

# GRADE 9 SOCIAL STUDIES:

COLLECTIVE CARIBOU IDENTITY:  
THE POWER OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
AND IDENTITY



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# SOUTHERN LAKES CARIBOU IN THE SCHOOLS: A COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING RESOURCE

**Compiled and edited in 2022 by:**

Rivers to Ridges  
2180 2nd Avenue  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Canada Y1A 5N6

**Cover art by:**

Violet Gatensby  
[instagram.com/violet.gatensby](https://www.instagram.com/violet.gatensby)

**All interior art by:**

Tedd Tucker,  
Berwin  
[www.berwin.ca](http://www.berwin.ca)

**Elder facilitation and  
leadership provided by:**

Copper Joe Jack (Go' gon'),  
Land and Peoples Relationship Model  
[www.respectcareshare.ca](http://www.respectcareshare.ca)

[www.southernlakescaribou.com/educators](http://www.southernlakescaribou.com/educators)

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Southern Lakes Caribou in the Schools:  
your local Southern Lakes Yukon First Nation  
Community Booklet or Southern Lakes Caribou  
in the Schools: Learning Resource

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# GRADE 9 SOCIAL STUDIES: COLLECTIVE CARIBOU IDENTITY: THE POWER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND IDENTITY

## BIG IDEAS

- Emerging ideas and ideologies profoundly influence societies and events
- Physical environment influences the nature of political, social and economic change
- Disparities in power alter the balance of relationships
- Collective identity is constructed and can change over time

## GRADE 9 - LEARNING STANDARDS:

### CONTENT

- Political, social, economic and technological revolutions (transportation including highways, railway and waterway)
- Continuing effects of colonialism on First Nations peoples in Canada
- Patterns of migration (seasonal movement) and population growth
- Discriminatory policies, attitudes and historical wrongs
- Physiographic features of Canada and geological processes

### CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

- Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions
- Explain and infer different perspectives on past or present people, places, issues or events (perspective)
- Recognize implicit and explicit ethical judgments in a variety of sources (ethical judgment)
- Make reasoned ethical judgments about actions in the past and present, and determine appropriate ways to remember and respond (ethical judgment)
- Assess the justification for competing historical accounts after investigating points of contention, reliability of sources and adequacy of evidence (evidence)

## LEARNING TARGETS

1. I am able to demonstrate an understanding of historical inequalities and how they have impacted First Nations people and the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC) population over time.
2. I am able to explore the effects of colonialism and reflect on perspectives related to people, place and culture.
3. I am able to recognize how the arrival of new groups affected natural and human characteristics of the physical environment.

## **PRIOR LEARNINGS**

Prior to teaching the following activities and games, it would be helpful if the students had a basic overview of Southern Lakes Caribou seasonal movement and seasonal rounds. Some helpful resources are listed below.

- C. (n.d.-a). *Southern Lakes Caribou* | <https://southernlakescaribou.com>
- *Caribou in the Schools: Community Booklet (for your community)*

Prior teaching related to Yukon First Nations would be helpful for having a basic understanding of topics such as Treaties, discriminatory policies (ex: banned potlatches) and the history of Residential Schools as well as the concept of Truth and Reconciliation. Holding space for an Elder or Traditional Knowledge Holder to share their experiences and stories with the group is also important.

- Council of Yukon First Nations. (n.d.-b). <https://cyfn.ca/agreements/self-government-agreements/>
- History – Council of Yukon First Nations. (n.d.). <https://cyfn.ca/history/>



# PART 1: OPENING CIRCLE AND NO VOICE PERSPECTIVE

## LEARNING TARGET:

I am able to demonstrate an understanding of historical inequalities and how they have impacted First Nations people as well as the SLC population over time.

## MATERIALS

- **A chair (for guests and No Voice Perspective)**
- **Caribou artifact or photo printed (Appendix 1B and 2C)**
- **Paper and writing tools**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

**TIME: ~90 MINUTES**

## OPENING: CONNECTING TO CARIBOU

Gather in a circle and begin with introducing guests, Elders or Traditional Knowledge Holders, staff and students. Acknowledge the Traditional Territories on which you are presently teaching and where these activities will be taking place. Pass around a Caribou artifact and invite students to share their personal connection with Caribou.

## ASK STUDENTS

- What is interconnectedness?
- How are you connected to Caribou?
- Why are Caribou a keystone species for Yukon First Nations?
- What role do Caribou play in the ecosystem?
- Can you think of some ways that humans have impacted Caribou's survival?

Share ideas.

## SHARE

Observing the land, waterways and the animals that live on it offers many teachings. All living organisms, including lichen, need air to survive and flourish. Lichen are known to be a quality indicator, meaning that their growth is affected by air pollution and can teach a lot about air quality in a region. If the lichen are not able to flourish, then Caribou will be affected as this is a staple food source for this creature. If Caribou cannot source the food they need to survive the winter months, that too will affect the predators who prey on Caribou for their survival. Every living organism in an ecosystem is interdependent and when one part of the web is out of place, it is a crisis for nature but also for the First Nations who have a profound connection with the land.

If possible, invite an Elder or Traditional Knowledge Holder to share stories related to Traditional Laws, which have different names. If this is not possible, there are resources available to introduce this concept.

"In some Yukon First Nations Traditional Law is embedded in a system of respectful behaviour of all life. It is often subdivided into behaviour towards plants and animals and humans." At the core is respect for the land, animals and plants. "Respect determines how one harvests and treats resources." (Jody Beaumont and Michael Edwards, 2014, p. 35)

Breaking Traditional Laws could result in illness, injury or bring hard times to a community, an imbalance to the interconnectedness of all things. Yukon First Nations depend on traditional hunting to supply their community with nourishment. By gathering and hunting what they need, but never taking more than what is needed and always using every part of an animal that is being harvested, nothing is wasted. Survival, respect and balance are key components to Yukon First Nations ways of Knowing, Doing and Being.

### ASK STUDENTS

- How have Caribou been affected by humans? Why?
- What would Caribou want us to say if we were to tell their stories?

Brainstorm ideas around human impacts and how they relate directly or indirectly to Caribou. Consider discussing: railways, mining, hunting and overhunting, road collision and highways, deforestation and habitat removal and sensory disturbances of noise, smell or unfamiliar sights.

Introduce the idea of the **No Voice** perspective. Place a chair in the middle of the group and on it a Caribou artifact which will represent a non-human voice— that of the Caribou. This perspective gives a voice to an entity which would normally not have a voice. This will offer unity and remind us that the goal is to make good decisions on behalf of non-human beings on Earth.

## ACTIVITY 1: ROLE PLAY NEGOTIATIONS

Tell students that they will be analyzing negotiations, making decisions that are in the best interest of the SLC. Break the students into two groups:

Group 1: **No Voice** Perspective of Caribou

Group 2: Stakeholders in a construction company who build highways

### ASK STUDENTS

- What are the technological revolutions that have allowed people to move humans and goods? How have these affected the life quality of SLC?
- What reasons might stakeholders have for creating a new highway?
- What perspectives might local First Nations have on the use of natural resources?

1. Team A: Opening statement
2. Team B: Opening statement
3. Team A: Ask question(s)
4. Team B: Response(s)
5. Team B: Ask question(s)
6. Team A: Response(s)
7. Team B: Closing statement
8. Team A: Closing statement
9. Voting

Allow time for students to write down their ideas, thoughts and arguments for and against the construction of a new highway in the Southern Lakes communities. Encourage them to also come up with questions they can ask the opposing 'team'. Allow the role-play to start and once they have had a chance to share and ask their questions, follow up with a conclusion.

## **EXTENSIONS**

- Break the students into smaller groups where one student will represent the **No Voice** perspective of the Caribou and the others will represent the construction company. Have each group share their findings in the closing circle.
- Consider a blindfold activity where the students will pair up and one student will be blindfolded while the other student shares their point of view. This will enhance the practice of listening and speaking clearly. The students can then swap roles and follow up with a reflection on how it felt in both roles.

## **CLOSING**

Bring all students back to the circle and find out how this activity affected:

- Their opinions on protecting the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC).
- Their opinions on construction and human impacts on the land/animals.
- Their view of First Nations relationships to the land and living organisms.

## **ASK STUDENTS**

- What do SLC need to stay healthy?
- How can we have a positive impact on Caribou?
- What does respect for SLC look like?

## **ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Are students able to:

- Express why SLC are an important part of the ecosystem?
- Share their own perspectives clearly with supporting examples?

Invite the students to self-assess their sharing by:

- Writing a short journal entry that is a reflection of their participation and connection to the No-Voice Perspective for Caribou.

# PART 2: PEOPLE, PLACE AND CULTURE

## LEARNING TARGET:

I am able to explore the effects of colonialism and reflect on perspectives related to people, place and culture.

### MATERIALS

- Large paper, whiteboard or chalkboard
- Paper and writing tools
- Community Booklet (for your community)

**TIME: ~1 HOUR 45 MIN**

### OPENING: INTRO TO ECONOMY

Gather in a circle. Brainstorm ideas and a definition for economy.

Oxford English Dictionary, retrieved 2022: Economy- noun- "the relationship between production, trade, and supply of money in a particular country or region."

Share with students the three areas that make up an economy: resources (materials that are found in nature), industry (making things) and services (helping people).

### ASK STUDENTS

- What are some goods and services that are offered to people living in the Yukon?
- Who are these goods made for? Who benefits from them?
- Who controls the creation of these goods and services?

### OVERVIEW

Ask students to brainstorm examples of these three areas, what types of jobs exist in the Yukon that could be categorized by resources (forestry and mining jobs), industry (building of houses) and services (medical professions or educational professions). Write these jobs down under each title or invite students to write their ideas down, creating a list as a class that describes how Yukon's economy is built.

### ASK STUDENTS

- How do these jobs contribute to Yukon's economy?
- How might the creation of these jobs affect the SLC?
- Are there ways that these jobs can exist today without affecting the SLC?
- How might Colonialism play a role in the creation and future of Yukon's economy? (Collins Dictionary, retrieved 2022: Colonialism- noun- "[the] practice by which a powerful country directly controls less powerful countries and uses their resources to increase its own power and wealth.")
- What are some positive and negative impacts of the economy for the SLC and local First Nations?

Share ideas.

- Yukon's economy is heavily dependent on human interaction and the interdependence of each other in our roles within our society. Each decision we make has consequences, whether positive or negative. Building of roads has impacted the SLC, removing vital parts of their habitat and creating opportunities for collisions with cars.
- First Nations had their own form of government and law within their own communities before settlers came to what is now known as Canada. It is pertinent that Canada recognizes that First Nations people have a right to self-determination and how Traditional Knowledge is connected to the healthy state of all living organisms, including SLC.

- The **Indian Act**, the ban on nákwät'à/potlatches (Dän'ke, Dákwänjē dialect), residential schools and internments can all be linked to the three areas that make up an economy.
- Settlers, over time, developed their own sense of society, identity and sovereignty. In doing so, Yukon First Nations people had many of their rights taken away. For example, speaking First Nations languages was illegal, making it intentionally difficult to focus on cultural practices. How could Haa Kusteeyi (a set of Tlingit values and beliefs on respect for nature, animals and each other) be passed on through generations if Yukon First Nations were to give up their identity, culture and language?

## ACTIVITY: COMPARE PERSPECTIVES

Tell the class that they will be put in small groups for this next activity. Each group will be given a specific role or job based on the three areas of an economy. Once each group has received their role, they will draw a visual representation of what this job entails, what equipment or materials are used and they can also write a sentence or more to describe how this job impacts the lives of others (humans, land, water, air, animals including the SLC and future generations).

On three separate pieces of paper, place the titles:

- Before settlers arrive
- After settlers arrive (~1870 - 1898)
- After the Yukon becomes a territory (1898 - present day)

Invite each group, one at a time, to share with the class their job and the visual work that they created together. Then invite the group who is sharing to choose into which category they should place their job description. They can place it in more than one category if they feel that there are overlapping connections.

### CLOSING: LINKS TO CARIBOU

Discuss the importance of the survival, revitalization of Caribou and SLCRP in relation to resilience and Yukon First Nations Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being. Find out their opinions about how colonization might have affected/still be affecting the SLC population.

### ASK STUDENTS

- When do you think the SLC population was the healthiest and most abundant?
- How might economic activities on the land have affected the SLC?
- Are there ways to mitigate any negative impacts from the jobs being explored?

### ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Reflect on the impacts of colonization?
- Retell the story of the formation of the SLCRP in their own words?
- Share reasons why the SLCRP was needed to protect the Caribou?
- Express the inequalities that colonialism brought to First Nations communities and their long lasting effects?

# PART 3: HUMAN IMPACTS AND NATURAL IMPACTS

## LEARNING TARGET:

I am able to recognize how the arrival of new groups affected natural and human characteristics of the physical environment.

### MATERIALS

- **Caribou artifact or photos printed (lichen, hooves, antlers, fur, pelt, tufting, or bone) (Appendix 1B and 2C)**
- **Four cones or markers**
- **Three long ropes**
- **Bandanas in two colours**
- **Fabric ties as food (optional)**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

**TIME: ~1 HOUR 30 MINUTES**

### OPENING: DRAWING ON OUR KNOWLEDGE

Gather in a circle. Pass a Caribou artifact around and invite students to share what they remember from the story shared by the Elder or specialist about Traditional Laws and the impact of treaties for Yukon First Nations. This is a great moment for students to share stories of personal connections to Caribou as well.

### ASK STUDENTS

- Do you know someone who has seen Caribou before? Have you?
- Do you know someone who has harvested Caribou?
- Have you eaten Caribou before or know someone in the area who has a Caribou recipe?

Review the definition of settler colonialism in Canada and the Yukon with the aim of dismantling First Nations societies to replace them with settler societies.

- What do you think were the primary reasons for colonial expansion?
- What challenges do Yukon First Nations face today? Is this different or the same as when the first European settlers arrived in the Yukon? Yukon First Nations have hunted and gathered food, fishing in one area in the summer and then hunting in another area in the winter for thousands of years. When Europeans arrived in the North, the local First Nations were forced to relocate. Many First Nations people, such as Chief Kohklux, offered to help the Europeans as they were unfamiliar with the new environment. Despite providing this support, First Nations were faced with the removal of identity, governance and sustenance. They were unable to hunt and harvest animals, like Caribou, as had been their traditional and cultural practices, following animal herds as they moved seasonally.
- What policies did the Crown and Government of Canada put into place that forced First Nations people to be displaced?
- In being displaced, what were Yukon First Nations disconnected from? The impacts from contact with the Europeans has affected First Nations people all over the world, including the Yukon's 14 First Nations. They were disconnected from their language, the land and water, their traditional practices, their spirituality and songs, values and all that is at the core of their identity as a nation within their culture.
- How did the Government gain access to the land?

Share ideas.



## ACTIVITY: MOVING ACROSS THE LAND

Make connections between European contact and changes in how humans interact with the land, the waterways, the ecosystem and the animals in their habitats.

### ASK STUDENTS

- What impacts have humans had on the physical environment?
- What impacts on the land have been natural?
- How have these impacts affected the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC) and their survival?

Share ideas.

#### Human Impacts:

- Overhunting (less Caribou for mating and survival of species)
- Technological revolutions including building roads, highways and railways (road collisions, habitat removal)
- Mining (sensory disturbance)
- Anthropogenic hazards (environmental pollutants by human activity)

#### Natural Impacts:

- Climate change (more forest fires remove habitat and also the growing lichen)
- Seasonal changes (more snow could slow down seasonal movement before calving season)
- Hereditary changes (change in size of antlers)
- Natural selection (body posture, length of legs and stride)

**Prep:** Set up the large play area with the four seasons in four corners starting with fall in the far left hand side. Create zones for the seasons with ropes as circles to give boundaries. Place four cones in the middle of the play space.

Gather outside with the group and share that you will be playing a game of survival with indirect and direct impacts. For the first round, all students will be Caribou going from season to season learning and reviewing what Caribou do during that season. Practice the terms for the seasons in Dän k'è, Tàa'an Män dialect with students. All Caribou will be safe and will survive this first round before human impacts and gender will be introduced. All Caribou will start in fall and will act out the actions while there, waiting to hear the next season called by you. Use the online dictionary for pronunciation.

- **nuchü/fall:** this is rutting season where the male Caribou, the buck, will make vocalized airy grunt noises to win over a female cow. They are known to use their large antlers in fighting for the win and are also known to mate with more than one cow.
- **yük'è/winter:** Caribou will move to lowlands where they will find lodgepole pines and black spruce. There they will dig under the snow for lichen growing below and hide from predators as their food digests.
- **ädatal/spring:** Caribou move towards higher elevations as mosquitoes and other insects arrive.
- **imbè/summer:** Caribou continue moving for calving season and look to find sub-alpine ridges far away from predators to protect their young. They do a lot of foraging to fuel up for continued energy needs in the coming weeks.
- **Back to nuchü/ fall:** Caribou will continue moving only weeks after the calves are born. They will head back to valleys where rutting season approaches yet again.



## EXTENSIONS

- Inform the students that they will be tracking data on how many Caribou, broken down by sex, survive or do not survive during the next rounds and will be asked to graph this data later on.
- Round two: introducing human impacts and sex of the Caribou will depend on the group size. Divide the Caribou players into male and female, marking them with face paint or bandanas. If a Caribou is tagged by any of these players while moving, they are dead and must go to the marked zone in the middle of the play area. They can only be brought back into the game during summer if and when a female Caribou makes it safely to that season for calving and must start in summer.
  - Between fall and winter, there will be players who will be humans hunting Caribou.
  - Between winter and spring, there will be players as dog teams and mushers who will disturb the Caribou with their noises.
  - Between spring and summer, there will be players as a forest fire wiping out their habitat and food source.
  - Between spring and fall, there will be players acting as a highway and construction reducing the chance of survival.

**Note:** If there are no females who safely make it to summer, then there will be no calves. If there are no males who make it safely to summer, there will be no calves and no players will be brought back into the round.

- Round three: consider changing up how many female or male Caribou are in the game. Consider including a predator who lives in a specific season and can also tag Caribou.
- When students are gathering data during the game, ask them to focus on how the Caribou died and take data in relation to implicit and explicit impacts on their survival to later graph.

## CLOSING: CELEBRATING CARIBOU

Circle up and allow students to share their reflections. Make space for the sentiments around ethical judgments and historical wrongdoings. Plan a moment where students can share their data collected and encourage them to make connections with inequalities throughout history and the present-day situation with First Nation relationships to SLC.

## ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Reflect on human and natural impacts on SLC's habitat?
- Show an understanding of seasonal movement patterns based on adaptations Caribou have learned post-contact?



# ASSESSMENT

## GRADE 9 SOCIAL STUDIES: COLLECTIVE CARIBOU IDENTITY: THE POWER OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND IDENTITY

Formative and self-assessment opportunities are listed throughout the activity plans. The rubric below can be used or adapted as necessary for summative assessment. It may be used to assess the learning targets set out on the previous pages.

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK	1 EMERGING	2 DEVELOPING	3 PROFICIENT	4 EXTENDING
<b>PART 1: I am able to demonstrate an understanding of historical inequalities and how they have impacted Yukon First Nations people and the SLC population over time.</b>	Is not aware of Elders or shows little respect. No questions are formed or little to no curiosity demonstrated	Is aware of and listens to Elders. Can partially form a question about Yukon First Nations & connection to Caribou	Listens to Elders attentively and respectfully. Forms a well constructed question about Yukon First Nations & connection to Caribou	Highly respectful of Elders' teachings. Forms multiple well-constructed questions about Yukon First Nations & Caribou
<b>PART 2: I am able to explore the effects of Colonialism and reflect on perspectives related to people, place and culture.</b>	Not yet able to communicate opinions related to how economy structures impact SLC & Yukon First Nations	Some verbal or visual representation of opinions are shared about the impacts of economy of SLC & Yukon First Nations	Opinions are shared verbally, visually or orally on how Yukon's economy has impacted Yukon First Nations and the SLC	Verbal, visual and oral representations are presented with connection to economy and its effects on Yukon First Nations as well as SLC
<b>PART 3: I am able to recognize how the arrival of new groups affected natural and human characteristics of the physical environment.</b>	May have little to no reflections on personal reflection of connection to Caribou, local First Nations stories & place	Some evidence of personal reflection of connection to Caribou, local First Nations stories & place provided	Verbal, visual or oral evidence is provided of a reflective process about personal connection to place, local First Nations stories & Caribou	Verbal, visual and oral evidence is provided of a significant reflective process about personal connection to place, local First Nations stories & Caribou

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CARIBOU



LICHEN



CARIBOU HIDE



TENDON USED  
FOR SEWING





SNARE



CARIBOU HAIR/  
TUFTING



# ARTIFACTS

## Appendix 2C

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CARIBOU SKIN  
PARKA



SNOWSHOE  
BABICHE

## ICE PATCHES



## TRADITIONAL TOOLS

