

GRADE K/1 SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES:

CONNECTING SOUTHERN LAKES CARIBOU
THROUGH SEASONS



ILLUSTRATED BY VIOLET GATENSBY, 2022.

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

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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 K/1 SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES: CONNECTING SOUTHERN LAKES CARIBOU THROUGH SEASONS

BIG IDEAS

- Grade K - Social Studies: Stories and traditions about ourselves and our families reflect who we are and where we are from
- Grade K - Science: Daily and seasonal changes affect all living things
- Grade 1 - Social Studies: We shape the local environment and the local environment shapes who we are and how we live
- Grade 1 - Science: Living things have features and behaviours that help them survive in their environment

CONTENT	CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES
Social Studies • People, places and events in the local community, and in local First Nations communities • Relationships between a community and its environment Science • Living things make changes to accommodate daily and seasonal cycles • First Nations knowledge of seasonal changes • Names of local plants and animals • Behavioural adaptations of animals in the local environment • The knowledge of First Nations: local knowledge of the local landscape, plants and animals, local understanding and use of seasonal rounds	Social Studies • Sequence objects, images or events, and distinguish between what has changed and what has stayed the same (continuity and change) Science • Demonstrate curiosity and a sense of wonder about the world • Experience and interpret the local environment • Recognize First Nations stories (including oral and written narratives), songs and art, as ways to share knowledge • Identify simple patterns and connections
LEARNING TARGETS	
1. I am able to demonstrate curiosity about how Caribou are connected to Southern Lakes communities. 2. I am able to reflect on my experience of place as it connects to local First Nations knowledge and stories. 3. I am able to explore animals and culture through ordered seasonal events.	

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)*

PART 1: OPENING CIRCLE AND EXPLORING SEASONAL ROUNDS

LEARNING TARGET:

I am able to explore animals and culture through ordered seasonal events.

MATERIALS

- **Caribou artifact:** sewing materials, Caribou tufting, snare, clothing, lichen sample, swatch of Caribou hide or Pictures of artifacts printed (Appendix 1b)
- **Visual calendar representation (e.g., seasonal round or year-long calendar) (optional)**
- **Pictures of four Caribou seasonal homes printed (Appendix 1a)**
- **Large paper, with four separate “slices” of seasonal round (¼ of the full, large circle)**
- **Collage/tissue paper/ paint materials/gathered natural items**
- **Extension: warm clothes/ layer**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

TIME: 45 MINUTES

OPENING: CONNECTING TO CARIBOU

Gather outside in a circle, and pass the Caribou artifact (swatch of hide) around, allowing every student a chance to hold it. Observe texture. Brainstorm where it came from. Give hints/prompts, e.g., natural, animal sources, it is from something living. It has four legs, hooves and antlers. Tell students that a Caribou's coat is unique - very special.

ASK STUDENTS

- Do you know what is special about a Caribou's coat?
- How did the Caribou hide feel when you held it? Rough, smooth?
- Why do you think it feels like that?

Share ideas.

- Caribou have two layers of fur covering their bodies, ears and muzzles to keep their body heat in.
- Caribou 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 in the walls of a house, to keep the heat in), keeping in the Caribou's body heat.
- The hair that covers the body of the Caribou is called the **pelage**. The **pelage** changes colour throughout the year and is darkest in the summer (Madsen, 2018).

Invite students to look around. What season is it? Imagine you are a Caribou.

ASK STUDENTS

- What would help keep a Caribou warm or cool depending on the season? (hint: pelage) Would they be warm enough? Too warm?
- What do Caribou eat? Where can they find food? Can they always find it? How does that change with the seasons?

Brainstorm what the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC) might do in the current season and where they might go. Record ideas of whether/how this might change with the seasons (e.g., food and food shortages, shedding coats, and colour changes to aid camouflage).

ACTIVITY 1: 'ROUND IN THE SEASONAL ROUND

In preparation, print out pictures representing each of the four habitats that make up the SLC seasonal movement: spring alpine calving areas, high-country summer range, fall rutting grounds, lowland winter ranges **Seasonal/weather indicators will be helpful**. (Appendix 1a)

Put out the pictures as if they are in four corners, noting that when students go through the seasonal movements they will be moving in a circular shape. Pictures should be ordered in seasonal order in a sunwise (clockwise) direction.

Tell students that they are going to travel like the Caribou: every year, Caribou travel between four different homes, depending on the season—this is called their seasonal round. Show a visual example of the seasonal round (e.g., a circle segmented into seasons/months with reference to local language and culture, content to represent seasonal change for Caribou), highlighting the difference in seasons.

Draw attention to the four pictures around the room. Each of these images represents one of the four homes in the SLC's seasonal round. Invite students to imagine they are travelling with a herd of Caribou.

Read the following “clues” to students, asking them to move to the picture or part of the room that matches the home described. The seasons are in Dän'ke, Tää'an Män dialect.

- The snow is starting to melt! The first new growth and delicious vegetation are starting to poke out of the ground on the mountain sides. There is lots of food to feed the hungry cows so they can look after the newborn calves.
- **ädatäl/spring** » alpine calving areas
- It is starting to get hot, and there are lots of mosquitoes buzzing around. Where on the mountain will it be cooler, with fewer insects since there is a good breeze?
- **imbè/summer** » high-country summer range
- The weather is changing, with colder winds blowing in and the start of snow. Where is there shelter from the cold?
- **nuchü/fall** » rutting grounds - valley bottoms
- Snow is falling and settling on the ground. Where will the snow be easiest to dig into, finding food?
- **yūk'è/winter** » lowland winter ranges

Repeat clues, adding details about Caribou diet and life cycle, emphasizing the repetition each year of these rounds.

EXTENSIONS

- Mix up the order of the four Caribou habitats, keeping the order of clues the same and challenge students to find the right home to travel to.
- Add a predator to the mix - invite a student to be a wolf, grizzly bear or wolverine. Caribou have to watch out for predators while moving with the season!
- Add in roads to cross safely all together.
- Invite students to layer up with outside clothes (coats, hats and boots) and shed layers as they travel through the seasonal round, mimicking Caribou adaptation to seasons.

ACTIVITY 2: CREATE A CARIBOU'S SEASONAL ROUND

In small groups or working together as a class, share highlights of the class' Caribou travel, and imagine where Caribou might feel most comfortable.

ASK STUDENTS

- How could you show this in a picture or painting?

Students will be creating a piece of art exploring the Caribou journey, and will get to share what they know about the seasonal round through this art piece, sharing it with family and community.

Decide as a group where to display the art piece once it is finished.

Divide the students into groups, giving each a "slice" of the seasonal round.

Using a variety of supplies (e.g., gathered natural elements, tissue paper, paint or collage material), students will fill their seasonal slice with representations of the Caribou home in that season.

CLOSING: COMPLETING THE ROUND

Encourage students to reflect on the seasonal wheel they have created together:

- Once the art pieces are complete, gather back in a circle, and bring four homes/seasonal round slices together, organizing them in seasonal order as a class.
- Invite students to share (and record) what they chose to display about each slice of the seasonal round.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Explain why Caribou travel in seasonal rounds each year?
- Identify ways in which weather changes impact Caribou?

Invite the students to self-assess their sharing by asking:

- On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel you shared? (Raise 1-5 fingers in the air).
- Are you able to add more to your answer?



PART 2: STORY OF THE SOUTHERN LAKES CARIBOU RECOVERY PROGRAM (SLCRP)

LEARNING TARGET:

I am able to reflect on my experience of place as it connects to local First Nations knowledge and stories.

MATERIALS

- **Caribou artifact:** sewing materials, Caribou tufting, snare, clothing, lichen sample, or swatch of Caribou hide or photos printed (Appendix 1b)
- **Caribou Cards** printed and cut out (Appendix 1d)
- **Community Booklet** (for your community)

TIME: ~60 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.

ASK STUDENTS

- Are there more SLC today than there were hundreds of years ago (before colonization)?
- How many Caribou do you think there are in the whole herd?

Talk about numbers and make predictions together of the health of the SLC herd today.

ASK STUDENTS

- What might affect the population, or change the number of Caribou in the whole group, or the total number of SLC?

Share ideas.

Students are going to have a guest, someone who knows a lot about the special story of the SLC.

- Prepare a small homemade gift or card to present to the Elder or visitor in gratitude.
- Request permission in advance to photograph or record any visitors.
- Set group agreement of how to receive and respect the visiting Elder, visitor or special guest.

Brainstorm and record questions as a group to ask the special guest. Possible topics of Caribou conversation or inquiry could be:

- Is there a way to hunt Caribou in a healthy way that allows numbers to recover? (Sustainable harvesting practices—hunting in a respectful way, taking only what is needed, allowing hunting to continue)
- What/are there any safety measures for Caribou at busy road crossings, especially during Caribou seasonal movement/seasonal rounds?
- Are the homes of Caribou still being affected by humans? If so, how?
- If the Caribou could ask us to pause and pay attention, what would they say?

Note: The special visitor may also be connected through a video or recording of an Elder or specialist sharing their story and experience of working with the SLCRP.

ACTIVITY: SPENDING TIME WITH ELDERS

Gather in a circle. Invite the students to acknowledge the Yukon First Nations Traditional Territory that the activity is taking place on. If they are present, introduce and welcome the visiting Elder or visitor. Go around the circle and have students introduce themselves.

Invite the visiting Elder or visitor to share their story about the SLC and the SLCRP. Ensure time for students to ask questions.

One or more students can present the guest with a homemade card and gift (e.g., a craft made by students, or wild-harvested flowers or items) to show gratitude for the time and/or teachings shared with the students.

If an Elder is not present, ask the students if they know of any Elders in their communities or lives that are important to them. Invite students to share any teachings that they have learned about how to treat Caribou, how to act when out on the land, and near water related to Yukon First Nations ways of Knowing, Doing and Being (e.g., sustainable or respectful harvesting practices, respect for the land and waters and seasonal activities).

CLOSING: VISUALIZING HUMAN IMPACTS

- Gather in a circle. Pass the Caribou cards around so that each student is holding one. Invite the students to stand up, holding their cards for everyone to see. Imagine that this is the SLC herd.
- Recap with students that the SLC have a very special story. Not too long ago, the SLC were in danger. Their numbers were getting smaller and smaller. Why? (Unsustainable hunting practices, highways and vehicle traffic)
- Invite students to turn their Caribou cards over and notice the colour on the back. Each colour has a different meaning: green = healthy/sustainable hunting practices; brown = overhunting; grey = highways
- Invite students with grey on their cards to place these face down in the circle. Discuss how highways affect Caribou numbers (collisions and interrupted seasonal

movement routes). These students can sit down. These Caribou are gone.

- Take a look around the circle. How many Caribou are left?
- Invite students with green on their cards to hold their cards up in the air, and find another green card in the circle to change places with. Share how Yukon First Nations have been harvesting Caribou sustainably since time immemorial.
- Take a look around the circle. How does traditional, sustainable hunting affect the population (total number) of SLC?
- Invite students with brown on their cards to place these face down in the circle. Discuss why overhunting affects Caribou numbers differently than sustainable harvesting. These students can sit down. These Caribou are also gone.
- Take a look around the circle. How many Caribou are left?
- Consider the story shared by the Elder or specialist. What did the SLCRP do to address the shrinking number of Caribou? (Voluntarily stopping hunting, educating the public about the Caribou and giving Caribou space)
- SLCRP Connection: talk about how a ban on all Caribou hunting allowed numbers to recover. Invite students with brown cards to turn these back over, rejoining the herd. Take a look around and notice numbers.
- Brainstorm ideas of how to reduce human impact on Caribou. As ideas are shared, invite two or more students with grey cards to turn these back over, rejoining the herd.

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?

PART 3: CARIBOU STORIES FROM HOME AND COMMUNITY

LEARNING TARGET:

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

MATERIALS

- Caribou artifact: sewing materials, Caribou tufting, snare, clothing, lichen sample, or swatch of Caribou hide or pictures printed (Appendix 1b)
- Letter home—template printed (Appendix 1e)
- Community Booklet (for your community)

TIME: ~60 MINUTES

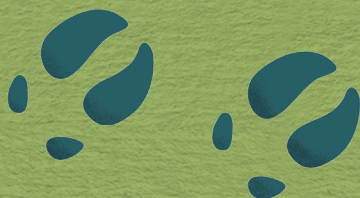
OPENING: DRAWING ON OUR STORIES

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 visitor about the SLCRP. Invite students to share stories of personal ɫat'adinch'e/connections (Dānk'e, Dákwānjē dialect) to Caribou as well.

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

ASK STUDENTS

- Have you/do you know someone who has seen Caribou before?
- Have you/do you know someone who has been on a Caribou hunt?
- Have you eaten Caribou before? Do you know someone in the community with a delicious Caribou recipe?
- Do you know someone who uses Caribou in their crafts?
- Who could you visit with and ask about their Caribou stories?



ACTIVITY: CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES ABOUT CARIBOU

Brainstorm ideas together of who in families or in the community students could approach and ask about SLC.

Create a list of initial questions to send home with each student. Include a letter home to families (Appendix 1e), describing the class project about SLC, and how important family and community input is for the class's understanding. The letter should also encourage families to help students record the information through, for example, audio recordings, writing or drawing their responses.

Decide on a timeline as a group for when they would like to share the family and community stories together.

Create a plan for sharing the stories and recipes with the class, and with the school.

Display the content in a creative way. Some examples of this could be:

- Create Caribou story books illustrated by the class
- Fill a giant Caribou silhouette with the images, quotes and highlights gathered by students
- Share audio recordings as part of assemblies or daily announcements

CLOSING: CELEBRATING CARIBOU

Plan a celebration to share and celebrate the stories, experiences and knowledge about the SLC that is gathered. Consider inviting family and community members who shared their stories with students.

EXTENSIONS

- In collaboration with other classes working on the caribou curriculum, 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?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY: RUN CARIBOU, RUN! - SEASONAL ENERGY AND HUMAN IMPACT

- All students are part of a Caribou herd. Choose a part of the yard where Caribou are safe (this could be called their calving area). Encourage students to mill around, searching for food and grazing.
- Choose two students to be predators—they can choose between most common predators: wolves, wolverines, grizzly bears, or humans.
- Predators observe Caribou grazing, and then call out, “Run, Caribou, run!” while running out to try to catch them. Caribou try to make it back safely to their calving area without being caught.
- Students who have been tagged turn from Caribou into predators.

EXTENSIONS:

Humans

- Try this game with humans as the predators, and have students observe what happens when there are too many hunters trying to bring Caribou home to their families. Experiment with different numbers of humans as predators, or have humans decide together how many Caribou can be harvested to allow enough to remain for the following year. Discuss together how this connects to the human impacts game explored together.

Seasonal Energy Cost

- Try this game while exploring seasons and energy output. Introduce energy tokens (cards/cubes/popsicle sticks). Start students in the summer season, with each Caribou full of energy (6 tokens). If caught by a predator, students can give three of their energy tokens to the predator for an extra “burst of speed” to escape.
- Shift students into winter. Ask what food is available to Caribou in the winter months—how can they get to it? (Often digging through hard packed snow to get to lichen). What do Caribou need energy for in winter? (keeping warm!) Each Caribou starts with only three energy tokens. Give students time to play and explore in these seasons, and then gather in a circle to discuss what the students observed, as Caribou and predators, how it felt to have fewer energy tokens, and how it felt when there were.

ASSESSMENT

GRADE K/1 SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES: CONNECTING SOUTHERN LAKES CARIBOU THROUGH SEASONS

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
PART 1: I am able to demonstrate curiosity about how Caribou are connected to Southern Lakes communities.	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
PART 2: I am able to explore animals and culture through ordered seasonal events.	Not yet able to communicate aspects of seasonal events affecting Caribou	Some verbal or visual representation of one stage of the seasonal round of Caribou are provided	Verbal, visual or oral representation of one stage of Caribou seasonal rounds are provided	Verbal, visual and oral representation of at least one stage of Caribou seasonal rounds with additional details or stories
PART 3: I am able to reflect on my personal experience of place as it connects to local First Nations knowledge and stories.	May have little to no reflections on personal reflection of connection to Caribou, Yukon First Nations stories & place	Some evidence of personal reflection of connection to Caribou, Yukon First Nations stories & place provided	Verbal, visual or oral evidence is provided of a reflective process about personal connection to place, Yukon First Nations stories & Caribou	Verbal, visual and oral evidence is provided of a significant reflective process about personal connection to place, Yukon First Nations stories & Caribou

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SEASONAL ROUNDS

Appendix 1A

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Appendix 1B

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CARIBOU



LICHEN



CARIBOU HIDE



TENDON USED
FOR SEWING



SNARE



CARIBOU HAIR/
TUFTING

CARIBOU CARDS

Appendix 1D



**SUSTAINABLE
HARVEST**



**SUSTAINABLE
HARVEST**



**SUSTAINABLE
HARVEST**



**SUSTAINABLE
HARVEST**



**SUSTAINABLE
HARVEST**



**SUSTAINABLE
HARVEST**











TEMPLATE: LETTER HOME

Appendix 1E

Date: _____

Dear families,

We have been exploring the Southern Lakes Caribou as a class, and we are eager to learn more. Each student has been asked to reach out to family or community members who have Caribou stories to share. Students have been asked to consider:

- *Do you know someone who has seen Caribou before?*
- *Do you know someone who has been on a Caribou hunt?*
- *Do you know someone in the community with a delicious Caribou recipe?*
- *Do you know someone who uses Caribou in their crafts?*
- *Who could you visit with and ask about their Caribou stories?*

Your input and stories are very important for the class' understanding of and connection to the Southern Lakes Caribou.

Please help your child record the information shared with them, so that they can bring their findings into school and share it with the students - this could be through audio recordings, helping them write what they hear, or encouraging them to draw their reflection of the Caribou stories they hear.

Gunalcheesh, shäw nithän, mahsi cho for your support, and for helping us deepen our understanding of Caribou!

All the best,

Date: _____

Dear _____ ,

All the best,
