

# THE OFFICE OF FIRST NATION EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

September-October 2020



## Links for learning and teaching about Canada's Indian Residential and Indian Day Schools:

The Story of Orange Shirt Day:

<https://www.orangeshirtday.org/about-us.html>

Phyllis Webstad's Story:

<https://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html>

The Office of First Nation Education One Site (only accessible to educators)

<https://collabe.nbed.nb.ca/sites/OFNEPL/layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx>

## ORANGE SHIRT DAY 2020

Wednesday, September 30 is Orange Shirt Day! To mark this important occasion, The Office of First Nation Education has distributed Orange Shirts to each of the four anglophone school districts as well as to staff at The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).

[The Office of First Nation Education One Site](#) has a variety of lessons and instructional materials in both French and English which can be used to teach students about the importance of Orange Shirt Day and the need to remember the victims of the Indian Residential Schools.

## WHAT IS ORANGE SHIRT DAY?

Orange Shirt Day grew out of the St. Joseph Mission Residential School (1891-1981) Commemoration and Reunion Project in Williams Lake, BC in 2013. Events were designed to commemorate the Indian Residential School experience and to honour the healing journey of the survivors and their families. Orange Shirt Day grew out of this project and has since spread nationwide.

Phyllis Webstad, as a spokesperson for the Reunion group told [her story](#) of having her new orange shirt, which was a gift from her grandmother, taken away on her first day at residential school.

## WHY SEPTEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>?

September 30<sup>th</sup> falls during the time of the year when many Indigenous children were taken from their families to attend Indian Residential schools.

## MAKING INDIAN RESIDENTIAL AND INDIAN DAY SCHOOLS A YEAR LONG TEACHING

Indian Residential schools were church-run schools where approximately 150,000 Métis, Inuit and First Nations children were forced to attend from the 1860s until the 1990s. Indian Residential Schools were never intended to be a place where Indigenous children would receive care or a real education, rather the purpose of these schools were clearly intended to destroy Indigenous languages, cultures and identities. Children were often rounded-

up without their parent's consent, and many children never saw their parents again. The mortality rate is not clear, but research from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission estimates that at least 3,301 students died, mainly from disease. TRC chair, Justice Murray Sinclair believes the number to be closer to 6,000.



The 1909 Bryce Report stated that “the Indian population of Canada has a mortality rate of more than double the whole population, and in some provinces more than three times”. One of the causes mentioned in the report was the role of Indian Residential Schools in spreading disease. As children were generally buried in unmarked graves, often on the grounds of the ‘schools’, the identity of many of the victims is unknown.

The schools were part of a larger policy to “kill the Indian in the child”, a phrase often attributed to Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Scott is on the record describing the purpose of the Indian Residential school system was to “get rid of the Indian problem”. In a letter to B.C Indian Agent-General Major D. McKay, Scott wrote:

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***“It is readily acknowledged that Indian children lose their natural resistance to illness by habitating so closely in these schools, and that they die at a much higher rate than in their villages. But this alone does not justify a change in the policy of this Department, which is being geared towards the final solution of our Indian Problem.”***

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The Canadian government and the various churches which administered the schools on behalf of the government have each issued apologies or similar statements. While it is clear from the testimony that not everyone who attended an Indian Residential school was the victim of abuse, many were. Phil Fontaine, former National Chief of the AFN, himself a survivor claimed that he, and his entire class were the victims of abuse in this system. His testimony echoed that of many others across Canada.

### **FURTHER LINKS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

[They Came for the Children \(TRC Report\)](http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/resources_2039_T&R_eng_web[1].pdf) [http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/resources\\_2039\\_T&R\\_eng\\_web\[1\].pdf](http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/resources_2039_T&R_eng_web[1].pdf)

A detailed report on the purpose of the Indian Residential School system, the governmental and church roles in administering these schools, and the experiences of the students which range from generally positive to highly abusive.

[Facing History and Ourselves, Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indian Residential Schools.](https://www.facinghistory.org/stolen-lives-indigenous-peoples-canada-and-indian-residential-schools/historical-background/who-are-indigenous-peoples-canada)  
<https://www.facinghistory.org/stolen-lives-indigenous-peoples-canada-and-indian-residential-schools/historical-background/who-are-indigenous-peoples-canada>

A book (also distributed to schools in physical form) which contains a series of chapters on different aspects of the Indian Residential School System. To request a copy of this book for your class, please contact [Craig.Williamson@gnb.ca](mailto:Craig.Williamson@gnb.ca)

[Ten books about residential schools to read with your kids](https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/10-books-about-residential-schools-to-read-with-your-kids-1.3208021)

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/10-books-about-residential-schools-to-read-with-your-kids-1.3208021>

Age appropriate books for introducing younger children to the history and legacy of the Indian Residential Schools in an age appropriate manner.

**When We Were Alone-Novel-** (copies should be available in your school library) An online read-along is also available (please contact [Craig.Williamson@gnb.ca](mailto:Craig.Williamson@gnb.ca) for details of how to access).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPbmCke-x8w> - a 5-minute video of David A. Robertson (author) and Pamela Dirksen (Gr. 1 teacher) discussing the use of this book in an elementary classroom. Includes helpful advice for teaching challenging topics to young learners.

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*Reminder: [Teach Indigenous brilliance and success](#) as much as you  
teach Indigenous suffering and trauma*

*- Megan Tipler*

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## CULTURAL AWARENESS CAMP

Due to Covid-19, the yearly “Cultural Immersion Camps” (one on Mi’kmaq territory and the other on Wolastoqiyik territory) had to be cancelled. In its place, The Office of First Nation Education hosted a Cultural Awareness camp which featured five days of teachings from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Wabanaki linguists, and other scholars.

We had over 50 participants each day and the response from educators has been very positive.

## WHEN WE WERE ALONE READ ALOUD

A read loud for “When We Were Alone” was produced several years ago by Atlantic Educators for Reconciliation, of which our office is a member. While the read aloud is in English, there are Mi’kmaq and Wolastoqey words which appear on screen. The video is password protected and is only permitted to be used by educators in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. Contact [Craig.Williamson@GNB.CA](mailto:Craig.Williamson@GNB.CA) for information on how to access.

## DISTRICT INITIATIVES AND NEWS

For district First Nation initiatives and news, please visit the following links:

ASD-North <http://asd-n.nbed.nb.ca/fne>

ASD-West <https://secure1.nbed.nb.ca/sites/ASD-W/Pages/default.aspx>

ASD- East <http://web1.nbed.nb.ca/sites/ASD-E/wabanaki/Pages/Home.aspx>

ASD- South <https://secure1.nbed.nb.ca/sites/ASD-S/Pages/welcome.aspx>

## SORA: INDIGENOUS THEMED BOOKS IN THE STUDENT LIBRARY COLLECTION

The SORA student library was expanded back in the spring with an additional 4,000 titles including 1,000 books written by Indigenous authors or written with an Indigenous theme. We are currently in the process of selecting more texts for inclusion which are available on Overdrive. While the number of Indigenous authored or themed books is expanding, we hope to see more Wabanaki content available in the future. Access to SORA is also available to First Nation community schools.

## WELDING CAMP UPGRADES

Over the summer, The Office of First Nation Education has coordinated some upgrades to welding stations constructed for dual purpose use between communities and schools. Additional programming is being made available through community partnerships.

## OFFICE OF FIRST NATION EDUCATION SHAREPOINT PAGE

The Office of First Nation Education maintains a SharePoint page on the EECD One Site (available inside school and district networks). The page has multiple sections including a page dedicated to professional learning opportunities for school-based educators and other school personnel as well as multiple pages with educational resources and links to curriculum documents.

**To access the page from inside a school network, you can use this link:**

<https://collabe.nbed.nb.ca/sites/OFNEPL/layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Home.aspx>



Office of First Nation  
Education

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Department of Education and  
Early Childhood Development

# WORLD OF WISDOM PLATFORM (WOW)

<http://world-of-wisdom.ca/>

## WOW TUTORING

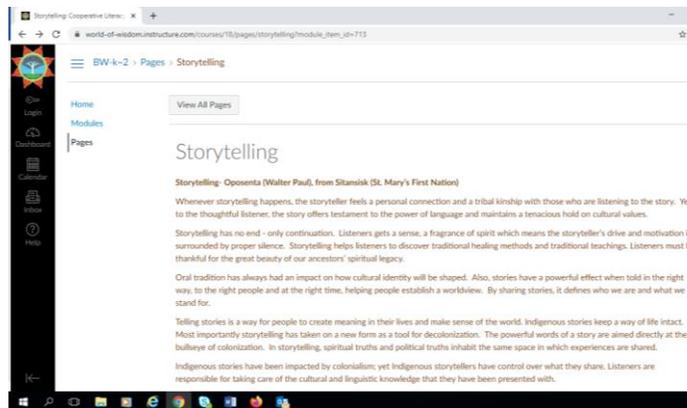
The World of Wisdom Tutoring site is back up and running for the new school year. Teachers can book a session for a student, or students can register independently as well.

The tutoring site also contains links for Grade 9 and Grade 10 Math help videos and worksheets.



## BEYOND WORDS: SHARING INDIGENOUS CULTURES AND BOOKS

Beyond Words seeks to provide avenues for communities and schools to connect virtually through Indigenous literature. We are hopeful that educators will incorporate Elders and Indigenous partners to lead and support classroom instruction and discussion. The Beyond Words site has many features including summaries and classroom activities for books for grades K-12, a resource section for educators, supplementary readings, extended learning activities, author information and others. The live portion of this site has not launched yet, but teachers will find it to be a wealth of information. Beyond Words is hosted on the World of Wisdom (WoW) platform.



## KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS

The Knowledge Keepers section of the World of Wisdom platform enables classes to connect learners with Wabanaki Knowledge Keepers for group discussions through an online platform. At present, educators can book sessions with Wolastoqey and Mi'kmaq Knowledge keepers.

## LANGUAGE KEEPERS

Educators can also book a session with either a Wolastoqey or a Mi'kmaq Language Keeper through the WoW platform. We request that a minimum of one week's notice is given when scheduling a language session.

## CAREER COUNSELLING

Career Counselling remains available for students to book directly or for guidance counsellors to book a session directly on behalf of students within their schools. A First Nation career counsellor is available to support individuals or groups of students.

## TEACHING SUPPORT

Teaching support is a new site on the WoW platform which will provide a library of resources to support teachers. At present, a one-hour tutorial on the New Brunswick Global Competencies is available. This tutorial was developed for The Office of First Nation Education and has particular teachings suitable for teachers seeking to include Indigenous understandings in their practice.

The tutorial is also available directly here:

<https://youtu.be/nIOhHi4G9ms>

A PDF guide is also developed which is available here: [http://world-of-wisdom.ca/video/NBGC\\_tutorial\\_guide.pdf](http://world-of-wisdom.ca/video/NBGC_tutorial_guide.pdf)

<http://world-of-wisdom.ca/>



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