

UNDERSTANDING # 2:Communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians are found in Northern Saskatchewan

The foregoing statement implies that there are communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians. The statement also tells us where, in Saskatchewan, such communities may be found. Students may now use a number of ways to find out whether the information contained in the statement is accurate. The activities provided with this lesson will allow them to use an inquiry process to find the answer. First, students will become acquainted with the concepts of minority and majority populations. Second, they will gain an understanding of some of the geographic and demographic differences between the northern and southern part of the province. Finally, a comparison of the two regions will be undertaken.

The conclusion reached in the previous understanding established that Metis and Non-Status Indians do not tend to live in one distinct area but are scattered throughout various communities in Saskatchewan. The questions put to students now relate to the number of Metis and Non-Status Indians in Saskatchewan communities:

- (1) How many are there?
- (2) Are they the majority?
- (3) Is there a distinct geographic area that has communities with majority Metis populations?

The answer to these questions is found through an analysis of the population statistics shown on Appendices A and B. These statistics may be used for making simple bar graphs. When we compare the data of various Saskatchewan communities we realize that there is a distinct geographic pattern concerning the communities which have a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians.

The lesson plan lists a number of activities from which teachers may select those that seem appropriate for his/her class.

At the beginning of the lesson identify the problem and the guiding concept:

- i) Present the students with the question:
Where are the communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indian people found?
 Or present the statement: Communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians are found in Northern Saskatchewan."

Through a discussion ask the students to identify the guiding concept. a) There are communities in Saskatchewan with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indian people. b) These communities are found in the north.

- ii) Have the student discuss the concept of majority/minority. You may ask students to identify situation in which they are a majority and others in which they are a minority, i.e. boys/girls, month born, age. From this discussion have the students define the criteria for a majority/minority i.e. $1/2 + 1$ majority, $1/2 - 1$ minority.

Next, develop strategies for investigation. For example:

- iii) Ask students to suggest ways of collecting data and researching, which would determine if there are any communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians i.e. Ask friends. Write to several communities. Study population statistics.

Appendix "A" provides a list of communities in which Metis and Non-Status Indian people live. The communities on the list give population statistics. These statistics may be used to supply the data required by the students. Note: the communities have been selected in order to represent a cross-section of Saskatchewan communities.

Check the validity of the suggestion that there are communities in which the Metis and Non-Status Indians make up the majority of the population.

- IV) Demonstrate the process of making bar graphs for the activities

Have the students make a bar graph for each of the communities for which population statistics are supplied.

- V) a) from the results of the bar graph exercise have the students report any communities in which they have found a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians.

- VI) Have the students determine other ways of dividing Saskatchewan into a north and a south region. The student may consult the Saskatchewan Official Highways Map.

Check the guiding concept that communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians are in the northern part of the province.

- VII) a) Have the students locate the communities on the grid map supplied in Appendix C.

b) Have the students list the communities which lie north of the geographical centre of the province and those which lie south of the geographic centre.

Have the students determine which northern communities have a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians and which southern countries have a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians.

- VIII) a) Have the students develop a generalization based on the listing exercise.
ie. - communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians are in the north.
- most communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians are in the south.

- all communities with a majority of Metis and non-Status Indians are in the north.

b) Have the students check their generalization against the guiding concept.

Communities with a majority fo Metis and Non-Status Indians are found in the North.

Note: the students may not agree with this concept because the understanding is based on the traditional definition of northern Saskatchewan, which is based on the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and not on the geographic centre of the province.

Have students draw conclusion from their research and compare these conclusions to the statement:

Communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians are found in Northern Saskatchewan.

Can the students suggest any amendments to this statement?

Or, let students answer the question: Where are the communities with a majority of Metis and Non-Status Indians?

The following are enrichment activities for this lesson:

Have students request the current Northern Saskatchewan Community Directory from the Northern Saskatchewan Board of the Department of Education. The directory lists the languages spoken in each community, whether the schools are federal or provincial schools, etc. Students may find out more about Northern Saskatchewan through the directory.

Attached are two sample pages from the Northern Saskatchewan Community Directory.

UNDERSTANDING #7:

The newcomers needed the assistance of the Indians. The Indians gave many contributions to the newcomers.

In this lesson, students are asked to hypothesize what happens when one group of people move in with another group in an entirely new environment. The hypothetical situation is later related to the actual circumstances in which the settlers found themselves when they moved to Saskatchewan. Through discussion, students arrive at the understanding that in order to survive the newcomers needed the assistance of the people with whom they came in contact. The contribution of Indians in the way of food, transportation and clothing, as outlined in Appendix 'A', are well recognized: over 50 new kinds of plants were introduced to the Europeans by the Indians. Today two of these, namely corn and potatoes, furnish almost half of the world's food supply. Clothing, such as mocassins, leggings, and parkas have become standard fashions for North Americans. Many modern drugs were derived from medicines used by Indians, and camping, canoeing and hiking are adaptations of early methods of travel and survival.

Least recognized are the contributions of Indians to modern civilization. The individual rights of persons were valued by the original people of North America. Ideas of freedom, liberty and equality existed among Indian nations long before Europeans came to accept them. Health habits, like purging the body of toxins through sweating, bathing, and exposure to sunshine and fresh air, were longstanding practices of Native life. Once thought to be harmful they are now accepted by modern civilizations as ingredients to well-being and longevity.

The story "Surviving on Adanac", Appendix 'B', can be used to stimulate discussion about situations in which the newcomers to Saskatchewan found themselves. Suggestions for activities, provided with the story, encourage the solving of problems through group decision. Transparencies with illustrations, also included, may be viewed while the storyline is read.

On Appendix 'C', teachers will find an outline of the special role played by the Metis in the adaptation of the two cultures, Native and non-Native, to life in a changing social and economic climate.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	CLASS ACTIVITY	SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (4 - 5 STUDENTS)
<p>Outcome of research.</p>	<p>iv) Have students examine the original statement and ask them if it is accurate.</p> <p>Or, ask the question: "What are the best ways for learning how to survive in a new environment?"</p> <p>Through examination of the data, students should have been led to the conclusion that the best way to survive is to encourage the assistance of the people already living in the new environment.</p>	

UNDERSTANDING #8:

A Unique Group of People, The Metis and Half-Breeds Developed On The Prairies

In this lesson, students will become acquainted with the customs and traditions of a family celebration. The story of a Metis wedding demonstrates the participation of family members in the event, and their interaction with each other. Through the story students should be able to draw certain conclusions.

(1) The Metis Combined Indian and European Ways of Living:

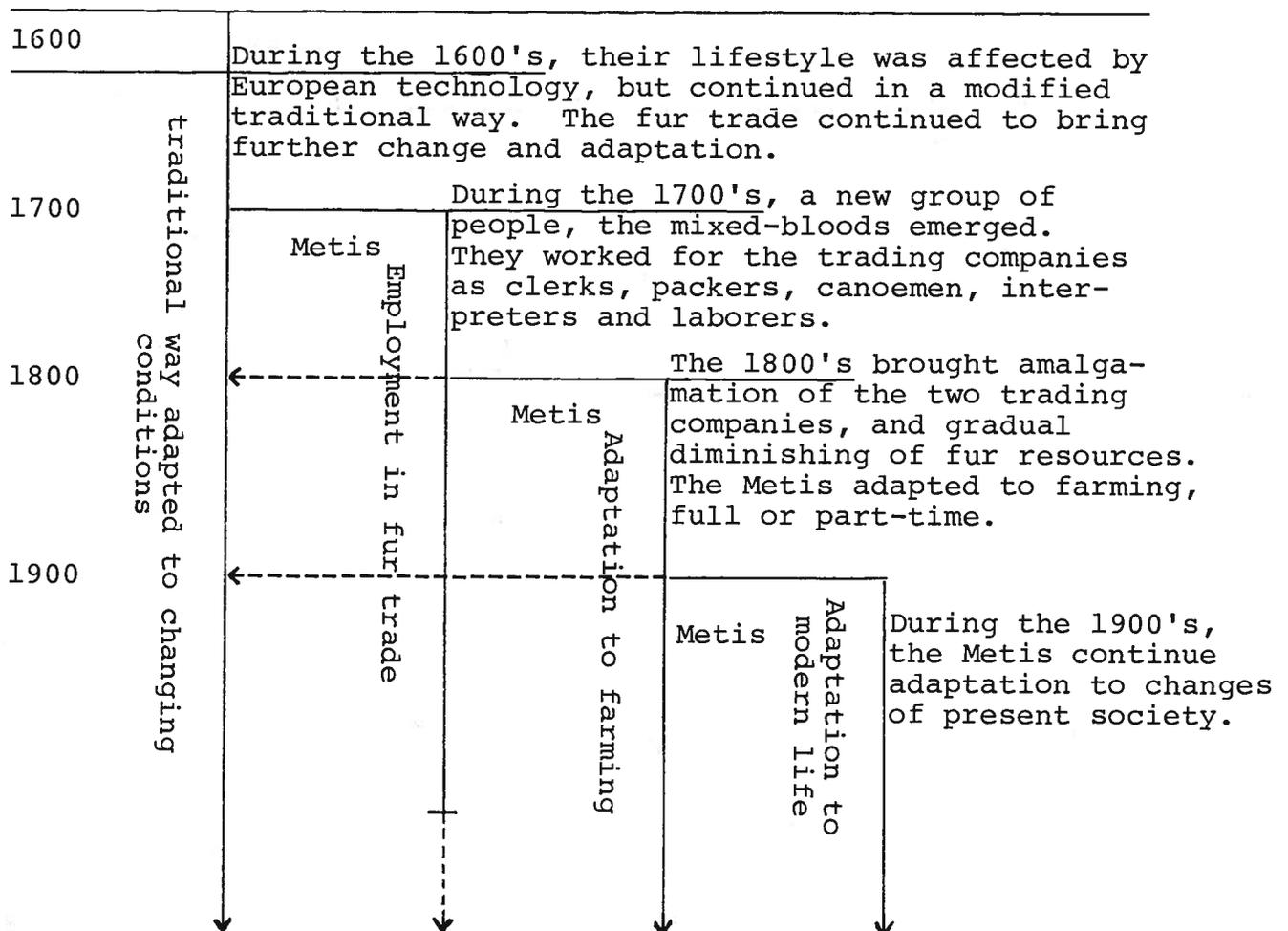
Before reading the story about the Metis wedding, teachers should explain to students how the hunting, gathering and trapping lifestyle of the Plains Indians was changed through the fur trade. Intermarriage with Indian women on the part of the traders brought about the most dramatic changes in all, because the daily contact with European traits and manners combined with knowledge of the Indian customs and traditions began to mold a unique group of people. Most of the mixed-bloods acknowledged their Indian ancestry, yet borrowed what was useful from the European way of life. Others remained with the tribes on the Plains which tried to retain their Indian cultural traditions despite the heavy influences of trade and fur commercialization. Two distinct groups of people emerged over a period of time: the Indian of the fur trade era with the modified Indian lifestyle, and the mixed-blood, or 'Metis' which tried to create a new way of life that was neither Indian or European, but distinctly 'Metis'.

During the early nineteenth century, the lives of the people employed with the trading companies were, again, subjected to further changes. The diminishing fur resources, and the merger of the two major trading companies resulted in unemployment of a large group of company men. The

Metis had to find new means to make a living. The new way, again, combined the Indian with the European way of life.

By the middle of the nineteenth century farming had become a viable, but often meagre, way of self-employment for a number of English-Indian 'Half-breeds', while many of those with mixed French-Indian blood adapted to subsistence farming, interspersed with seasonal hunting. A third group remained in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. Contact with the fourth group, still maintaining the modified Indian lifestyle, remained intact through frequent intermarriage. The following diagram may help to illustrate the parallel developments of the different groups of people.

Before 1500 A.D. the Indians of the Canadian North West lived by hunting, trapping, gathering, and fishing.



(2) The Metis People Were Accepting of Each Other's Lifestyle:

The Metis attached no stigma to the choice of lifestyle by members of their community. They understood that individuals dealt to the best of their ability with the changing times and circumstances. The story demonstrates this acceptance by describing their support of each other and their willingness to share everything in the way of labor and of material goods.

(3) The Metis Were Unique in The Way They Developed Their Own Way of Life:

The adaptation to the changing social and economic circumstances and their intermarriage with people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds prompted the Metis to seek a way of life that was flexible, to allow for change, yet stable enough to provide a solid foundation for communal living. All had one thing in common, namely their origin of Indian ancestry. The latter provided the solid base from which came the strong feeling of a separate, positive identity. No other racially mixed group has achieved this to the same degree. In other cultures children of mixed marriages usually assimilate into one or the other group of their ethnic origin. In the Canadian North West--the former Rupertsland--the trading companies supported the traditional Native-born skills out of a desire for their own advancement while at the same time maintaining European customs and traditions. These conditions made adaptation without loss of tradition possible.

Yet, uniqueness is more than clinging to traditional ways or adapting and borrowing ethnic customs and traditions. Uniqueness implies the ability to create something new and special for a particular situation. Evidence of uniqueness on the part of the Metis is demonstrated in the creation of their own transportation system, their own style of clothing, their music and dancing and their ability

to govern themselves. All of these achievements are generally known and respected. The story, however, attempts to demonstrate their uniqueness as a separate group of people who were capable of living in harmony in a North American culturally mixed, social environment.

Students should be able to examine the validity of the statement: A Unique Group of People, The Metis and Half-breeds, Developed on the Prairies, after reading the story, "A Metis Wedding". Questions relating to the characters of the story, and to their interaction with each other, may help students to reach the appropriate conclusions. Examples are as follows:

- by what means did the characters in the story earn their living?
- did the people uphold one particular occupation over another?
- what can we learn about the role of men and women?
- how did children participate in the events of the story?
- how did people relate to one another?
- what customs point to Indian origin, or European influence?
- where, on the prairies, could such a wedding have taken place?
- is there any other group that has the same customs as those described in the story?

(Appendix*: The two trading companies, the North West Company, and the Hudson's Bay Company, merged in 1821 under the name the Hudson's Bay Company.)

UNDERSTANDING #12:

The Metis made rules and laws to govern their affairs. Just as today we have rules and laws to guide the actions of people, the Metis recognized the need to have a system to guide their activities. Rules and laws are not arbitrarily created but, rather are created on the basis of the beliefs and values of the society. Therefore, one may gain some insight into the beliefs and values of a society by looking at its laws.

To begin the activities we will study a community (Appendix 'A') which very closely resembles St. Laurent in the 1870's. As you become familiar with the physical and economic environment of the community, you may begin to speculate on exactly what laws would be required for the community. You might consider such things as:

- (i) Who makes the laws and how.
- (ii) Who interprets the laws.
- (iii) How are the laws enforced.
- (iv) How is the law enforcement paid for.

This exercise will allow you to incorporate your beliefs and values into a set of laws.

Once you have defined a set of laws, then it will be useful to study a set of actual laws for a similar community. You may compare your laws to the original laws to determine similarities and differences and to determine the similarities and differences between your beliefs and values and those of the actual community.

Following these activities, you may ask yourself whether:

- (i) The Metis had rules and laws.
- (ii) The Metis rules and laws were based on beliefs and values of the society.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	CLASS ACTIVITY	SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (4 - 5 STUDENTS)
<p>Defining the problem and defining the guiding concepts.</p>	<p>(i) Present students with the question: "Did the Metis make rules and laws to govern their affairs?", or, present the statement, "The Metis made rules and laws to govern their affairs."</p> <p>Through a discussion ask the students to identify the guiding concepts.</p> <p>(1) such rules and laws exist (2) such laws and rules are based on a system of values and beliefs.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"</p>
<p>Research and data collection for the purpose of checking the validity of the guiding concept.</p>	<p>(ii) Have each student read the description of the community in Appendix 'A' or read the description.</p> <p>(a) Have the students draw a picture of the community from the description, or</p> <p>have the student discuss the description in order to clarify the image they have of the community.</p> <p>Sketches of the community are available in Appendix 'B'.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"</p>

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	CLASS ACTIVITY	SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (4 - 5 STUDENTS)
<p>Research data collection for the purposes of checking the validity of the guiding concepts.</p>	<p>(iii) Have each student choose a role as one of the types of residents; i.e.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.B.Co. official - priest - Metis <p>In any class, there should only be one of the H.B.Co. official and the priest, and the remainder Metis in order to reflect the proportions of the community.</p> <p>Have the students participate in the development of a set of rules and laws from the perspective of the character they choose.</p>	<p>(iii) Have each student in each group choose a role as one of the types of residents; i.e.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.B.Co. official - priest - Metis <p>Each group should have either a H.B.Co. official or a priest and the remainder of the group Metis in order to reflect the proportions of the community.</p> <p>Have each group develop a set of rules and laws from the perspective of the characters they choose.</p> <p>Have each group report its result to the class in order to compile a list of laws and rules for the class.</p>
	<p>(iv) Have the students analyze the laws and rules, which they have developed, in terms of the beliefs and values portrayed; i.e.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the role of the community in making laws - equal rights - authority of the law - the value of education - the value of religion - the value of the land - the value of the environment - protection of material (theft and destruction) - the value of agreements (honour) - human rights <p>Note: there may not be many values or beliefs expressed by the laws, however, those which are expressed should be identified.</p>	<p>(iv) the students may engage in this activity based on the rules and laws developed by the group or by all of the groups.</p>

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	CLASS ACTIVITY	SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (4 - 5 STUDENTS)
<p>Research and data collection for the purpose of checking the validity of the guiding concepts.</p>	<p>(v) Have the students study the laws of St. Laurent, Appendix 'C', and compare these laws to the laws developed by the students. Have the students list the similarities between the two sets of laws. Have the students list the differences between the two sets of laws.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"</p>
	<p>(vi) Have the students analyze the laws in terms of the beliefs and values which are portrayed; i.e.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the role of the community in making laws - equal rights - authority of the law - the value of education - the value of religion - the value of the land - the value of the environment - protection of material (theft and destruction) - the value of agreements (honour) - human rights 	<p style="text-align: center;">"</p>

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	CLASS ACTIVITY	SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY (4 - 5 STUDENTS)
<p>Outcome of research.</p>	<p>(vii) Ask the students to respond to the questions:</p> <p>(1) Did the Metis have rules and laws?</p> <p>(2) Were the Metis rules and laws based on the beliefs and values of the community?</p> <p>Ask the students to respond to the question asked or statement made in activity (i): "The Metis had rules and laws to govern their affairs."</p>	<p>"</p>

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ACTIVITY	ENRICHMENT AND RELATED ACTIVITY	TEACHER'S COMMENTS
<p>(iii) Have each student develop a list of rules and laws which would be required for the community.</p>		
<p>(iv) Each individual student may engage in this activity based on the rules and laws developed by the individual or by the class.</p>		