

# GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES:

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS THROUGH  
SOCIAL STUDIES



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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 6 SOCIAL STUDIES: DRAWING CONCLUSIONS THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES

## BIG IDEAS

- Systems of government vary in their respect for human rights and freedoms
- Media sources can both positively and negatively affect our understanding of important events and issues
- Economic self-interest can be a significant cause of conflict among peoples and governments

CONTENT	CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know the urbanization and migration of people (land use, access to water, pollution, population density and transportation)</li><li>• Roles of organizations representing First Nations People</li><li>• Resource Management (deforestation, mining, oil and gas, infrastructure development and relocation of communities)</li><li>• Media technologies/coverage</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use social studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions</li><li>• Develop a plan of action to address a problem or issue</li><li>• Construct arguments defending the significance of individuals/groups, places, events or developments</li><li>• Ask questions, corroborate inferences, and draw conclusions about the content and origins of a variety of sources, including mass media</li></ul>
LEARNING TARGETS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I can make connections between living organisms and Southern Lakes Caribou.</li><li>2. I am able to reflect on my experience of place as it relates to local First Nations knowledge.</li><li>3. I can use guiding principles to verify the reliability of a source's information.</li></ol>	

## **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 (SLC) habitat, and an introductory overview of Southern Lakes First Nations and their involvement in the Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery Program. Some helpful resources are listed below.

- *Caribou in the Schools: Community Booklet (for your community)*
- *Self-government.* (n.d.). <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100032275/1529354547314>
- *Our Languages – Council of Yukon First Nations.* (n.d.). <https://cyfn.ca/history/our-languages/>
- *Southern Lakes Yukon | Nature, Culture & Adventure.* (n.d.). <https://southernlakesyukon.com>
- *Self Government Agreements – Council of Yukon First Nations.* (n.d.). <https://cyfn.ca/agreements/self-government-agreements/>
- Yukon Council of First Nations, (n.d.), *Language Map*, <https://cyfn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/language-map.jpg>

# PART 1: OPENING CIRCLE AND EXPLORING INTERCONNECTIONS

## LEARNING TARGET:

I can demonstrate curiosity about how Caribou are connected to Southern Lakes communities.

## MATERIALS

- **Bandanas:**  
green (herbivores), brown (omnivores) and red (carnivores)
  - **Alternative:** coloured pinnies
- **Life cards:** coloured bristol board/cardstock cut into circles or squares, hole punched near the top
  - **Green:** 10 cards
  - **Brown:** 5 cards
  - **Red:** 2 cards
- **Pylons (or cutout cardstock cards) with markers tied to them:**
  - 5 Orange Food source
  - 5 Blue Water source
- **Designated play area:** large and wooded with a clearly marked area for yúk'e/winter (Dän'ke, Kwanlin Dün First Nation)
- **Pipe cleaners (to attach the life cards)**
- **Yukon Wildlife by Species<sup>5</sup> (optional resources to show animal pictures and facts)**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

**TIME: ~ 90 MIN**

## OPENING: CONNECTING TO CARIBOU

Gather in a circle and discuss the importance of food and water for all living organisms in order for them to survive. When we eat, our bodies use energy through digestion which causes a rise in body temperature. Caribou are similar in this way and need to eat a lot of plant matter to create body heat.

Note that there are other factors keeping Caribou warm such as their thick fur.

Brainstorm some example definitions of herbivore, omnivore and carnivore.

Discuss possible animal adaptations to survive in nature.

Share some ideas around Caribou and what they eat seasonally (labrador, lichen, bushes); also discuss predators to Caribou.

## ASK STUDENTS

- What are the basic fundamental needs of any animal, including humans? (All living organisms need food and water to survive, shelter as well. Without these fundamental needs, they will not survive.)
- Do you know what is special about a Caribou's coat? (Caribou have two layers of fur covering their bodies, ears and muzzles to keep their body heat in. They have fine, crinkly underfur and a thick coat of guard hairs on top. Guard hairs are hollow, and full of air. This acts as insulation, like the walls of a house to keep in the heat, and this keeps in the Caribou's body heat. The hair that covers their body is called the pelage(**bold**). The pelage (**bold**) changes colour throughout the year and is darkest in the summer.)
- What do Caribou feed on? (Caribou work hard through the winter months, living amongst the trees that provide food such as witch's hair or old man's beard. They also dig through the deep snow and ice with their large hooves to find lichen and dried sedges to feed on. They need to eat about six pounds per time period, equal to two garbage bags full. Lichen can take 50-100 years to grow back after they have been foraged; they grow rather slowly. Lichen are also an indicator species, meaning that they are a plant that will die when there are air pollutants. Observing this plant can tell a lot about an environment or animal patterns. Caribou eat other plants such as sedges, and small shrubs like blueberry bushes.)

<sup>5</sup> *Yukon wildlife by species*. (2023, March 30). Government of Yukon. <https://yukon.ca/en/outdoor-recreation-and-wildlife/yukon-wildlife/yukon-wildlife-species>.

- What feeds on Caribou? Is it the same in every season? (wolf, golden eagle, lynx, black bear, wolverine)
- What are the three types of animals, based on their diet? (What do they eat? The three types of animals are omnivore (plant and animal diet), carnivore (meat diet) and herbivore (plant diet).)
- Which of these types of animals does the Caribou classify as? (Caribou are herbivores.)

### ASK STUDENTS

- What would help keep a Caribou warm or cool depending on the season? (Hint: antlers as they grow offer a cooling system for Caribou- as warm blood rushes to the antlers, the outside air cools it down!)
- How do Caribou adapt to their surroundings to survive extreme temperatures or changes within the environment or local predators? (pelage, seasonal movement, genetics—larger or smaller antlers, eating without chewing to hide from predators while digesting)
- How can local Traditional Knowledge about living on the land help humans better understand the needs of all animals? (Living on the land means you are also living along the waterways as well. Every living organism has specific ways that they move, eat, find shelter, use the areas around them, travel, etc. Learning by observing and by respecting plants and animals, we can share knowledge that will help humans protect other animals and plants. Respect for the land and waterways shows that you care about sustainability and see how everything is connected.)

## ACTIVITY 1: GAME OF LIFE

### Prep:

- Cut and write out the food and water cards. Gather 10 pylons (or just use the paper as stations). Tie on food and water markers (5 orange food, 5 blue water). Adjust the amount of food and water stations based on the size of the group playing. Hide these really well around the play area.
- Cut out the life cards, hole punch them and put them on pipe cleaner (green: ten cards, brown: five cards, red: two cards). Each player will receive a collection of life cards depending on what they eat. You will need many of these sets for all players.
- Mark off an area for **yúk'e**.

Gather outside in the area designated as **yúk'e**. The goal of the game is for the players/

animals to survive. Put on the coloured bandanas or pinnies while sharing the rules of the game.

- The herbivores (Caribou) will start the game first and must collect markings on their hand from all food and water sources.
- The omnivores will be introduced two minutes later and must collect markings on their hand from all food and water sources. They also must catch (tag) two herbivores (change numbers based on group size).
- The carnivores will be introduced last and must collect markings on their hand from all food and water sources. They also must catch four other animals in the game (change numbers based on group size)

When an animal is tagged, they must go to

**yūk'e** and wait for the spring thaw when newborns are welcomed into the world. Educators have the role of releasing the newborn into the wild to continue the game and mark their life card for a caught animal. The students will stay the same animals and have the same diet when they come back as a newborn. Brainstorm with the students which animals would be in the three groups and practice using their names in Dän'ke (Kwanlin Dün First Nation). Only Caribou will be herbivores and be sure to have a fair amount of Caribou to show the effects (**ägay/wolf**, **ńttthe/fox**, **nàday/lynx**, **tt'h'i/mosquito**, **nàghay/wolverine**).

### EXTENSIONS

- There will be five unmarked players who will help in winter until they are introduced into the game (change numbers based on group size). These students will represent players such as: human overhunting Caribou, disease from deer that kills Caribou, natural effect of huge amounts of snowfall, air pollution, deforestation and mining. If Caribou are tagged by one of these players, the Caribou are no longer in the round and must wait in winter until a new round begins. Introduce these characters after the game has been played for some time as it will affect the game immensely.
- Introduce a wildlife management agent or land guardian who can give the human hunter regulations to follow to encourage sustainable practices.

### CLOSING: COMPLETING THE ROUND

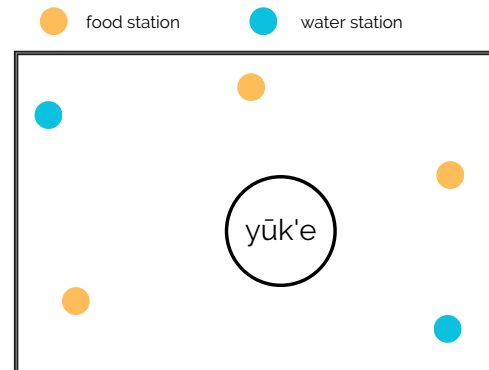
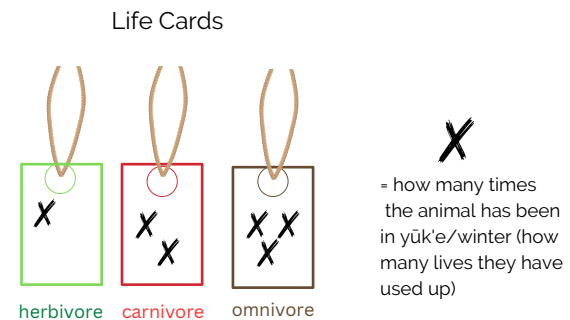
Encourage students to reflect on the game and the many rounds they played:

- What do you know about Caribou now, that you did not know before playing?
- How did it feel to be a Caribou? An omnivore? A carnivore? Another role?
- What does interconnectedness mean?
- How are all of these organisms connected?
- What happens when one component of an ecosystem is removed? Added?
- How can human impacts affect the Caribou's way of life? What happened when...

### ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Explain the key terms used?
- Make connections between all living organisms?
- Share the importance of Caribou in the ecosystem and to the First Nations of this land?



# PART 2: HISTORY OF SOUTHERN LAKES CARIBOU RECOVERY PROGRAM AND PLACE NAMES

## LEARNING TARGET:

I am able to reflect on my experience of place as it relates to local First Nations knowledge connecting power and meaning with the land.

## MATERIALS

- **SLCRP Story Maps**<sup>6</sup>
- **Yukon Geographical Place Names (Southern Tutchone, not all regions)**<sup>7</sup>
- **Caribou artifacts or photos printed (Appendix 1B and 2C):**
  - **Hides:** sled, shelter, clothing, footwear
  - **Bone/antler:** weapons and tools, jewelry
  - **Hair, sinew, babiche:** snowshoes, fishing
- **2 long ropes**
- **4 markers or cones (obstacle and starting point)**
- **food tokens**
- **2 cones or markers for predators**
- **2-4 bandanas (tied up in knots for throwing)**
- **Community Booklet for your community)**

**TIME: 45 MINUTES**

## OPENING: CONNECTING WITH CARIBOU

Gather in a circle. Pass a Caribou artifact around the circle, and invite the students to share what they know and remember about Caribou: how Caribou adapt and where Caribou travel throughout the seasons. Encourage students to share any stories or personal connections they have with Caribou.

Share details about the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC) Relationship Plan: the recovery program started in 1993 because of a decline of Caribou on territorial ranges. The main focus was to stop Caribou from being harvested and local First Nations voluntarily stopped their harvest all together to help make an impact. Caribou numbers have been increasing due to the program and a return of Caribou in these ranges has begun.

## ASK STUDENTS

- Do you think that the SLC has a healthy population today?
- What might affect the population, or change the number of Caribou in the whole group, the total number of SLC?
- Why do you think that SLC are important to the First Nations of the area? (Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Champagne Aishihik First Nations, Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Teslin Tlingit council)

Share ideas.

There are many factors that contribute to the decline of Caribou numbers, including: global warming, land use, pollution, highways and transportation, population density, predation and lack of food.

Many Yukon First Nations have a deep connection with Caribou and have for thousands of years. It is a historical connection but it is also a present-day connection. Yukon First Nations have relied on SLC for food, clothing, tools, jewelry and more. When they harvest a Caribou they use all of its parts as a sign of respect.

<sup>6</sup> Fish and Wildlife, 2021, Southern lakes caribou: Monitoring a recovering woodland caribou herd in yukon, Yukon government, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f37506914b3643b-c919321a2bd53b628>.

<sup>7</sup> *Dákeyi* – “Our Country” - Yukon Geographical Place Names Board. (2018, November 21). Yukon Geographical Place Names Board. <https://yukonplacenames.ca/dakeyi/> (Southern Tutchone).



## EXTENSIONS

- Invite an Elder or Traditional Knowledge Holder to share stories about connections of Caribou to language and culture, importance of Caribou to their culture, traditional harvest, systems of governance and the SLCRP.

# ACTIVITY 1: SEASONAL MOVEMENT OBSTACLE COURSE: CONNECTING YUKON PLACE NAMES TO SLC HABITAT

Gather in a circle and discuss the importance of language, the importance of place names in local First Nations languages and their direct link with culture. Acknowledge the land on which you are teaching and learning, including the students in this process while also incorporating the importance of bodies of water. The rich history and culture that exists among Yukon First Nations is being preserved through place names.

This activity will follow a structure but what will change are the place names, depending on where you are teaching this activity. Incorporate names for bodies of water and consider other place names, such as mountains in the area, when possible.

**Prep:** Put out cones or markers to show the beginning spot for this obstacle course. The number of cones or markers will depend on how many teams there will be.

A short distance forward from there, lay out a rope in a circular shape to represent a body of water (river, lake, creek etc).

Beyond this point, place cones or markers once again to represent an obstacle that will disorient Caribou such as a landslide, a highway or building.

At the end of the play area, create a large circle with another rope. This will represent their feeding grounds. Toss food ties/tokens inside this area making sure they are not too close to the edges of the boundary the rope is creating.

Place two rubber mats or markers on either side of the feeding ground, a short distance away. This is where the predators will be when harvesting Caribou.

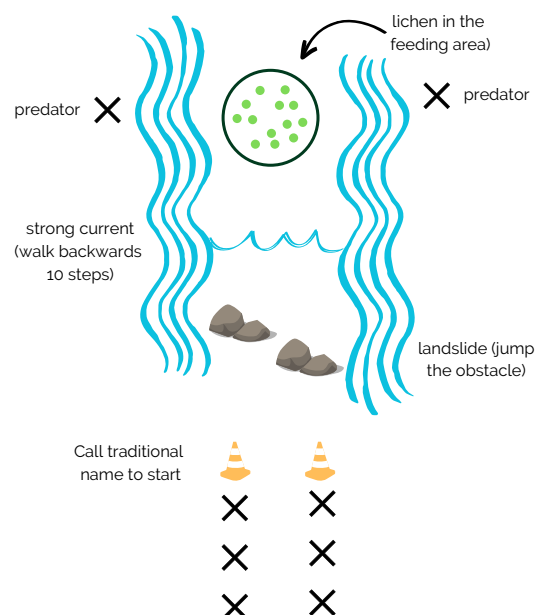
Once the obstacle course is set up, explain the game to students:

The groups will represent Caribou herds. Each group will follow the same obstacle course with

the goal of surviving and bringing food back with them. At the end, each herd will add up how much food they were able to eat during that round.

Run through the course showing students what they will need to do at each spot:

- Body of water: move backwards because the water slows you down a bit.
- Obstacle: run three time around the marker to become disoriented.
- Feeding Grounds: Caribou must step inside the area completely before attempting to get one lichen to eat. If they are hit by a predator's strike, they must return to their team without any food.
- Predators: On their place marker, they will toss a bean bag or a tied up bandana to tag/harvest a Caribou. They can move to pick up their tossed item but must only try to harvest a Caribou from their place marker. This gives the Caribou a chance to find food.



## **EXTENSIONS**

- Consider including human impacts into the game (e.g., noise pollution, building of a bridge over the river and overhunting).
- Add more or less predators.
- Move the spot where the predators can stand, closer or further away from the feeding ground.
- Include new roles such as a Wildlife Manager or Land Guardian who can monitor the predators, especially if they are humans/hunters!

Show students the interactive map of the twenty-seven herds of SLC, shown in green on the ARCGIS map. Tell students that you can click on each herd to learn more about when they were surveyed, the trend and what the population is of the woodland Caribou.

Break the class into small groups and give each group of students a specific SLC herd (Ibex, Laberge and Carcross). Each group will be tasked to collect data from the story map. They can create their own map with the data and graph the data to compare with the information from other classmates.

## **CLOSING: MAPPING AND COLLECTING DATA ON SLC**

Review the game with the students and find out their feelings related to who or what they represented in the game.

## **ASK STUDENTS**

- How can human impacts affect Caribou? Positive and/or negative effects.
- What changes could be made to create support for the recovery of the SLC?

## **ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Are students able to:

- Retell the story of the formation of the SLCRP, in their own words?
- Share reasons why the SLCRP was needed to protect the Caribou?
- Ask questions about the SLCRP?
- Use local language for place names?

# PART 3: INVESTIGATING AND FORMING OPINIONS

## LEARNING TARGET:

I can use guiding principles to verify the reliability of a source's information while forming an opinion on the SLCRP.

### MATERIALS

- **Online resources- articles or newspapers of a different variety**
  - Southern Lakes Caribou Steering Committee<sup>8</sup>
  - CBC News: First Nations Work Together to Monitor Caribou<sup>9</sup>
  - 2019 On the Land Gathering: Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council (Cover page visuals from How We Walk with the Land and Water)<sup>10</sup>
  - Yukon Department of Education: Southern Lakes Caribou (Video)<sup>11</sup>
  - Awesome Poetry is All Over: Caribou, Indigenous Winter Poetry<sup>12</sup>
- **Writing tools and paper**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

**TIME: ~60 MINUTES**

### OPENING: DRAWING ON OUR STORIES

In a circle, invite students to share their knowledge on Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC) in relation to their ecosystem, reviewing any concepts previously learned.

Invite students to think about others in their family or community who may have stories to share.

### ASK STUDENTS

- What information related to SLC can you share with the group?
- Who might you know in your community who could speak about their connection with the SLC?
- Why are SLC important to the ecosystem and how do they give back to other living organisms?
- How are Caribou important to your life?

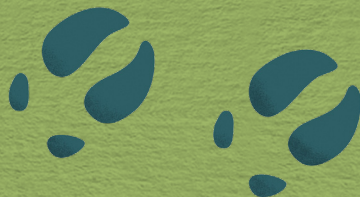
<sup>8</sup> Caribou. (n.d.). *Southern Lakes Caribou* | <https://southernlakescaribou.com/>.

<sup>9</sup> Rudyk, M. (2019, January 11). First Nations work together to monitor caribou, with camera traps, GPS and traditional knowledge. CBC. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/southern-lakes-caribou-yukon-first-nations-1.4975111>.

<sup>10</sup> On the Land Gathering- Proceedings: Caribou and Community-Based Fish and Wildlife Workplan. (2019, June 7-8). Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council. <https://www.ctrrc.ca/index.php/all-files-docman/documents/113-on-the-land-gathering-2019-report/file>.

<sup>11</sup> Department of Environment. (2018, April 5). *Southern Lakes caribou recovery: Composition surveys* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzRXP5oWNws>

<sup>12</sup> Frédéric.Arps.Blogs. (2016, January 31). Caribou. *Indigenous Winter Poem. Winter Solstice story telling! — complete now!* Awesome Poetry From All Over. <https://poetryisjustawesome.com/2014/12/19/caribou-indigenous-winter-poem-winter-solstice-story-telling/>.



## ACTIVITY 1: EVALUATING CREDIBILITY OF A SOURCE

Tell students about the concept of credibility of content. Briefly go over the strategies they can use in identifying the relevance, bias, accuracy and reliability of content in relation to the SLC. Example topic: What does respect look like for Caribou, the land and local First Nations?

### ASK STUDENTS

- What does credibility mean to you?
- What is the meaning of content? Bias? Relevance?
- Are some sources more trustworthy than others? How can you tell?
- Why is it important to be an informed citizen on any topic? Topic of SLCRP?

### STRATEGIES

1. Check the basics:
  - Is this an article, video, website, media literacy?
2. Ask questions:
  - Is this site relevant to my needs and purpose? (relevance)
  - When was this information updated? (recency)
  - Why did this person or group put this information together? (intent)
  - Does this source present one side of the issue or more than one perspective? (bias)
  - How can I check the accuracy of this source? (accuracy and reliability)

Break the students into small groups. Each group will look over two online articles written about the SLC (factual, scholarly journal, blog, wiki and newspaper). Students will read both articles and decide whether the source is credible by answering the above questions. They can record their findings and put together their own perspective on the topic covered. Once these steps have been completed, they will present their inquiry project to the whole class for further reflections.

### ASK STUDENTS

- Do you agree or disagree with the opinion held or shared by the author?
- Are any of the local First Nations voices and perspectives represented in the information you have sourced?

### EXTENSIONS

- Break each group into two smaller groups, each taking the standpoint of the content from one source. They must then debate these opinions, creating well thought out arguments while also questioning the other group's stance.

### CLOSING: CELEBRATING CARIBOU

Plan a time to celebrate the stories, knowledge and experiences shared through these activities. Collect reputable sources and share them among other classrooms, encouraging them to learn more about the SLCRP. Consider organizing a community celebration to share and celebrate stories about the SLC.

### ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Identify the importance of Caribou in their community?
- Identify ways Yukon First Nations and/or they themselves are interconnected within the environment?
- Identify relevant sources of info?

# ASSESSMENT

## GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES: DRAWING CONCLUSIONS THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES

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 can make connections between living organisms and SLC.</b>	Is not aware of the importance of Caribou in the ecosystem and does not form questions about Yukon First Nations & connection to the land	Is aware of the importance of Caribou in the ecosystem and can partially form a question about Yukon First Nations & connection to the land	Listens to Elders attentively and respectfully. Forms a well built question about Yukon First Nations & connection to Caribou's habitat in relation to other living organisms	Highly respectful of Elders' teachings. Creates multiple well-thought out questions about Yukon First Nations, Caribou and the larger ecosystem
<b>PART 2: I am able to reflect on my experience of place as it relates to local First Nations knowledge.</b>	Not yet able to form questions about the SLCRP. Not yet showing confidence orally in Southern Tutchone the vocabulary to be modeled	Some verbal representation of the vocabulary in Southern Tutchone is being modelled. Able to form a question about the SLCRP with support and guidance	Verbal representation of Southern Tutchone words is used in at least one stage of the activity. Creating questions about the SLCRP with little support	Verbal representation of the vocabulary in Southern Tutchone is presented more than once within the activity. Posing questions about the SLCRP flows more naturally with little support
<b>PART 3: I can use guiding principles to verify the reliability of a source's information.</b>	May have little to no reflections on the credibility of a source. No connections made in forming an opinion about the SLCRP	Some evidence of questions being formed on the topic of SLCRP and credibility of sources. A few statements formed on a perspective about the SLCRP with some support	Verbal, visual or oral evidence is provided of a reflective process about the credibility of sources and a clear statement is made in relation to the importance of the SLCRP	Verbal, visual and oral evidence is provided of a significant reflective process about personal connection to the SLCRP while proving the credibility of a source through clear research

# REFERENCES - GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES

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# NOTES

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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

