

Learning Bundles



Isaiah

Senior Years (Grades 9-12)

Renée McGurry
Learning Bundles

(Photo by K.C. Adams)

Bundle 1

Identity: Creating Identity Story Vines

The Concept/Overview

'I Lost My Talk' is a lyrical poem by Mi'kmaw elder and poet Rita Joe (1932-2007). She wrote this poem to express the pain and suffering she experienced at Schubunacadie Residential School in Nova Scotia. During her time in foster care and then at this Residential school she was forced to give up her language, an important part of her identity.

Many of us spend our lives searching for our sense of self. For most of us it is a slow process an adventure explored in our own time. For others, the sense of self is challenged brutally and abruptly and sometimes violently. We've seen it with the Residential School system—Indigenous peoples torn away, displaced, their cultures and language threatened as they yearn for a home that no longer exists.

While at the Residential School, Poet Rita Joe, faced an insidious attack on her identity and did so with honour, wisdom, integrity, and enormous compassion. Her powerful message encourages peaceful reconciliation, and a hope that her words would guide and inspire Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples across Canada towards a place of strength and healing.

What is the difference between learning another language the way most people do, voluntarily, and being forced to speak the language of others? How can that affect one's identity? What are the effects of losing one's language?

Note: Prior to attending Residential School students were fluent in their language, values, beliefs, and practices of their Nation. Once at the school, students were punished for speaking their language and were told that how they had come to understand the world was wrong. That they were savages. The foundation of any culture is the language. Without the language your understanding of the world changes and your thinking is framed by the

English language which disconnects you from your Indigenous worldview. In this poem, Rita Joe acknowledges that the things that defines who she is (language and culture) have been scrambled. Her identity is not lost but it has been buried by the residential school system. It is important for students to understand that the two primary goals of the residential school system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions, and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture by taking away their language and cultural identity.

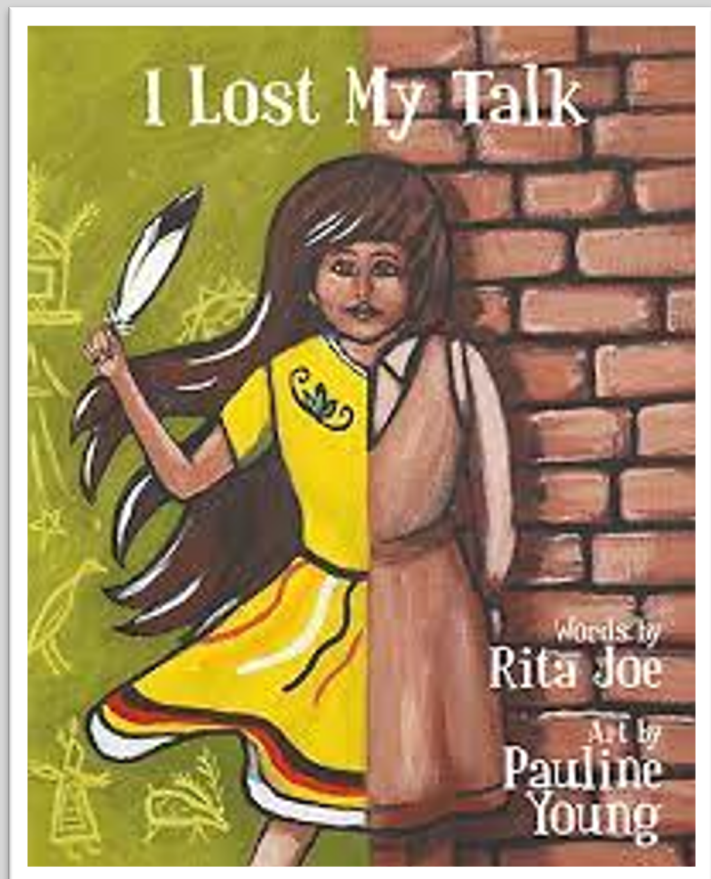
I Lost My Talk by Rita Joe

I lost my talk
The talk you took away.
When I was a little girl
At Shubenacadie school.

You snatched it away:
I speak like you
I think like you
I create like you
The scrambled ballad, about my word.

Two ways I talk
Both ways I say,
Your way is more powerful.

So gently I offer my hand and ask,
Let me find my talk
So I can teach you about me.



(Cover art by: Pauline Young)

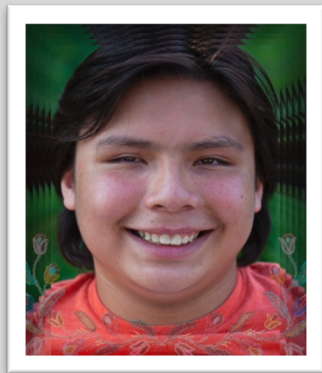
Connection/Reflection Questions:

1. What images does the poem use to convey a story? How would you describe the emotions behind the words? How is the experience of losing a language described? What does the poet try to convey in her description?
2. In the poem, Rita Joe says, “I speak, I think, and I create.” What is she suggesting about the relationship between language and power?
3. In this poem, Rita Joe says “Two ways I talk.” She is referring to her First Nations language, Mi’kmaq (an Eastern Algonquian language), and English. She has lost one of her “talks.” What conflict seems to exist between the two talks?
4. What is the relationship between language and identity?
5. The poem ends with the words: “Your way is more powerful. / So gently I offer my hand and ask, / Let me find my talk / So I can teach you about me.” Why is it important for her to be able to teach “you” about herself?
6. What is the relationship between language and identity?

Need:

1. Book “*I Lost My Talk*” by Rita Joe or a copy of the poem (above).
2. Storyboard- one per student.
3. All supplies for story vines as per Teaching Bundle: Tool #6.

Dakota



Felicia



(Photos by K.C. Adams)

	Students	Teacher
LEARNING TO KNOW	<p>Read the poem silent and then have a volunteer read it aloud.</p> <p>Students think about the answer to the question posed in the last verse. Share answers.</p> <p>Pose question about what defines Culture?</p>	<p>Remind students that the two primary goals of the residential school system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture by taking away their language and cultural identity.</p> <p>Have students think about the title and the topic of losing your language, part of your identity.</p> <p>Pose questions about what defines culture. Use questions below, to generate a discussion on culture and language.</p>
LEARNING TO DO	<p>Students share aspects of other cultures, perhaps their own.</p>	<p>Ask students about culture and what that means, how cultures are different. What are the aspects of culture that are hidden? What is it that people don't know about your culture? (see cultural iceberg below).</p> <p>Show students the cultural iceberg and discuss/share ideas about their own culture, or the culture of their ancestors. Things that most people wouldn't see.</p>
LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER	<p>Students create storyboards for vine project then proceed to make their own story vine as per instructions.</p>	<p>Have students create a storyboard of 5 or 6 main points about who they are, their family, their interests, their culture. These will be illustrated and then serve as cues for their 'Who I Am' story vine.</p>
LEARNING TO BE	<p>Share their stories, using the cues that they have attached to the vines.</p>	<p>Encourage students to share with the class in a talking circle. These can also be shared with other classrooms.</p>

(Table design by: Renée McGurry)

Examples of Story Vines:

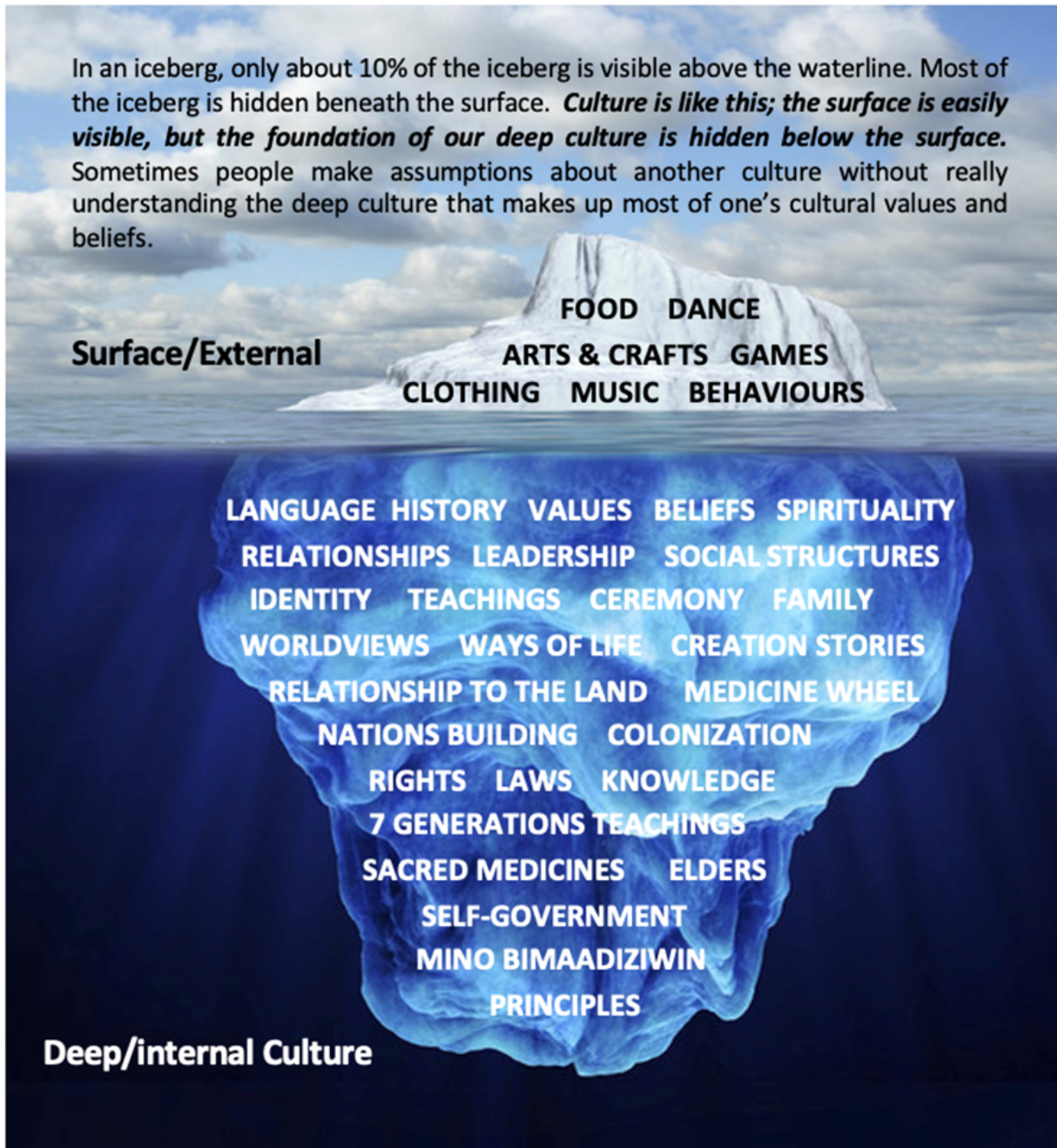


(Photos by Renée McGurry)

THE CULTURAL ICEBERG

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE MORE THAN JUST 'BEADS & FEATHERS'

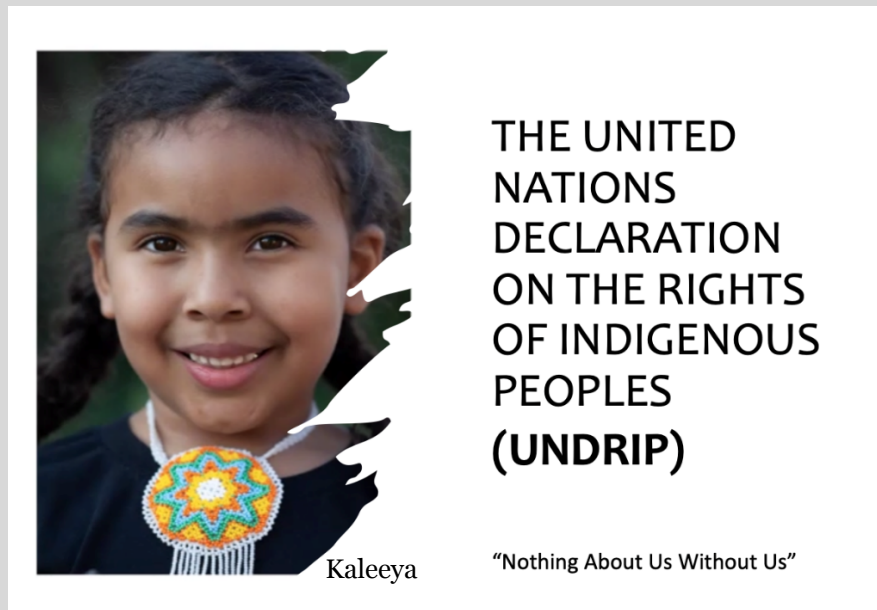
In an iceberg, only about 10% of the iceberg is visible above the waterline. Most of the iceberg is hidden beneath the surface. ***Culture is like this; the surface is easily visible, but the foundation of our deep culture is hidden below the surface.*** Sometimes people make assumptions about another culture without really understanding the deep culture that makes up most of one's cultural values and beliefs.



(Image designed by: Renée McGurry)

Bundle 2

UNDRIP: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



(Photo by K.C. Adams)

The Concept/Overview

The United Nations (UN) is an organization made up of governments from 193 countries. It was established after World War II with the aim of maintaining lasting peace and international cooperation between countries, to prevent further war. The UN has developed several international agreements to:

1. maintain international peace and security
2. protect human rights
3. deliver humanitarian aid
4. support sustainable development
5. uphold international law

A United Nations Declaration is a statement that has been agreed upon by the world's governments. In most cases, a declaration is not legally binding. However, declarations do outline the principles that world governments have agreed to work towards.

The United Nations also develop legally binding agreements that are upheld by international law. These agreements are called treaties, conventions, covenants, or protocols.

The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted on 13 September 2007, after 20 years of discussions and negotiations between governments and Indigenous groups from around the world.

The Declaration was developed in response to the discrimination, oppression, marginalization, and exploitation faced by so many Indigenous Peoples. The UNDRIP is the most extensive document to address the rights of Indigenous Peoples. It outlines an international framework that aims to achieve the survival, dignity, and well-being of all Indigenous Peoples throughout the world.

Why do we need UNDRIP?

Indigenous Peoples throughout the world have been dispossessed of their land and marginalized by incoming communities who have dominated and disrupted their society and culture. These experiences have caused many Indigenous communities to experience high rates of poverty and inequities.

The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples targets the causes of inequality and aims to ensure that the rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected and fulfilled.

UNDRIP is made up of 46 Articles, or statements, that aim to ensure the survival, dignity, security, and well-being of Indigenous Peoples around the world.

The Declaration works as a document that governments and Indigenous Peoples can refer to when developing ways to ensure that the rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected and fulfilled.

UNDRIP is divided into 10 parts:

1. The Preamble
2. Foundational Rights
3. Life and Security
4. Language, Cultural and Spiritual Identity
5. Education, Information and Employment
6. Participation, Development and Economic and Social Rights
7. Rights to Country, Resources and Our Knowledge
8. Self-governance
9. Implementing the Declaration
10. Interpreting the Declaration

The preamble states the UNDRIP was written to address the injustices experienced by Indigenous Peoples and sets out standards to improve the lives of Indigenous Peoples to address disadvantage and discrimination.

Canada and UNDRIP

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (aka ‘the Declaration’) provides us with a road map to advance lasting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It shows us that further steps must be taken to respect, recognize and protect the human rights of Indigenous peoples and to address the wrongs of the past.

In 2016, the Government of Canada endorsed the Declaration without qualification and committed to its full and effective implementation. In December 2020, the Government of Canada introduced legislation to implement the Declaration. On June 21, 2021, Bill C-15, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* received Royal Assent. This Act will provide a road map for the Government and Indigenous peoples to work together to fully implement the Declaration.

CBC Article: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/undrip-declaration-passes-senate-1.6068524>

Guiding Questions:

1. Why has a United Nations Declaration been written for Indigenous Peoples?
2. How have Indigenous Peoples in Canada been treated in the past?
3. How have Indigenous Peoples been treated in the past in other parts of the world?
4. Do you believe that Indigenous Peoples have the same rights and freedoms as non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada?
5. How is the UNDRIP helpful for Indigenous peoples in general?
6. What does self-determination mean to you?

Video: <https://learningbird.com/speaking-about-indigenous-rights-in-the-classroom/>

Implementing the Declaration is a significant step forward on the shared path of reconciliation—one which will help build a future for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike. It will contribute to building renewed, nation-to-nation, Inuit-Crown, government-to-government relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis based on affirmation of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

TRC Call to Action as it relates to UNDRIP

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) named the UN Declaration in 16 Calls to Action.

In Call to Action 43, the TRC called upon the Government of Canada to “fully adopt and implement” the UN Declaration as “the framework for reconciliation.” Call to Action 44 calls upon the Government of Canada to “develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the United Nations Declaration.” At this point, this has not been done and it is time for Canada to enact those a plan to achieve these goals.

Letter to the Prime Minister can be done by Canada Post:

**Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2**

Or an email can be sent to the Prime Minister at: justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca.

	Students	Teacher
LEARNING TO KNOW	<p>Brainstorm ideas about what ‘human rights’ are for everyone.</p> <p>Answer guiding questions and discuss rights and freedoms as they relate to Indigenous peoples in Canada.</p>	<p>Active prior knowledge about human rights, the history of Indigenous peoples, treaty rights and reconciliation. Introduce UNDRIP from concept overview notes.</p> <p>Discuss how Indigenous peoples and the government have not had good relationships.</p> <p>Share guiding questions.</p>
LEARNING TO DO	<p>View video, take notes.</p> <p>Discussion on UNDRIP and the importance for our youth to voice their opinions.</p> <p>Create list of points to add to a letter to the Prime Minister.</p>	<p>Share the video above, pausing to discuss concepts such as inherent and treaty rights.</p> <p>Brainstorm with students important points to add to a letter to the Prime Minister to address the need for an action plan to move UNDRIP forward.</p> <p>Discuss how to write a letter, beginning with: Dear Prime Minister Trudeau....</p>
LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER	<p>Write a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau.</p>	<p>Have students read their draft letters before producing a final copy to send to our Prime Minister.</p>
LEARNING TO BE	<p>Share letters with the other students, edit and write a final copy to send to Prime Minister Trudeau.</p>	<p>Have students share their letters before doing a final copy and sending via Canada Post or email.</p>

(Table design by: Renée McGurry)

Bundle 3

Reconciliation to ReconciliACTION



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The Concept/Overview

Prior to contact, the Indigenous Peoples of Manitoba lived by a belief system that revealed individuals, families and whole communities living according to good, health driven lives, understood in the ancestral language as “Mino Pimatisiwin”. This life includes a wholistic and sustainable process which reflected the deep respect and reverence held by the original people to the very land on which they lived. It was and is today this deep-felt relationship to the land or Mother Earth which provided food, clothing, shelter, tools, and everything needed to provide a good and healthy life.

While the past cannot be changed, a new understanding of shared history can lead to respectful relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the future. Too many Canadians still do not know the history of Aboriginal peoples’ contributions to Canada or understand that by virtue of historical and modern Treaties negotiated by government, that citizens in Canada are all Treaty people. Education plays an important role in reconciliation; Canadians must look to, and learn from, the past to create and build a better future for everyone.

“Reconciliation must become a way of life. It will take many years to repair damaged trust and relationships in Aboriginal communities and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation not only requires apologies, reparations, the relearning of Canada’s national history, and public commemoration, but also needs real social, political, and economic change. Ongoing public education and dialogue are essential to reconciliation. Governments, churches, educational institutions, and Canadians from all walks of life are responsible for taking action on reconciliation in concrete ways, working collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation begins with each and every one of us.”

(Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation - TRC 2015)

What is Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is not about ‘feeling guilty’, it’s about learning the truth about Indian Residential Schools and the effects that have had and still have on Indigenous peoples . There are many ‘Acts of Reconciliation’ that Allies can easily do. Many of these are small, everyday acts, that encourage people to think about Indigenous-settler relationships in new ways.

✓ Creating relationships with Indigenous peoples by attending community events (e.g., National Indigenous Peoples Day, Louis Riel Day, Arctic Games, round dances, community meals) and having a critical conversation about relevance and meaning.

✓ Learning from local Indigenous Knowledge Keepers in a culturally relevant space (e.g., medicine walks, living with the land, sharing/talking circles, attending powwows, sweat lodges, pipe ceremonies, water walks, language camps).

✓ Engaging in community outreach projects that have compassion and comprehension at their core (e.g., Project of Heart, Orange Shirt Day, I am a witness, Walking with Our Sisters, Shannen’s Dream, Jordan’s Principle, The REDress Project).

✓ Participating in experiential activities that delve deeper into Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations (e.g., Imagine a Canada – National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Indigenous Rights Blanket Exercise Workshop – KAIROS Canada, WE Schools – Indigenous Programming).

✓ Evaluating individual and collective growth using (w)holistic models that includes the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects of life (e.g., Medicine Wheel, Indigenous Wellness Framework, First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness).



(Graphic adapted from Elder teachings)

Reconciliation/ReconciliACTION Poster

Create a poster that illustrates one or both words Reconciliation or ReconciliACTION as the main focus. Start by thinking about what that Looks like, Sounds Like, Feels Like, or Is Not, as well as any text that adds to the messages. Sample poster below.

Need:

1. Video about 16-year-old advocate Autumn Peltier:
 - i. <https://youtu.be/nloMR18fR>
 - ii. Autumn is an Anishinaabe Indigenous clean water advocate from the Wiikwemkoong First Nation on Manitoulin Island, Ontario. She is Chief Water Protector for the Anishinaabek Nation and has been called a "water warrior."
2. Poster Pattern
3. Drawing/colouring supplies
4. Access to internet
5. Sample poster below:

	Students	Teacher
LEARNING TO KNOW	Watch the Autumn Peltier video. Share thoughts and reflections.	Show the Autumn Peltier video. Discuss the main points. Share who she is and why her message is important.
LEARNING TO DO	Students help generate a list of reconciliation words from the word cloud. Looking at the calls to action, determine what Canadians need to do moving forward.	Then display the 'Reconciliation' word cloud and ask students to pull out key words. Then open a discussion what Reconciliation really is as it relates to the TRC's 94 calls to action and what needs to be done. Record all key reconciliation words. These will be used by the students to create their 'ReconciliACTION' posters.
LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER	Students will create a poster with the word "ReconciliACTION" as the focus.	Have students create ReconciliACTION posters. Additional online research may be needed if students are struggling with images to include.
LEARNING TO BE	Share posters with class. Photos and/or a video can be put together to share with other classrooms or at an assembly.	Have students share and then post their work in or out of the classroom. Might be an opportunity to take photos or videos of the students with their work. If a video is done, then students can choose one idea to verbalize in the video... ReconciliACTION is...

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Possible terms to include:

- Gifts
- Wisdom
- 7 Teachings: love, truth, honesty, respect, wisdom, courage, humility
- Identity
- Footprints
- Kindness
- Gratitude
- Storytelling
- All My Relations
- Mother Earth