game



Bringing in the New Year



P'es'ka and the Salmon Ceremony

#### **Student Sheets**

Comparing Cultures Sheet

#### **Lesson Part 1**

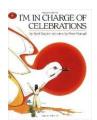
- Write the word "tradition" on the board or chart stand. Discuss and give
  examples of some of your family traditions. Explain that different cultures have
  different traditions.
- Read Sona and the Wedding Game or Bringing in the New Year. Invite students to make connections to their own family traditions while you are reading
- Ask students if their family celebrates any special events or days and what traditions they might have. Explain traditions often include special foods, or clothing, or activities connected to the celebration.
- Brainstorm different celebrations and have students share with a partner.
- Pass out "Comparing Traditions" sheet Students complete right side only

#### Lesson – Part 2

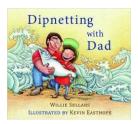
- Review "tradition" and "celebrations". Invite students to share their work from previous day with a partner
- Introduce **Peska and the First Salmon Ceremony** - Explain that it is a story about a boy who is participating in his first cultural tradition. Ask students to listen for the special foods, clothing, activities that is part of this ceremony.
- After you read, brainstorm ideas from the story (food, clothing, special activities). Discuss the fact that first nations believe that everything is a gift from the land and that many first nations ceremonies include gratitude and "giving back" to the land.
- Students can complete the other side of their "Comparing Traditions" sheet.



#### Other books to support this lesson:



I'm in Charge of Celebrations Dipnetting With Dad Byrd Baylor



Winnie Sellars



My First Metis Lopstick Leah Marie Dorion



The Sugaring-Off Party Jonathon London

#### Lesson – Part 3

- Ask the students to remember their favorite cultural celebration or tradition. Ask them to then think about how they would feel if someone told them they weren't allowed to celebrate if any more. EVER. "No more Christmas" "No more Lunar New Year"
- Introduce Secret of the Dance by Andrea Spalding. Explain that the story is based on something that happened to First Nations people when they were told that they weren't allowed to have Potlatches.
- Discuss a Potlatch explain that it is a very important celebration in First Nations culture. Explain it is a special gift-giving ceremony where tribes or clans give gifts to show status or wealth. There is a great feast, dancing, drumming and singing. Potlatches can last several days. Show books, images or video clips to show.

#### **Connecting to Home**

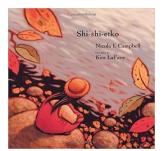
**Theme** – special memories and artifacts connected to home, visualizing using the senses, introduction to residential schools

#### Student Sheets:

- 6 Senses of Home
- Memory Bags Sheet



The Hello, Good-bye Window – Norton Juster



**Shi-Shi-Etko** – Nicola Campbell

#### Lesson - Part 1

- Remind students that First Nations believe that everything is connected.
   Explain that the next few lessons we will be focusing on our connection to home
- Write the word "home" and "house" on the board. Ask students to discuss the difference with a partner. Discuss ideas as a class. (house is just the building, home is the building plus all the people, feelings, memories, etc.)
- Introduce <u>The Hello, Good-bye Window</u> by Norton Juster. Explain that it is a story about a little girl who goes to her grandparents' home for the weekend. Tell the students that the author has really tried to help us feel as if we are there spending the weekend with her. He does this by writing about all the senses of grandparents' home.
- Review the "6 senses" of a writer: sights, smells, sounds, tastes, feelings (touch) and feelings (emotion)
- Draw a web of the six senses with small pictures.
- Ask the students to pay close attention to all the senses the little girl uses to describes her grandparents' home in the story.
- Begin to read the story stop part way and have students discuss the senses they noticed. Brainstorm as a class. Continue to the end and brainstorm other senses. You can add these ideas onto the web.

• Pass out "The Six Senses of Home" page. (Copy this double sided – one side for the grandparents' home, the other side for the senses from their own home) Explain that they will be doing one side only and that they will be focusing on the grandparents' home from the book.

#### **Lesson Part 2**

- Review that you are focusing on our connections to home. Remind the students of the book you read about the girl describing her grandparents' home.
- Invite the students to close their eyes and visualize their own home (could be their grandparents home if they spend a lot of time there).
- Remind students that when they are visualizing, their body is still and only their brain is busy making pictures.

Visualize your home. Visualizing standing on the sidewalk looking up at your house. Now visualize walking up the path or stairs and getting to the door. Turn the door knob, push the door open, and walk inside. What room are you in? What's the first thing that you can see? (pause) Breathe in the smells of your home. What smells do you smell? Cooking? Cleaning? Who are the people in the house with your? What are they doing? (pause) Listen. What sounds can you hear? (pause) What are some of the first things you might touch? (pause) If you are hungry, what will you eat? Are there any snacks you like to have after school? (pause) Notice the feeling you have when you are in your home. What are your

strongest connections to your home? What feelings do you connect with when you think about home? Stay with that feeling while you open your eyes.

 Invite the students to share their experience with a partner – talking about their home.

- Discuss how the visualizing exercise felt for them.
- Students can then complete the second side of the "Six Senses of Home" sheet.
- End the lesson by talking about how "home" includes all of the senses, not just what your "house" looks like.



#### Lesson – Part 3

- Review the word "home"
- Ask the students if they have ever been away from home? Discuss going away from home with your family vs. going away by yourself.
- Introduce the book Shi-Shi-etko. Tell the students it is a book about a First Nations girl who is leaving her home to go away to school without her family. Ask the students what that might be like? What feelings would she be having?

NOTE: At this point, you may want to introduce the subject of residential schools. This would depend on your grade level. If so, explain that many first nations children were sent away to school. In the schools, they were given English names, their hair was cut short and they were not allowed to speak their own language or talk about their culture. Discuss what that might have been like.

Explain that before she goes, she is trying to collect memories of her home. Her
mom is telling her to remember her home, her land, laughter, dancing when she
is away at school.

- Invite the students to listen carefully to the way the author uses the senses to help us get a feeling about the girl's home and what are some of the memories she collects.
- Read the story.
- Discuss some of the "memories" she is keeping. Explain that a memory is a connection she makes between an object and something from home.
- Draw a large "bag" as students respond, draw and label the items inside the bag: fireweed, paintbrush (flower), sprig, leaf, columbine, sage, pinecone. (If possible, show images of these plants on your ipad or smart board)
- Pass out "Memory Bag" paper. Students draw Shi-Shi-Etko's memories inside the bag.



#### Lesson – Part 4

- Review story of Shi-Shi-Etko. Remind students that in order to remember her home, her land, her family. Shi-shi-Etko collected "memories" for her memory bag.
- Tell the students to imagine having their own memory bag to store things to help them remember their home.

- Explain that you have collected some items from your home that you have strong connections to. They help you remember your home. (If possible, bring real objects from home for this lesson) Example:
  - sprig of lavender my grannie's favorite flower and the smell reminds me of her
  - knitting needle reminds me of my mom because she loved to knit
  - maple leaf reminds me of the maple tree in my front yard which was a wedding gift (reminds me of my husband)
  - piece of fur from my dog to remind me of her
  - heart shaped pebble reminds me of my sons



- Have students talk with a partner about some of the things they might want to put into their memory bag
- Students can complete the second Memory Bag paper with pictures and labels.
- On the back, they can list their items and why it is special to them.

#### End the lesson

• Ask the students to compare their memory bags with Shi-Shi-Etko's. What do you notice? All of Shi-Shi-Etko's memories are connected to the land. Remind students that First Nations people believe that the land connects us all.

#### Other books to support this lesson



I Know Here by Laurel Croza

#### Connecting to the Community

**Themes:** the 6 senses, how gratitude is practiced in First Nations culture

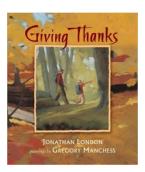
#### **Student Pages:**

- The Six Senses of Morning
- Good Morning! Sheet

#### Books:



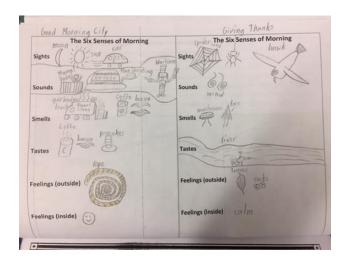
**Good Morning, City** – Pat Kiernman



**Giving Thanks** – Jonathon London

#### Lesson:

- Write the words "Six Senses" on the board and ask students to discuss the 6 senses with their partners. (this will be a review from previous lesson)
- Ask the students to think about what their house in the morning what sounds, smells, sights, tastes, touches and feelings to they notice? Share with a partner.
- Ask students to think about what sounds, smells, sights, etc. they might see outside their house on their way to school?
- Introduce Good Morning, City! by Pat Kiernman. Tell the students that while listening to the story, to notice how the author uses the senses to describe a city in the morning.
- After reading, have students discuss some of the things they noticed. Record on a chart paper (see chart below)
- Introduce Giving Thanks by Jonathon London. Explain that this is a first nations dad and his son walking one morning through the woods. Invite the students to listen for the different senses in the book.
- After reading, students can discuss some of the things they noticed from the book. Record their ideas onto the chart.
- Pass out The Six Senses of Morning sheet. Students can complete the sheet using the ideas from the chart or their own ideas.



Senses	Good Morning, City!	Giving Thanks
sights	Darkness to first light, trees, delivery	Sky, field, insects, shadows, deer
	truck, newspaper, joggers, traffic	tracks, quail, sun, moon
sounds	Quiet, ferry horns, dishes, baby	Father's voice, trees, leaves, frogs,
	crying, swoosh, traffic, garbage	crickets, quail
	trucks	
smells	Coffee, diner food, pancakes,	
	garbage,	
tastes	Coffee, bacon, pancakes	Chanterelle mushrooms, fresh air,
		grass, forest
touch	Newspaper, dishes,	Grass, plants, deer prints, trees,
		insects
feelings	Sleepy, happy, rested, rushed, busy,	Calm, quiet, grateful, thankful,
	hurry	love, silly, embarrassed

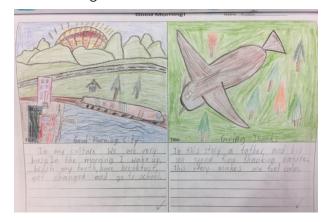
#### Lesson – Part 2

• Review stories from the previous lesson. Invite the students to think about how they are different. How is our culture different from FN?

Mornings are busy in a house – people are getting up, showing, eating, packing lunches, getting ready for work and school, rushing around. One thing I know that I don't do

every morning is take the time to give thanks to nature and to the land. In the book Giving Thanks, the dad and child are calm and quiet, not rushing. They are grateful and take the time to thank nature. Their day is connected to the land. This book made me feel calm, the other book made me feel busy.

 Ask students why do they think FN people thank nature when they wake up? (because of connection to the land)

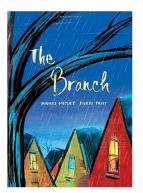


 Explain that today, they are going to write about how different cultures do things differently Good Morning sheet, comparing how they say good morning and how FN say good morning. See example below.

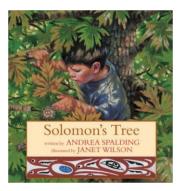
Good Morning, City!	Giving Thanks
In our culture, we usually have busy mornings. At my house	In this story, the dad and his son are walking through the woods in the morning and giving thanks to nature They
	say thank you to

#### **Connecting to Land**

Theme – connections to trees, ice storms, transform.



**The Branch** – Mierelle Messier



**Solomon's Tree** - Andrea Spalding

#### **Student Sheets**

- Transforming Trees Sheet x 2 (or copy back to back)
- Transforming My Tree (optional)

#### Lesson – Part 1:

- Ask the students if they have ever climbed a tree. Ask them if they have a tree in their yard or close to their home that they have a special connection to.
   In Vancouver, we are very lucky to be surrounded by beautiful trees. Think about a tree that is special to you, a tree that you love, that you always notice or like to climb.
- If possible, tell them a story of a special connection to a tree from your childhood. Have students share their tree connections with a partner.

• Introduce the story The Branch. Explain that it is the story of a little girl who lives in

Quebec who has a special connection to a tree in her back yard.

 Read the story to the point when the girl and Mr. Frank are making a plan transform the branch. Invite students to predict what they think they will make.

NOTE: Because this story is about an ice storm, I like to show photos of what an ice storm looks like. (Google images and show on Ipad or project on smart board)

- Pass out Transforming Trees page. Have students draw and write about what they think will happen to the tree branch on one side of the page.
- Gather together and read the rest of the story. (branch is made into a swing)
- Students can then complete the other side of the page.

#### Lesson – Part 2

- Remind students that you are reading stories about trees that are transformed.
   Explain that the second book is very similar to *The Branch* but the story is about a first nations boy named Solomon who is very connected to a tree.
- Ask students to pay attention to how Solomon's story is different from The Branch
- Read the story and pause when the tree branch is broken by the storm. Invite students to predict what Solomon and his uncle might transform the branch into. Why?
- Pass out Transforming Trees sheet. Students draw and write their prediction on the left side of the paper.
- Students gather as you continue to read the story. Compare what Solomon and his Uncle did before they carving? (they give thanks for the tree's spirit)
- When the story is finished, students can complete the other side of the Transforming Tree page. Show the photograph at the back of the story showing the photograph of the real hummingbird mask.

#### **End the lesson**

- Ask students if they are noticing a pattern in the First Nations stories we have been reading? (many stories include giving thanks to nature) Discuss.
- Depending on time, students can draw and write about what they would make out of a tree branch if they could.

#### **Connecting to Land**

- Explain that Indigenous ways of life were reflected in their languages, for
  example, in the ways they described the passing of time and the changing
  seasons. One example of this is the traditional Haida way of naming the months
  or "moons" which were passed down orally from one generation to the next.
- Ask the students what they notice about the names of the moons (they are all connected to the land).
- Explain that Indigenous cultures are founded on people's relationships with the land.

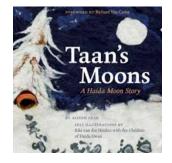
Theme – phases of the moon, aboriginal moon phases (Haida)

Different cultures have different connections to the moon.

#### **Books:**

We look at the moon as "man in the moon", outer space, phases of the moon, seasons, harvest moon.





The Moon Seems to Change

Taan's Moons - Alison Gear

Student Sheets: Phases of the Moon, 4 Seasons Sheet, My Moon page

#### Lesson – part 1

- Remind the students that we have been reading stories to help us understand how we are all connected to each other and to the land.
- Show a photo or picture of a full moon. Ask the students if they have ever seen a full moon outside? Show a picture of a crescent or half moon.
- Invite the students to share any connections they have to the moon: ie "The cow jumped over the moon", "the man in the moon",
- Ask the students to talk about how sometimes the moon looks like a full circle and other times it looks like it's half. Briefly discuss the notion that the phases of the moon change due to the shadow of the earth.

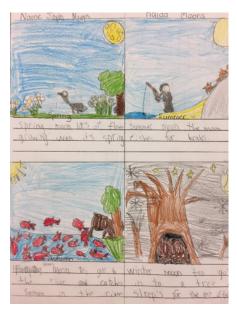
- Explain that in our culture we use scientific terms for the different phases of the moon. Read any book about Moon phases and introduce the words: waxing, waning, new moon, full moon.
- Pass out Phases of the Moon sheet. Students can color and label the different phases of the moon.
   Or use Oreo cookies and have students make their own moon phases.



#### Lesson - PART 2

List the names of the traditional Haida moons on a chart paper: (you will find these in the book "**Taan's Moons**" by Alison Gear - my sister!)

- Bear Moon
- Goose Moon
- Noisy Goose Moon
- Migratory Geese Moon
- Food Gathering Moon
- Raw Berry Moon
- Berries Ripen Moon
- Fish Moon
- Cedar Bark Weaving Moon
- Ice Moon
- Bears Hibernate Moon
- Snow Moon



- Explain that different Indigenous used their own language and way of life to describe time passing and seasons changing. The traditional way that the Haida people named the months or "moons" were passed down orally from one generation to the next.
- Ask the students what they notice about this list (names are connected to the land, changing seasons, animals)
- Explain that Indigenous cultures are founded on their connection to the land and that is why when they developed "names" for things, they chose words connected to nature and land.
- Pass out **Seasons** template. Invite students to record a list of words they associate with each season. Model how they can include activities, food, weather, feelings and colors. (this is a great activity to do with a partner!)

- Tell the students they are going to be designing their own "moon". They need to choose ONE season, look over the list of words and choose 2 or 3 words to describe "their moon"
- Encourage them to choose words connected to the land.
- Model some examples:
  - "Crunchy Colorful Moon"
  - "Sparkling Snowflake Moon"
  - "Sunny Splashing Moon"
  - "Flower Blossom Moon"

#### SPARKLING SNOWFLAKE MOON



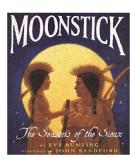


 Pass out MOON template. Invite students to design their Moon image and write an explanation of their moon below. The sample shown here is showing front and back of the same moon design.

#### Other books to support this lesson:



Thirteen Moons on a Turtle's Back
Joseph Bruchac



<u>Moonstick</u> – Seasons of the Sioux Eve Bunting

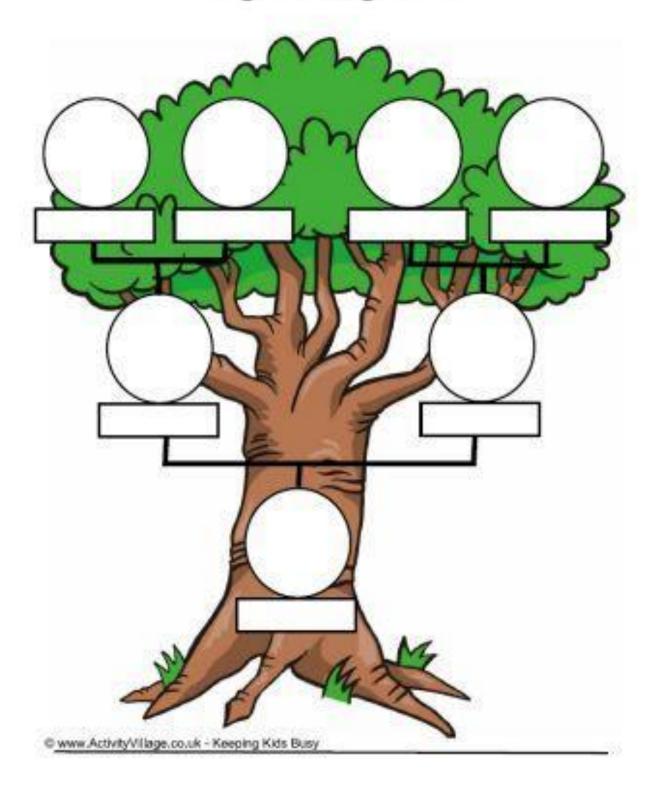
#### **Extension:**

 Investigate how different cultures describe, name, or celebrate the moon (ie – Lunar New Year, Ramadan Moon, etc)

# The Story of My Name

My name is		
My name comes from		
My parents named me		
Something interesting about my name is		
I like my name because		
If I could change my name, I would call r	nyself	

# My Family Tree



#### **TOTEM POLE ANIMAL & OBJECT SYMOBLISM**

Beaver	Old, wise, builder, creative, artistic & determined, strong sense of family, builder of dreams
Eagle	Ruler of the sky, great strength, leadership, prestige, divine spirit, connection to creator
Frog	Spring & new life, communicator, stability, rich in life, survivalist, connection to water element
Hawk	Strength, quick to assist when in need of help, messenger, stopper of time
Owl	Wisdom, watchful, perseverance, respected, may be associated with death

Raven	Credited for having tricked the owl and giving fire to man, putting the sun & moon in the sky and trees and rivers on land – tricky, mischievous & at times greedy
Thunderbird	Caller of rain, mystical, leadership, known to make lightning and thunder with a blink of an eye or flap of its wings
Whale	Hunter & commanding of the sea, family centered, wisdom, power, cleanser
Wolf	Loyalty, success, perseverance, powerful, heals humans that are sick, teacher, pathfinder and survivalist
Bear	Teacher, often misunderstood, welcome, friendly, strength, learned humility, motherhood
Salmon	Provider, instinct, persistence, dependability & renewal, represents different clans,

## Family Totem Pole

Family Member	Character Traits	Animal Match

#### Totem Animals and their Meanings

Bear - brave

Deer - loving

Beaver - determined

Butterfly - free-spirit

Moose - strong

Owl - wise

Rabbit - creative

Turtle - patient

Wolf - loyal

Porcupine - curious

Raven - truthful

Fox-clever

	25
Learning from Gran	adparents and Elders
My Culture:	First Nations' Culture:
Name	e:
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Celebrations	Name: _	
		on controlling and
Special Food	Special Clothing	Special Activities

Special Food	Special Clothing	Special Activities

Dipnetting With Dad		
Connecting With	Family Traditions	
Name:		

In the story, the boy learned the tradition of \_\_\_\_\_\_ from his \_\_\_\_\_. Dipnetting is...

In my family, I learned the tradition of	
	_ from my
	•
is	

# The Six Senses of Visualizing

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Author: \_\_\_\_\_

What I can see	What I can hear
What I can smell	What I can taste
What I can feel (touch)	What I can feel (inside)

# The Six Senses of Morning

Title:	Title:
By:	By:
See:	See:
Hear:	Hear:
Smell:	Smell:
Taste:	Taste:
Feel (touch)	Feel (touch)
Feel (emotion)	Feel (emotion)

# 30 **Transforming Trees** My prediction What really happened

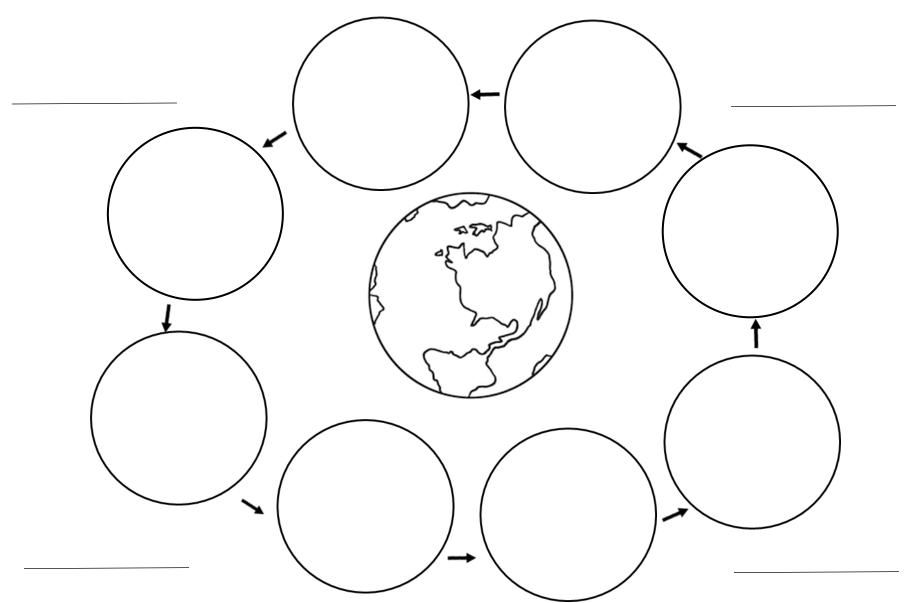
	3:
Good I	Morning! Name
In my culture	In First Nations' culture

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#### We Are All Connected

	Theme:		
Title:		Author:	
Summary	Connection	Question	Visualize
tle:		Author:	
Summary	Connection	Question	Visualize

### Phases of the Moon



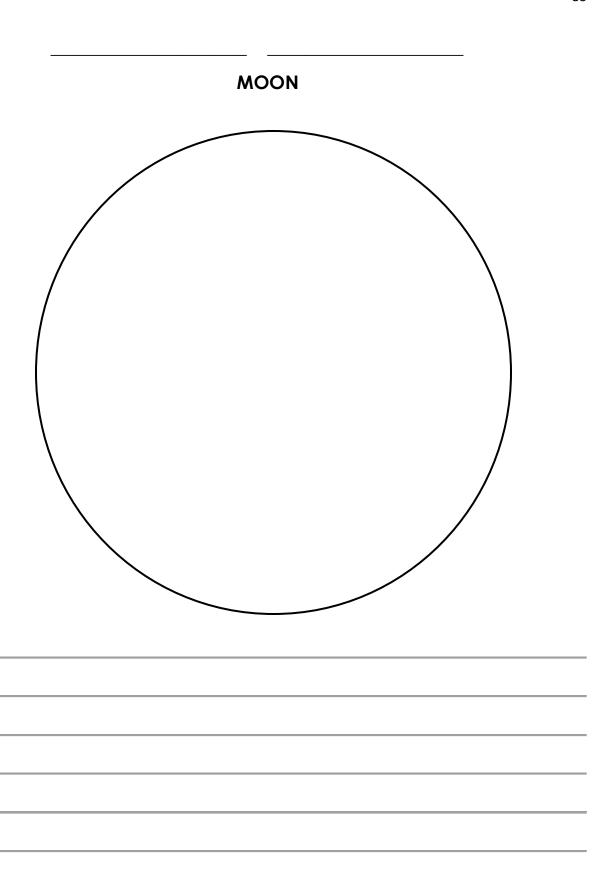
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#### **Seasons**

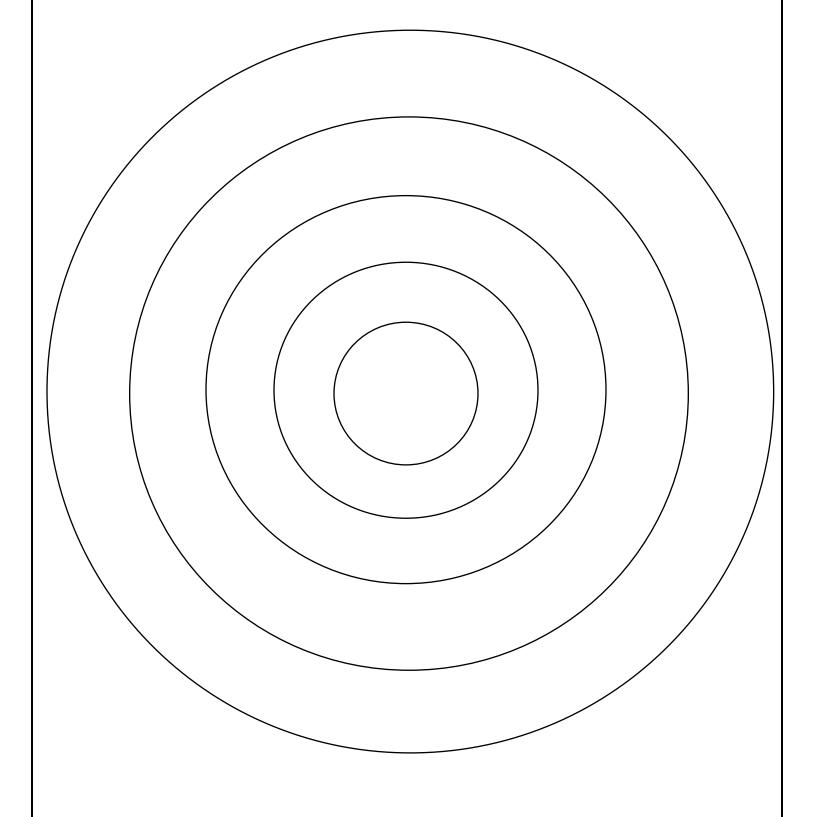
In each box, list your connections to the season. Include things such as: weather, activities, changes in nature, food, celebrations, colors.

Fall is	Winter is
Spring is	Summer is

Choose ONE season you would like to focus on for your moon.



# We Are All Connected



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