About this booklet...

The intent of this resource booklet is to provide a brief overview of the cultures, heritage and perspectives of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada for educators of primary, elementary and secondary students. What does it mean to be of First Nation, Métis or Inuit heritage in Canada? This resource booklet is a beginning in the journey to a greater understanding of the richness of the original cultures of Turtle Island—of Canada, in particular. These cultures will be better understood and appreciated by those who have the opportunity to inspire change in perspectives. For too long, the original cultures of this land have been suppressed and not celebrated as a contributing presence to the mainstream culture of Canada. It has not been understood, that this is the homeland of Canada's original people. This is the only place on earth where Anishnaabe, Haudenosaunee, Dene, or Inuuktut languages, for example, still live or can be retrieved. This is the land where the Seven Grandfather Teachings and the Great Law of Peace originated. First Nation, Métis and Inuit people exist because of this land, in this place.

No one can possibly know what makes each First Nation, Métis or Inuit community unique. Teachers have an especially important role in the demonstration of respect for the culture, tradition or perspectives of Canada's original peoples. Educators are encouraged to gain confidence in their role to increase the awareness of all students of the culture, heritage and perspectives of the Canada's First Nation, Métis and Inuit People. This resource booklet illustrates some distinctive features of some nations and some of the common threads of all nations. When addressing the culture of a particular group or nation, one should research what the expectations may be surrounding a particular gathering or teaching. Many educators utilize the wealth and quick accessibility of information within the internet web pages and it is no coincidence that much of the information within these pages can be found on the worldwide web.

Within this resource there is a larger focus on the Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee (Ho'dna show nay)(People of the Longhouse) nations which are the two predominant nations in Southern Ontario. Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board has three Anishnaabe First Nations within their boundaries—Alderville, Curve Lake and Hiawatha and is also situated near the land where the Haudenosaunee still live today. The material within these pages are strictly for classroom use.

All My Relations,
Shelley Knott Fife
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