

TREATIES OVERVIEW

TREATIES OVERVIEW AND KEY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

General Summary

The content in the Treaties learning experiences allow learners to explore and to understand basic information about the treaty relationship between the Mi'kmaq and the British, as well as how that relationship changed through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Learning experiences draw on content from the Foundations section as they explore the nature and history of the treaty relationship. An initial theme called What is a Treaty? emphasizes the importance of treaties as diplomatic tools that continue to the present day and that Canada still uses in its nation-to-nation relationships across the world. The theme on Treaty Making is at the heart of Treaty Education and gives learners content that will support them through the remaining themes. Experiences that delve into the two-hundred-year Treaty Denial period (c.1785 to 1985) follow the first two themes. This content is difficult, and essential to moving into the last section of the volume, Reconciliation. As part of the Treaty Education commitment to asking how Nova Scotians will reconcile a shared history and ensure justice and equity, the last theme tackles the concept of equity.

What is a Treaty?

These introductory learning experiences provide the most general context of a treaty. What is it? Who uses them? What are they for? Does Canada still make them? Learners will grasp what a treaty is (“a formal agreement between two or more nations”) as well as some primary vocabulary they will need in the themes and learning experiences that follow. They will also be asked to think about the advantages and disadvantages of war and peace—something the Mi'kmaq and British considered very carefully when making treaty agreements.

Treaty-Making

These learning experiences are at the heart of Treaty Education. Arguably the most important learning experience of the entire volume is the readers' theatre, “Protecting Netukulimk” (T4). This theatre conveys the core promises that define the treaty relationship and that can be found in every Peace and Friendship treaty. It is important that learners grasp that treaties were not about land: they were diplomatic agreements made to secure peace and end hostilities that were frequent in the eighteenth century.

Treaty Denial

The learning experiences that constitute the Treaty Denial theme connect the treaty-making period of the eighteenth century with the reconciliation time that Canadians are living through today. If learners do not grasp the severity and duration of this era (at an age appropriate level), it will be difficult for them to understand why Canada is in a national reconciliation process today. The learning experiences address land loss, habitat destruction, residential school, centralization and other challenges. They also share how Mi'kmaw leaders and communities moved through these difficult experiences into the Treaty Renewal period of the 1980s.

What is Equity?

Many people—learners and others—see equity and equality as the same thing. The learning experiences in this theme push learners to decouple these two ideas and to understand that equity is achieved when everyone can participate and self-determine their own futures. The historical experiences of the Treaty Denial period have left very different legacies for Mi'kmaw communities today. These legacies impact health, education, economic development, cultural identity and much more. The learning experiences in this theme are anchored by a readers' theatre that emphasizes the historical roots of inequity for Mi'kmaw communities today.

KEY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Here, you'll find the Treaties Learning Experiences that are available in the pilot version of Roots of Reconciliation. Stay tuned for many more when the full version is released in 2024!

- Dialoguing Treaty Words (T1)
- A Treaty Puzzle (T3)
- The Ratification: A Readers' Theatre (T4)
- Voices of Change (T8)