

GRADE K ART:

CONNECTING TO CARIBOU THROUGH
CREATIVITY



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 ART:

CONNECTING TO CARIBOU THROUGH CREATIVITY

BIG IDEAS

- People create art to express who they are as individuals and community
- Engagement in the arts creates opportunities for inquiry through purposeful play
- Dance, drama, music, and visual arts express meaning in unique ways
- People connect to others and share ideas through the arts

CONTENT	CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES
• Visual arts: elements of design (line, shape, texture, colour); principles of design (pattern, repetition) • Processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools and techniques to support arts activities • Variety of local works of art and artistic traditions • Personal and collective responsibility associated with creating, experiencing, or sharing in a safe learning environment	• Develop processes and technical skills in a variety of art forms to nurture motivation, development, and imagination • Reflect on creative processes and make connections to other experiences • Express feelings, ideas, stories, observations, and experiences through the arts
LEARNING TARGETS	
1. I am able to make connections to the Southern Lakes Caribou through reflection of creative processes. 2. I can use a variety of art forms to express my knowledge of the Southern Lakes Caribou. 3. I can develop an understanding of how seasonal events can impact food sources for the Southern Lakes Caribou.	

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 “A CARIBOU’S MEAL”

LEARNING TARGET:

I can develop an understanding of how seasonal events can impact food sources for the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC).

MATERIALS

- **Caribou artifact: lichen** (can be gathered in the forest)
- **Pictures of Caribou seasonal homes (Appendix 1A) printed**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

TIME: 30 MINUTES

OPENING: CONNECTING TO CARIBOU

Gather in a circle (outside, if weather permits) and pass the **udzí njī/lichen** (Dän’ke, Kwanlin Dün First Nation dialect) around, allowing every student a chance to hold it. Observe its texture and brainstorm where it came from. Give hints/prompts, for example, natural or grows on the forest floor. Talk about the four seasonal homes of the Caribou and observe the differences in each picture.

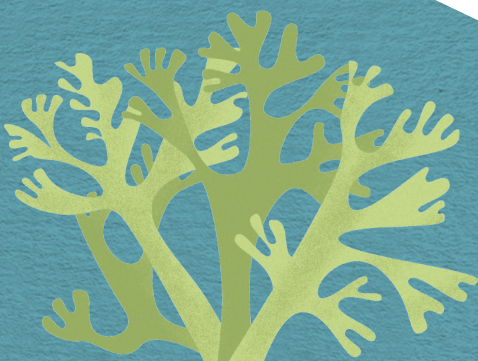
ASK STUDENTS

- Where do you think lichen/udzí njī grows?
- How do you think Caribou find the lichen/udzí njī?
- Would it be hard to get in the current season?

Share ideas.

1. Caribou can eat as much as two garbage bags full of food.
2. Lichen/udzí njī is the primary food source for Caribou.
3. There are over 2,000 kinds of lichen.
4. In the summer, Caribou feed on small shrubs and other plants.
5. In the winter, Caribou rely on the lichen/udzí njī buried beneath the snow which they dig up with their hollow hooves (gwéinli/hoof in Tlingit, Teslin Tlingit Council dialect).

Brainstorm what Caribou might do in the current season, where they might go and record ideas of whether/how this might change with the seasons (e.g., food and food shortage or predators).



ACTIVITY 1: "A CARIBOU'S MEAL"

This is a circle story that is meant to be created together as a group. By taking turns around the circle, each student will be able to add their own thoughts and ideas for the story to take shape. Take turns by passing the sample of lichen around, much like how a "Talking Piece" would be used as a visual for students to focus on who is speaking while others listen respectfully. The idea for the story will be around the feeding habits of the Caribou and the changing seasons. It is important to note that a Western style of storytelling emphasizes stories having an ending whereas Yukon First Nations storytelling does not emphasize having an ending. This is because stories are fluid and the knowledge learned from a story can continue on past the story itself.

To begin the story, recite the following line, or something similar, to start:

"It was a (current weather) day in (location), I was walking home from school when I came across a Caribou. I stopped to watch. The caribou was digging and digging with its hooves to get to the lichen and I noticed that..."

Pass the lichen piece to the student on your left and prompt the student to continue the story, taking turns each time to tell a small part of the story until the lichen returns to you. If students are unsure what to add on or need reminders for staying on topic, suggest points from the conversation about Caribou and their diet.

EXTENSIONS

- Each time the piece of lichen is passed to a student, add in a character or an item they have to use in their section of the story.
- After the story is complete and the group is inside, ask the students to draw or paint their interpretation of what happened during the story. Encourage them to dive into the details of the Caribou's "meal."

CLOSING: WONDER MOMENTS

When everyone has had a chance to share around the circle, the educator can spend some time offering wonder moments such as, "I wonder how much lichen the Caribou eats in one day", or "I wonder if Caribou eat other plants". Continued discussions like this will spark further inquiries beyond the story itself.

ASK STUDENTS

- What was your favourite part of the story?
- Which part of the story do you think could happen in reality? Which parts are imaginative?
- How does the land affect the Caribou?

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Input information they reflected on during the opening circle into the story?
- Keep within the same storyline for the Caribou and stay on topic?

Invite the students to self-assess their sharing by asking students to put their thumb up, down or horizontal to show how much they enjoyed sharing their parts of the story.

PART 2: THE PAINTED CARIBOU IN ITS NATURAL HABITAT

LEARNING TARGET:

I can use a variety of art forms to express my knowledge of the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC).

MATERIALS

- **Caribou artifact: sewing materials, Caribou tufting, snare, clothing, lichen sample or swatch of Caribou hide printed (Appendix 1B)**
- **Pictures of Caribou seasonal homes printed (Appendix 1A)**
- **Picture of a SLC printed**
- **Buckets, baskets or bags to store naturally foraged materials**
- **Large pieces of construction paper**
- **Pieces of sponge cut into the following:**
 - **1 triangle (head)**
 - **1 rectangle (body)**
 - **4 slim rectangles (legs)**
- **Any variety of art materials to add colour (paint or crayons)**
- **Glue**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

TIME: ~60 MINUTES

OPENING: CONNECTING WITH CARIBOU

Gather in a circle outside. Pass the Caribou artifacts around the circle, one at a time, and invite the students to share what they know and remember about Caribou. Encourage students to share a personal story that they might have about Caribou.

ASK STUDENTS

- Have you seen a Caribou before?
- Where do you think they live? Do you think that they always stay in the same place or do they move around?
- Do you think that they prefer warm or cold weather? Why?

Share ideas.

1. Some areas are more important to the Caribou than others.
2. Caribou are herbivores.
3. Their diet is very versatile, adapting to their environment.
4. The different areas that Caribou inhabit are called “Ranges”.
For example, summer range versus winter range.

After everyone has had a chance to share, hand a basket to each student and take a walk into the forest. Have students gather natural objects from the forest that they think they would find in the same areas of the Caribou’s natural habitat. Once everyone has filled their vessels with natural items from the environment, gather back in a circle to discuss.

Note: this experience offers an opportunity to talk about ethical harvesting, only taking what you need, offering a prayer and thanksgiving and gratitude for any harvested items.

ASK STUDENTS

- What were you thinking about when you were finding your items?
- Do you think you picked up items that would not be found in a Caribou habitat? What are they?
- What is your favourite item that you found? Why?
- What items do you think a Caribou would eat?
- Was there anything that surprised you when you were looking for materials?

ACTIVITY: THE PAINTED CARIBOU IN ITS NATURAL HABITAT

Prep: Cut the sponges into triangles and rectangles - these will be the painted body of the Caribou. Set out bowls for the students to put their foraged items into so that they can easily search for the pieces that are needed for their artwork. Have each of the students' spots set up with their piece of construction paper and keep the various art materials accessible for the class. Be prepared to create a version of this alongside the students to support them through the process.

Tell students that they are going to paint a Caribou in its natural habitat:

1. Use the sponges to paint the body of their Caribou; the triangle piece for the head, the large rectangle for the body and the small rectangle for each leg.
2. The different art materials are to add to the background scene. For example, use paints to colour the sky, crayons to colour the ground and markers for bold details.
3. The natural foraged items from their baskets will be used last to enhance their picture in whichever way they choose by gluing them onto the scene.

With step 3, encourage their creativity. For example, the Caribou will need antlers—what foraged items in their baskets do they have that could be adequate antlers for their Caribou? How big do you think they are? What do you think they feel like? What about their hooves (gwéinli/hoof in Tlingit, Teslin Tlingit Council dialect)? Explore these thoughts with the group, describe the textures—are they smooth? Rough? Remind them of the Caribou artifacts they handled during the opening circle and the textures that they had.

EXTENSION

Invite an Elder or Traditional Knowledge Holder to visit the class and share their stories about Caribou in their natural environment.

Leave space for students to ask questions and to share a thank you card in gratitude for their time visiting.

CLOSING

When the group has completed their “Caribou in its Natural Habitat” scene, gather in a circle. Ask students to share something special about their own piece and/or share what they notice in the pieces created by their classmates.

ASK STUDENTS

- What have you learned about Caribou that you did not know before?
- What materials did you use to create the art you made?
- How did you bring the land into your art?

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Express curiosity about Caribou by asking questions?
- Connect their knowledge of habitat in their artwork?



PART 3: CARIBOU ANTLERS

LEARNING TARGET:

I am able to make connections to the Southern Lakes Caribou (SLC) through reflection of creative processes.

MATERIALS

- **Caribou artifact: section, or a piece of Caribou antler**
- **Photos of Caribous at different ages with antlers at different stages printed (Appendix 1C)**
- **Photo of cow antlers, bull antlers and calf antlers printed (Appendix 1C)**
- **Construction paper (natural colours)**
- **Glue, pencils, scissors**
- **Small wooden sticks**
- **Pieces of soft fabrics (optional)**
- **Stapler, strong tape**
- **Community Booklet (for your community)**

TIME: ~25 MINUTES

OPENING: DRAWING ON OUR STORIES

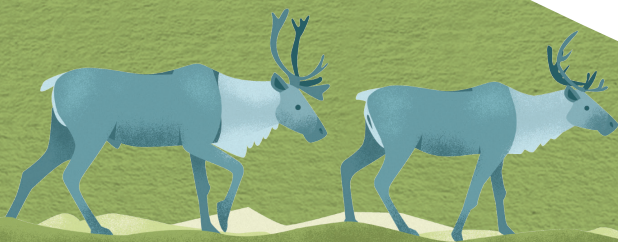
Gather in a circle. Pass a Caribou artifact around and invite students to describe the piece of antler and observe the texture and other attributes of the artifact. Encourage students to share a thought or a question that they have about the artifact.

ASK STUDENTS

- Have you/do you know someone who has seen Caribou before?
- Do you know someone who uses Caribou in their crafts or tools?
- What do you think Caribou use their antlers for?
- How do you think you can tell the age of a Caribou?

Share ideas.

- Female Caribou sometimes grow antlers.
- Caribou shed their antlers every year and they are made of bone that grows faster than any other bone in their body, growing up to an inch every day.
- Antlers on both males and females will have grown to full size and hardened fully by fall time.
- When antlers are in their growth periods they are covered with 'velvet'—this protects them as they are very sensitive and fragile during this time.
- No two antlers are the same, even on the same animal.
- The further that they branch out, the older the Caribou is; you cannot tell how old a Caribou is by the amount of points that they have.



ACTIVITY: CARIBOU ANTLERS

Prep: Have the art materials set up in an accessible way for the group. Hand out the pictures of Caribou antlers to each section of students, or ensure that they are in view for everyone to see. Have large strips of construction paper assembled for the headband pieces, then create a slit near the end of the strip to secure them, being sure that they fit the students' heads.

To begin, students will make their own Caribou antlers headbands out of construction paper. They can design them however they like, but try to remember what you talked about during the circle: no two are the same, the further they branch out the older the Caribou is, and they start growing at different times of the year.

Share these steps:

1. Draw out a pair of antlers on two pieces of construction paper. Students may need support with this step.
2. Cut out the antlers. Model holding scissors and keeping your elbow tight against the body for control.
3. Think about your antlers and consider what stage they are in, and whether they have velvet or not.
4. Choose the materials that are available to design and decorate your antlers.
5. Once the antlers are decorated, tape wooden sticks to the back to keep them sturdy and standing up.
6. Mount the antlers onto the headband strip with tape, or a stapler if tape does not hold.
7. Close the headband with tape so that each headband is secured.

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

- After the headbands are complete, have a herd move together around the classroom, mimicking the movements a Caribou might make with their antlers. Practice 'moving seasonally' as a herd.
- Gather in a circle and share stories of Caribou experiences or memories.

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are students able to:

- Identify the importance of antlers to Caribou?
- Connect to the Caribou through their art with information that they were given?

ASSESSMENT

GRADE K ART: CONNECTING TO CARIBOU THROUGH CREATIVITY

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 make connections to the SLC through reflection of creative processes.	Is not able to connect to Caribou through reflection. Little to no curiosity demonstrated through the creative process	Partial connections are made to Caribou through reflection. Some curiosity is demonstrated through the creative process	Is able to make connections to Caribou through reflection. Demonstrates curiosity about Caribou through creative process	Is able to make connections and share stories about Caribou through reflection. Highly curious about Caribou through the creative process
PART 2: I can use a variety of art forms to express my knowledge of the SLC.	Not yet able to use a variety of art forms. Little knowledge of the SLC	Can use some variety of art forms. Is able to express some knowledge of the SLC	Is able to use a variety of art forms. Is able to express adequate knowledge of the SLC	Very creative with a variety of art forms. Is able to express a lot of knowledge of the SLC
PART 3: I can develop an understanding of how seasonal events can impact food sources for the SLC.	Has little to no understanding of seasonal impacts on food sources for SLC. Unable to form a question or express curiosity	Has a little understanding of seasonal impacts of food sources for SLC. Can form a question with guidance	Has an understanding of seasonal impacts of food sources for SLC. Can form a question and express curiosity	Has a deep understanding of the seasonal impacts of food sources for SLC. Is easily able to form a question and expresses a lot of curiosity

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SEASONAL ROUNDS

Appendix 1A

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ARTIFACTS

Appendix 1B

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CARIBOU



LICHEN



CARIBOU HIDE



TENDON USED
FOR SEWING



SNARE



CARIBOU HAIR/
TUFTING

ANTLER GROWTH CYCLE

Appendix 1C

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CALF





COW



BULL