

TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS AND RIGHTS

PRE-TEACH/PRE-ACTIVITY

Begin by explaining the Indigenous perspectives on owning land and how this concept was introduced with European contact. During early colonial times, Europeans acquired Indigenous lands through treaties, some of which are still disputed today. It is also important to note that many treaties are celebrated and that when concerns about treaties are raised it is often because the terms of treaties are not being honoured and respected.

In more recent times, many Indigenous communities were displaced as the national and provincial park systems were established in the late 19th and early 20th century. The people from those communities were moved to less attractive, less useful lands, sometimes by force. Negotiations over Indigenous land rights continue, dealing with issues of unceded territory and grievances about past promises and treaties. If you have not already done so, invite a facilitator of the KAIROS Blanket Exercise to come to your school to provide an interactive educational experience.

Today, treaties are at the heart of Canada's political landscape. From the first contact between Indigenous Peoples and Europeans, formal and informal treaties have formed the basis for military and economic alliances. Treaty-making has evolved from early colonial times, when treaties were more about ensuring military support or continued trade, to later in Confederation times, when treaties centered on resources and land use. Today, much of Canada's land is covered by different treaties, and the terms of these treaties remain a topic of debate.

"In her paper on the meaning of the treaties, Delia Opekokew pointed out the need to consider more than the bare treaty text. She made reference to an earlier study:

'In the 1976 Federation of Saskatchewan Indians study of the circumstances surrounding Treaty 6, it was concluded that in considering the terms of a specific treaty, both the actual treaty document and the recording of the discussions involved must be included. This is the nature of the communication process within Indian culture. When oral communication takes place, it is understood that men are literally bound by their words. Considering this process then, it is easy to understand that the verbal assurances and statements of the commissioners were accepted by the Indian people as part of the treaty agreements.

There is an obvious contrast between the literal meaning conveyed by the written words of the treaty text and that suggested by the context and spoken words of the treaty-making process. Quite apart from specific content, there is a marked difference in the emphasis given to the subjects treated. This difference in emphasis is a major cause of the disparity found in various interpretations of the treaty.'"

— from "Treaty Research Report - Treaty Six (1876)" by John Leonard Taylor, Treaties and Historical Research Centre, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1985, aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100028706/1100100028708

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TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS AND RIGHTS

Explain to students that a treaty can be defined as a constitutionally recognized agreement between the government of Canada (called the Crown) and Indigenous people. Students should understand that treaties between Indigenous nations were an important part of life pre-contact. Most Indigenous treaties describe exchanges and interactions where different groups of Indigenous Peoples agree to share their ancestral land. Inform students that treaties have different meanings to different people (e.g., peace and friendship treaties, modern day treaties, numbered treaties). Ask students about what they know about relationships to the land and how the meaning of the word “treaty” could be different for European settlers and for Indigenous nations. Ask students what Canada would look like if there were no treaties. How do they think it would change what Canada looks like today? What do they think the consequences would be if First Nations had not signed the numbered treaties and many others?

Before you continue with this activity, ensure that you and your students know if your school is located on treaty land, whose traditional land it is on and how to properly acknowledge it. You can use the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada app to get an idea of what a proper local acknowledgment might include. If possible, invite a local Indigenous person into your class to explain the history of your territory.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will learn about the different types of treaties (modern and historic) and land agreements in Canada and their relevance today.
- Students will learn to recognize and acknowledge the traditional territory, treaty or unceded territory they live on.
- Students will use the timeline to explore the treaty-making process in Canada.
- Students will read official treaties and acts to gain a more thorough knowledge of treaties and agreements.
- Students will explore the realities of unceded treaty territories and discuss whether treaties are being honoured in their community.
- Students will differentiate between land designations, unceded treaty entitlement and traditional lands.
- Students will understand that land disputes still exist and have existed since European contact.
- Students will examine how the language in treaties can be interpreted differently.

TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS & RIGHTS

Foundational knowledge and perspectives

FIRST NATIONS

“**My father**, Willie Joe, believed in the valour of Yukon First Nations and our pursuit of self-government. He sought to empower our people to create a better tomorrow for the generations to come. On Aug. 17, 1977, my father, president of the Yukon Native Brotherhood, sat down alongside his colleagues and across from Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau. They deliberated over a proposal to build a gas pipeline that would follow the Alaska Highway corridor. My leaders were in the middle of land claim negotiations for the area in question at the time and asked for more time to complete those agreements.

My father stated that they needed a further seven years to ensure that people in the community in their day-to-day social conditions could benefit from development rather than become victims of it. He added that while Yukon First Nations had been bureaucratically organized

for the past eight years, instead of addressing social welfare, their energy had been largely spent locking horns with the federal government. The prime minister’s initial response was, ‘We all wish for more time.’ He said that last-minute decisions ‘happen to us on every problem, foreign affairs, NATO, budget...but I think we have to make up our minds.’

To the prime minister, my father asking for a further seven years was the equivalent of saying no. Prime Minister Trudeau declared that you are either interested in development, running toilets and hydro dams or you are not. For my leaders, this extra time to ensure things were done right would benefit First Nations for years and generations to come, not just for the present. They weren’t saying ‘never’; they were simply saying ‘not right now.’

In 1973, our leaders sent a document to Prime Minister Trudeau entitled ‘Together Today for Our Children

Tomorrow,’ outlining our grievances and our approach to negotiations. Today, it could be understood as a pathway to reconciliation. The document stated: ‘The objective of the Yukon Indian people is to obtain a settlement in place of a treaty that will help us and our children learn to live in a changing world. We want to take part in development of the Yukon and Canada, not stop it. But we can only participate as Indians. We will not sell our heritage for a quick buck or a temporary job.’ At the heart of this dispute was a foundational difference in the Indigenous approach to development: our vision is generations-long.

It was only after our leaders presented the federal government with that document that they started negotiating land claims across the Yukon. Unlike much of the rest of the country, there had never been any

treaties or agreements signed there, despite outstanding claims dating back to the times of the Klondike gold rush. Spurred on by proposals to build the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline in the neighbouring Northwest Territories, the government created a federal royal commission, led by

Judge Thomas Berger, to launch the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry in 1974. The inquiry looked at the potential impacts of the pipeline on the environment, the economy and the people who lived in the area. Ultimately, they recommended a moratorium on all pipeline development in the area for 10 years, partly to allow for land claims to be settled.

The pipeline never came to fruition. However, after another 16 years of negotiation, by 1990 we had finalized both the Umbrella Final Agreement for the entire territory and a specific self-government agreement for my community, and I feel the Yukon is better for it. My leaders would not devalue people over economics, and



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as a result they were part of advancing the decision-making institution. Prior to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, development decisions were based largely on economic values. Afterwards, it became the norm to evaluate environmental and socio-economic impacts through public consultation.

Would we have experienced the same level of success if the pipeline had been pushed through the next year? My instinct suggests not, and I'm thankful to our past leaders for their resolve to uphold the value of our people. My father and his colleagues stepped forward only considering my generation and our children. I am grateful for the opportunity, education and determination that our agreements have provided. Now, as I help further evolve decision-making, I strive to uphold the lessons of my past leaders and share my commitment to continuing our nation's journey with my children.

This phenomenon of intergenerational leadership driven by devotion to our children is one of the key successes

of Indigenous Peoples. It is a force that has and is changing how decisions are made. The achievement of our final agreements ensures we no longer have to jump at every opportunity. Instead, we are normalizing our approach, which is to take the time to do things right. While there's still work to do to convince our colleagues in development of the value of prioritizing generations over year-to-year benefit, we are moving to a framework where our partners are actively seeking our Indigenous direction and wisdom. It is important to recognize that our leaders negotiated the agreements for all of Canada's land and people. For this foresight, I am thankful. Today, I have more faith in the future of development as it's evolving through new models of decision-making that are rooted in Indigenous values and visions of prosperity for the generations to come."

—from "Treaties" by Jocelyn Joe-Strack, in the *First Nations* volume of the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*



TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS & RIGHTS

Foundational knowledge and perspectives

MÉTIS

“The Métis scrip system was implemented after the 1869-70 Red River Resistance. In the aftermath of the resistance, the Canadian government created Manitoba under the Manitoba Act, which set aside 1.4 million acres of land for the children of Métis families. Once this land grant was exhausted, the government supplemented it through scrip distribution to individuals rather than the collective. In 1879, amendments to the Dominion Lands Act acknowledged that the Métis had outstanding claims to their lands in the North-West Territories (including land in what is now Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan).

Section 43 of the act indicated that the federal government had a fiduciary responsibility to protect Aboriginal rights (for both Métis and First Nations), and thus had a duty to limit non-Aboriginal settlement in a region until the local First Nations and Métis inhabitants had their Aboriginal title dealt with through treaty and scrip. Section 125 of the Act paved the way for the infamous scrip system implemented by the federal government in an ineffectual attempt to extinguish the land rights of Métis.

The two types of scrip created for this process were land scrip and money scrip. When the system was first implemented, the value of the scrip provided to the Métis was either 160 acres of land or \$160 cash to be used for the purchase of land. Later, the value was increased to 240 acres or \$240. From 1876 to 1902, scrip was handed out by scrip commissions, which followed the treaty negotiators and travelled to various Métis communities in Western Canada. From 1899, Métis scrip was granted simultaneously in Treaty 8 (present-day northwest Saskatchewan, southern Northwest Territories, northern Alberta and northeast British Columbia), from 1906 in Treaty 10 (what is now northern Saskatchewan and

a small part of Alberta), and from 1921 in Treaty 11 in what is now the Northwest Territories. Sometimes, some family members took treaty, while others took scrip. This occurred among First Nations people, too, as many took scrip and became Métis. This meant that even within one family, some family members would become Status Indians and others, Métis.

The scrip system was flawed for many reasons, resulting in the systematic loss of Métis lands. The scrip commissions were advertised in newspapers and on posters. It is believed that the purpose of one of these advertisements was to alert speculators. There was also no protection against fraud — many had their names

forged without their knowledge. As a general practice, land speculators bought scrip from Métis at very low prices and then sold it to the main chartered banks in Canada. Out of the 14,849 issued, land speculators ended up obtaining 12,560 money scrips. They also managed to leave the Métis with only one

per cent of the 138,320 acres of land scrip issued in northwest Saskatchewan.”

— from “Scrip” in the Métis volume of the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*

“Manitoba Métis Federation v. Canada, 2013

On April 15, 1981, the Manitoba Métis Federation was joined by the Native Council of Canada in a major claims suit against the federal and Manitoba governments. In this case, the MMF sought a declaration that certain pieces of provincial and federal legislation that amended provisions of the Manitoba Act are unconstitutional. If proven in court, the MMF could proceed with another case seeking compensation for the losses the Manitoba Métis suffered as a result of the governments’ unconstitutional activities.



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The case was heard in court in January 1987. The federal government argued that the case should be dismissed since the matter was settled in 1870. In February 1987, a Manitoba court ruled in favour of the MMF, but the federal government appealed and the case went to the Manitoba Court of Appeal, which in a majority decision agreed that it should be struck. In 1990, the Supreme Court affirmed that the MMF had a right to seek a declaration that the federal and provincial governments had unconstitutionally undermined the Métis' rights conferred by sections 31 and 32 of the Manitoba Act, 1870.

In 2006 and 2009, the MMF appealed the ruling to first the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba and then to the Manitoba Court of Appeal, only to see both courts rule against the MMF in 2007 and 2010 respectively. The MMF appealed the decision to the Supreme Court in 2011. On Dec. 13, 2011, the Supreme Court heard the case. On March 8, 2013, the court, in a six to two decision, ruled in *Manitoba Métis Federation v. Canada* that the federal Crown 'failed to implement the land grant provision set out in Section 31 of the Manitoba Act, 1870 in accordance with the honour of the Crown.'

By ruling that the government had failed to meet its fiduciary obligation to the Manitoba Métis, the Supreme Court confirmed the MMF's standing in a collective claim for declaratory relief in order to have reconciliation between the descendants of the displaced Red River Métis and Canada. The case was not a land claim in the traditional sense. Since the lands in question represent present-day Winnipeg and the surrounding area, the MMF was not seeking to displace people living there, but rather seeking a land base elsewhere in the province as well as financial compensation. The Supreme Court did not list the amount of compensation, but left that open to the MMF and the federal government to settle the matter.

On April 13, 2017, the Métis National Council and its provincial board of governors and the Government of Canada signed the Canada-Métis Nation Accord, which spells out the Métis-federal Crown relationship. In the accord, *Manitoba Métis Federation vs. Canada* is referenced, indicating that as a result of this ruling, the Crown has a fiduciary obligation to the Métis and that

'the unfinished business of reconciliation of the Métis people with Canadian sovereignty is a matter of national and constitutional import.'

— from *"Métis and the Constitution" in the Métis volume of the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*

Alberta Métis Settlements:

"The eight Alberta Métis Settlements are the only government-recognized Métis land base in Canada. Comprising 512,121 hectares, the settlements are located in east-central and northern Alberta. These settlements emerged from the activism of Métis political leaders in the 1920s and '30s who were concerned about the social plight of landless Métis who struggled to feed their families. An earlier federally operated Métis settlement in Alberta — St. Paul des Métis — had been dissolved in 1909 for public homesteading after only 10 years of operation.

In 1932, the Métis Association of Alberta was formed from an earlier Métis political lobby. The new association lobbied the Alberta government to investigate the miserable living condition of the province's Métis. Their efforts convinced the government to act. In 1938, the Alberta government passed the Métis Population Betterment Act, which, based on the recommendations of the Ewing Commission, established a land base for the province's Métis. The new settlements, or "colonies" as they were then known, were: Buffalo Lake (Caslan), Cold Lake, East Prairie, Elizabeth, Fishing Lake (Packechawanis), Gift Lake (Ma-cha-cho-wi-se), Kikino (Goodfish Lake), Marlboro, Paddle Prairie (or Keg River), Big Prairie (now Peavine), Touchwood and Wolf Lake. The original governance structure was paternalistic; government and church officials had the largest say in governing, although the Métis had limited self-governing authority relating to hunting, fishing, and trapping. Four of the original settlements — Cold Lake, Marlboro, Touchwood, and Wolf Lake — were later dissolved.

Frustrated at the lack of self-government in these settlements, a group of activists formed the Alberta Federation of Métis Settlements in 1975. After years of negotiations and the threat of legal action, their lobbying efforts were successfully realized in 1990 when the

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Alberta government passed the Métis Settlements Act, the Métis Settlements Accord Implementation Act, the Métis Settlements Land Protection Act and the Constitution of Alberta Amendment Act. With this legislation, the Métis on the settlements were granted control of 512,121 hectares of land.

In 2016, the Alberta Métis Settlements contained 5,054 residents. The eight current settlements are: Buffalo Lake, East Prairie, Elizabeth, Fishing Lake, Gift Lake, Kikino, Paddle Prairie and Peavine. These settlements are self-governing and administered by the Métis

Settlements General Council. Each settlement has a council, and the eight councils meet and hold an annual general council assembly. A board of directors oversees the MSGC and includes the eight settlement chairpersons and all four MSGC executive members, who are non-voting members. In consultation with the Alberta Minister of Indigenous Relations, the MSGC makes policies that are binding on the settlements.”

—from “*Métis Settlements and Farms*” in the *Métis volume of the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*



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Foundational knowledge and perspectives

INUIT

“Nunavut, which means ‘Our Land’ in Inuktitut, is the newest, largest and northernmost territory of Canada. It was officially created on April 1, 1999, though the proposed boundaries had been drawn in 1992 after a plebiscite was held to confirm the division between Northwest Territories and Nunavut. In October 1992, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was put to a plebiscite and saw a resounding majority of voters pass the agreement with a nearly 85 per cent majority. In May 1993, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was signed in Iqaluit, and on June 10, 1993, the NLCA and the Nunavut Act (an act that created the new territory) were passed.”

—from “Nunavut” in the Inuit volume of the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*

“The Inuvialuit Settlement Region is the most western of the four Inuit homelands in Canada that make up Inuit Nunangat. The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, which was established in 1984 to manage the settlement outlined in the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, represents the collective Inuvialuit interests in dealings with governments and the world at large. Its goal is to continually improve the economic, social and cultural well-being of the Inuvialuit through implementation of the IFA and by all other available means. Inuvialuit beneficiaries directly control the IRC and its subsidiaries by electing directors from each of the region’s six communities.

In the IFA, Inuvialuit agreed to give up their exclusive use of their ancestral lands in exchange for certain other guaranteed rights from the federal government.

These rights came in three forms: land, wildlife management and money.”

—from “Inuvialuit Settlement Region” in the Inuit volume of the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*

“In 1971, the Quebec government announced the ‘project of the century’ — the James Bay project. This hydroelectric development project would massively change the face of northern Quebec, diverting several major rivers and their watersheds. The rights of the Inuit and Cree who lived in northern James Bay and northern Quebec were ignored. A young Inuk named Charlie Watt assembled a group of Inuit and created the Northern Quebec Inuit Association (NQIA). Watt would later go on to serve in the Senate for 34 years until his retirement as senator in 2018 when he was elected to lead Makivik as president.

Joining forces with the Quebec Association of Indians, Inuit applied to the Quebec Superior Court in 1972 for an injunction to stop the James Bay project. The ruling in their favour was quickly overturned by the court. However, events had been unleashed leading to an out-of-court settlement that was the historic James Bay and North-

ern Quebec Agreement. The agreement was signed in November 1975, becoming the first major comprehensive land claims agreement in Northern Canada, heralding a new era in Indigenous land claims.

The Makivik Corporation’s distinct mandate ranges from owning and operating large profitable business enterprises and generating jobs for Inuit, to social economic development, improving housing conditions and

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INUIT

protecting the Inuit language, culture and natural environment. In 1975 when the first agreement was signed, it took the position that “settling Inuit land claims” must be viewed in the context of a “new beginning” in terms of developing and implementing a new relationship and way of doing business with both the federal government and Quebec government.

Throughout its history, Makivik has also recognized the importance of participating on the broader national political agenda. Nunavik Inuit were key players during constitutional negotiations in 1982 that affirmed Inuit rights in the Constitution and offered constitutional protection to comprehensive land claims agreements.

In addition to settling land claims and providing financial compensation, the 1975 agreement, together with the later 2007 offshore agreement, defines Indigenous rights for Nunavimmiut (Inuit from Nunavik). These agreements are the basis for relations between Inuit and their neighbours as well as with different levels of federal and provincial governments. The agreements enshrine harvesting rights and resource management regimes and establish land categories of varying degrees of Indigenous and Crown control. School boards were created, health services were restructured and regional governments were established, all to help Inuit flourish in Nunavik.

Thirty years after the initial claim was signed, Makivik Corporation and the federal government concluded a 14-year process with the successful negotiation and creation of the Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement in 2007. This agreement covers the management of offshore areas and islands in the Hudson and Ungava bay areas for harvesting, transportation and resource development. Nunavik is well positioned to benefit from the new opportunities provided by the NILCA. With more than 30 years of land claims implementation experience, these new rights and compensation will be put to good use to improve the economic and social well-being of Inuit in Nunavik.”

—from “Nunavik” in the Inuit volume of the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*

“The Labrador Inuit Association was formed in 1973 to promote Inuit culture; improve the health and well-being of our people; protect their constitutional, democratic and human rights; and advance Labrador Inuit claims with Canada and the Newfoundland and Labrador government. In 1977, the LIA began the long journey towards self-government by filing a land claim with the provincial and federal governments seeking rights to the “land and sea ice in Northern Labrador.” For the next three decades, their negotiators pursued the dream of self-government for Labrador Inuit through the settlement of their land claim. This dream was realized on Dec. 6, 2004, when the provincial government passed the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement Act, which paved the way for the establishment of the Nunatsiavut government on Dec. 1, 2005.

The Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement set a precedent by including self-government provisions within the claim. This is the first Inuit region in Canada to achieve self-government, a proud accomplishment for all Labrador Inuit. As a self-governing Inuit regional government, Nunatsiavut continues to set new standards for the way in which Labrador Inuit interact with the provincial government and other entities.

Although Nunatsiavut remains part of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Nunatsiavut government has authority over many central governance areas, including health, education, culture and language, justice and community matters. At the heart of governance is the power to make laws. In Nunatsiavut, the Labrador Inuit Constitution is the fundamental law of Labrador Inuit. All other laws made by the Nunatsiavut government are driven by a set of fundamental principles that arise from the Labrador Inuit Constitution.”

—from “Nunatsiavut” in the Inuit volume of the *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*



TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS & RIGHTS

Points of inquiry and activation related to the Giant Floor Map



- **Bring students' attention to the timeline and ask them what happened in 1973.** Explain that in 1973, the federal government divided Indigenous legal claims into two categories: comprehensive (known as modern treaties) and specific (which make claims based on pre-existing or historical treaties or agreements). Ask students to first locate the historical treaties on the Giant Floor Map. Where are they located? Where are they not located? Next, ask students to locate the modern treaties. Where are they located? Where are they not located? Why are there so many? How are they named?
- **Ask all students to stand on a part of the map that is in a treaty.** Using the Treaty Examples cards, have students determine which type of treaty covers the area they are standing in. Discuss the similarities and differences among the types.
- **Students will use the Treaty 6 card as an example to learn more about the treaty process.** We encourage you to find other documents that are specific to your area/territory. As a group, have the class use ropes and pylons to mark off the area described in the document. Halfway through the activity, implement a rule that students may pass information from one to another only by playing Broken Telephone. Once the activity has been completed, ask students:
 - ▶ If you were a non-English speaker/writer, would you be able to completely comprehend what the treaty-making process was proposing?
 - ▶ If your translator missed a few messages or thoughts during translation, how would this affect the understanding of the treaty process?
- **Have students stand on a part of the map that is not in a treaty.** Discuss the concept of unceded areas and what this means. Using the Land Claim Definitions cards, discuss with students the differences between comprehensive and specific claims. We encourage you to research examples of both types of land claims, from your area/territory if possible.
- **Have students use the timeline around the border of the map to identify key events in the development and implementation of treaties and land agreements.** Mark these on the map where applicable and discuss.
- **Using the Métis Land card, show on the Giant Floor Map the relative amount of land that the Métis received from the government.**

TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS & RIGHTS

Age appropriate application and experiential learning

ELEMENTARY

K-6

- **Read *A Promise is a Promise*** by Robert Munsch and Michael Kusugak, and discuss the themes of empathy and emotions.
- **Explore the concept of treaties and unceded territory** by creating an example in your own classroom. Divide the classroom into different areas and establish rules for each section based on the type of agreement it falls under. Use the Treaty 6 card as a guide for creating agreements. Follow the rules set out in the agreements for a day or a week and reflect on how they were respected or maintained throughout that period of time. Extend this to how treaties and land agreements have or have not been respected in Canada. What does this mean for unceded territories?
- **Read *Road Allowance Kitten*** by Wilfred Burton and discuss the road allowance period and why Métis people were displaced by the government. Different families would be forced to move to different places, and often family and friends who lived next to each other would be separated. Ask students what it would be like if they had to leave their homes and move to a new place where they didn't know anyone. What would they take if they could only fill their backpack? What would they have to leave behind?
- **Ask students to locate** and place a pylon on the place they call home. Ask students what "home" means to them and if they have more than one home. Students with more than one home might include a First Nations student who has a home on First Nation land but lives in a village, town or city, and can mark both places as home; or any child who has a shared custody arrangement; or a student who still considers themselves a newcomer or recent citizen. Next, ask students to stand where they have friends or family who don't live in the community. If the locations are beyond the borders of the Giant Floor Map, have students stand in the general direction it would take to get to the place in question. Discuss how students feel about having another home far away or what it might have been like to leave a place they consider home.

INTERMEDIATE

7-9

- **Learn about treaty medals** and what they represent. Who would receive treaty medals and why? How did the gifting of these medals affect relations between Indigenous Peoples and settlers? Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - ▶ Who are the people represented on the coin?
 - ▶ What are they doing?
 - ▶ What images do students see (e.g., grass, water, sky)? Connect this to the "as long as the grass grows, the rivers flow and the sun shines" and other similar expressions that indicate the longevity of agreements and treaties for Indigenous Peoples.
- **Ask students to select one treaty** and do more research into its origins and existence.

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TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS & RIGHTS

Age appropriate application and experiential learning

- **Research historic land claims disagreements** such as the Oka Crisis in 1990. Have students outline the reasons for the dispute, the resolution of the dispute and the outcomes. Have a discussion about the rights of those involved and whether they think the dispute was justified.
- **Learn more about the scrip system:** When Métis lands were taken, the owners were offered land elsewhere or money. Advertisements were put in English newspapers despite the fact that most of the Métis weren't literate or spoke languages other than English. Scrip speculators represented themselves as Métis and signed script documents that took their land or accepted lower payments. Have your students re-enact this and imagine how it could have/should have gone in a way that would have respected the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- **The river lot system:** This method of land occupancy gave each Métis family fair and equitable access to water, made neighbours closer to one another, and gave communities a chance to gather more frequently because they were closer together. A typical river lot was 192 acres, or 77.7 hectares. Compare this with the the square sections the government survey imposed that gave only some people access to water and that set neighbours at greater distances from one another. Have students research and map out these different types of land divisions and discuss the pros and cons of each. What would they propose as a better solution?

SECONDARY

10-12

- Read the book *Chief Seattle and the Town That Took His Name* by David M. Buerge and discuss.
- **Explore the process of treaty-making:**
 - ▶ Who was involved?
 - ▶ How long did it take?
 - ▶ Who was consulted?
 - ▶ What language was it written in and discussed in?
- **Research the ways** in which the treaties or land agreements in your area are being upheld. If the treaties/agreements are not being adhered to, look into the issues and disagreements that have been raised.
- **Ask students to compare and contrast** the land agreement (or lack thereof) in your community to other treaties across Canada.
- **Explain to students that they will be learning about Indigenous land claims** and how many Indigenous people were relocated to reserves. Distribute *The House* cartoon by Alootook Ipellie to pairs or small groups and ask each group to write words to go along with each panel of the cartoon. There are no right or wrong answers. Afterwards, discuss as a class.
- **Have students sit around the border of Nunavut and read the story called *The House*** by Murray Angus, one of the instructors at Nunavut Sivuniksavut. Explain that this story is an analogy for the history of Nunavut. Remind students that an analogy draws a comparison in order to show similarities. Read the story aloud

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Age appropriate application and experiential learning

and then examine each section and relate it to the history of Nunavut. Using the teacher information guide provided, have a class discussion to help students draw links and analogies from *The House*. Ask students to share their reflections and thoughts on the emotions and feelings associated with the people in the story. Look at both groups of people in the story: those living in the house and those moving into the house.

- **Look into other ways that land disputes are still occurring today** (e.g., flood plains for hydroelectric development, mining and resource extraction, development of lands).
- **The Métis founders of Manitoba, including Louis Riel, saw the Manitoba Act as a treaty between the Métis Nation and Canada.** Through the fraudulent scrip system and other measures, the promise of this treaty was never fulfilled. Have the students read the *Manitoba Métis Federation v. Canada, 2013*, ruling and the text of *Canada-Métis Nation Accord, 2017*, to see how the spirit and intent of this treaty can be restored. What solutions or problems do they see down the road?
- **Review how the Indian Act affected First Nations peoples** in fighting for treaty rights. How did the right to vote and the right to hire lawyers change?

TREATIES, LAND DISPUTES, AGREEMENTS & RIGHTS



DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

- **Ask students to reflect** on their experience and determine their own criteria for assessment.
- **Ask students to connect** what they have learned to the treaty territory on which they live.



LEARNING TO ACTION

- **Incorporate a land acknowledgement** into your morning announcements. Discuss with students the importance of this action and what it means.
- **Write a letter to your town hall** or attend a town hall meeting and encourage members of your community to acknowledge which treaty your community is on. If this is already done in your community, connect with local Indigenous organizations/communities and work together to strengthen your community's knowledge of the Indigenous land claims in your local area.