



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Bison Unit: Lesson 2 - The Bison and Background Information

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Please read this Acknowledgement before the start of this lesson to respect the knowledge that is being shared and the Land of the People where the knowledge originates.:*

We respectfully acknowledge the original lands of the Indigenous Peoples of Treaty 4: Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota, Dakota, Lakota and Treaty 6: Cree, Saulteaux, Dene, and Dakota whose knowledge inform this lesson. As well, we acknowledge the homeland to many winged, four-legged, crawling, and water creatures.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

*Upon successful completion of this lesson plan, students will be able to:*

1. Examine the importance of the bison to traditional Indigenous cultures. 2. Examine current information about the bison and how people can benefit from these animals in contemporary society.
  3. Know about the bison and how people can be socially responsible in raising or reintroducing bison into their natural habitats on the prairies. [Broad Areas of Learning] [Science and Ecology]
  4. Examine the interdependence humans have with nature and the bison's importance in the grasslands ecosystem. Students could further examine this and look at the reintroduction of Bison to Banff National Park as an example. [Cross-Curricular Competencies]
  5. Examine the impact colonization has had on Indigenous peoples and the environment.
    - *Examine the harmful effects of forced change on the Bison and Indigenous people.*
    - *Investigate the factors that led to Indigenous peoples losing their lands.*
- [PA 10.2]
6. Examine the impact of contact on Indigenous economy, spirituality, identity, land, environment.
    - *Analyze how the genocide of the buffalo disrupted traditional Indigenous economies.*
    - *See that while Indigenous and Euro-Canadian worldviews are vastly different, basic values can be shared and see that the reintroduction of the buffalo is good for all people.*
    - *Students will learn about the important uses and dependence on the buffalo prior to European contact and look at the information about how bison (buffalo) are raised today on the prairies.*
    - *Students will investigate the correlations between policies the Canadian government used to remove Indigenous peoples from their lands, including the decimation of the buffalo.*

[RW 10.2]



## Indigenous Ways of Knowing & Being

### Origin

Buffalo People Arts Institute  
Regina  
Saskatchewan

### Learning Level / Grade

**10**

Also: 11, 12, Youth (up to age 30), Post-Secondary



**120 mins**

### Related Subjects

History, Health, Biology,  
Family and Parenting, On-the-  
Land, Science, Social Studies

PGP Goals: Focus on the shared responsibility for the land and all its creatures and when we heal the land, we heal ourselves.

**LIST OF ACTIVITIES**

1. Traditional Uses of the Bison

**MATERIALS**

## DESCRIPTION

This lesson is about the relationship, connection, and teachings of the bison, as well as, learning the spiritual, ecological, and characteristics of the bison. Students will view a series of videos that the Buffalo People Arts Institute created along with a CBC Gem video called *Absolutely Canadian Bison Return*. We will learn through watching the videos, the views and beliefs of the bison from an Indigenous and Settler perspective. Students will come to understand how bison were exploited and put on 'reserves' like the Original inhabitants of Canada. Students will come to understand the long-standing relationship between the Cree people, the Dakota People, the Nakoda People, etc., the bison, and the prairies.

## HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

*This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been developed with a focus on:*

- Language and Culture
- Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders
- Relationship with family, ancestors
- Healthy relationship with self and identity

## TEACHERS' GUIDE

### Background/Foundational Information

• **Subject:** Indigenous Studies 10

**Grade:** 10-12

**Topic:** Traditional uses and Bison today

**Essential Questions:** Why were Indigenous people on the prairies so dependent on the bison (buffalo) and what do we know about these animals today? How is the reintroduction of these animals important to Indigenous people, as well as settler people?

## ACTIVITIES

**1 - Traditional Uses of the Bison****Purpose**

To know and understand why the Bison has been a significant animal for all Indigenous Peoples in North America.

**Time:** 120 mins

**Activity Instructions**

**Motivational Set:** Students will think about human's connection to nature and the importance of these connections.

The teacher will ask the students to consider the following questions:

1. How have Indigenous Peoples' connection to land, bison, and culture been severed as a result of colonization?
2. Why is the reintroduction to the teachings of the bison so significant in the process of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples?

**Main Procedures/Strategies:**

*Note: Prior to students viewing these videos in class, the teacher should view the videos and consider questions that will help students answer the questions in the viewing guide.*

1. Discuss student responses to the questions posed in the Motivational Set.
2. Hand out the viewing assignment to students (see attached).
3. Watch the NCCIE video *Buffalo Hide Tanning and Teachings – Part 1 – Introducing Buffalo People Arts Institute*.
4. Watch the CBC Gem video *Absolutely Canadian Bison Return (44:00)*
5. Watch NCCIE video *Buffalo Hide Tanning and Teachings – Part 7 – Smoking a Buffalo Hide*.
6. Stop and start the videos as needed to discuss and clarify. Students should be following along and completing the hand-out.
7. Additional questions for consideration:
  - Why is the buffalo important to the Buffalo People Arts Institute?
  - What do we learn about the buffalo and their characteristics from the *Bison Return* video?
  - Discuss the overall importance of the reintroduction of the Bison and review questions with students.

**Closing:** Students will reflect on the spiritual ties that Indigenous people have with the buffalo and how the reintroduction of the bison/buffalo return to the land has begun a journey of healing and reconciliation.

As a large group, discuss the following: What more needs to be done to honour and include Indigenous People more fully in Canadian society?

**Assessment:** Have students do an individual reflection on the things they learned from the viewing of the videos as a final assessment.

**This activity is designed to connect with learners with these learning styles...**

- Spiritual (e.g., Relational) Learners
- Physical (e.g., Tactile, Experiential, Visual) Learners
- Intellectual (e.g., Rational, Logical) Learners

**... in the following ways:**

This activity connects with *spiritual learners* because this lesson is about place and identity and common values that relate to the connection of the bison. The bison is a grand spirit for many Indigenous Peoples.

This activity connects with *physical learners* because students will watch the videos.

This activity connects with *intellectual learners* because students are thinking and responding to questions related to the videos they are watching.

**Suggested Adaptations for Different Kinds of Learners**

**Adaptations/Differentiation:** The viewing assignment can be done in a cloze format for students that have problems writing in answers. Students could make a list of the things that stood out for them.

**TEACHING NOTES**

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## ASSESSMENT

*This section contains information for assessing progress in students' learning. While Indigenous approaches to assessment may be highlighted, conventional assessment methods may also be discussed.*

Students will reflect on:

- any of the videos provided, what was a new learning or teaching that one has never thought of before and share why?
- the spiritual ties that Indigenous people have with the buffalo and how the reintroduction of the bison/buffalo return to the land has begun a journey of healing and reconciliation.

As a large group, discuss the following: What more needs to be done to honour and include Indigenous People more fully in Canadian society?

**Assessment:** Have students do an individual reflection on what they learned from the viewing of the videos as a final assessment.

*The teacher can assess the students' learning by evaluating journal reflection responses to the questions posed throughout this lesson. Using an assessment for learning strategy, it is recommended that instructors make notes of student participation and work completed through Anecdotal Notes.*

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.

To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.

Resource Title	Type
<b>CBC Gem Absolutely Canadian - Bison Return</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
This 44:07 minute long video discusses the traditional and background information for the Bison. In 2017 for the first time in over 100 years, Bison will return to Banff National Park (Alberta). The area has potential to support a thousand animals making Banff the potential home to one of the largest free-ranging Bison populations in North America.	
<b>Buffalo People Arts Institute</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
<b>Introducing Buffalo People Arts Institute</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
To learn about the history and relationship Indigenous Peoples had with the bison - listen closely to Joely BigEagle-Kequahtoway and Lorne Kequahtoway in the video Buffalo Hide Tanning and Teachings – Part 1 – Introducing Buffalo People Arts Institute.	
<b>Buffalo People Arts Institute - Sharing Final Reflections While Smoking a Buffalo Hide</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
To learn about the experiences of Joely BigEagle-Kequahtoway and Lorne Kequahtoway and their connection to the bison, listen to the Buffalo Hide Tanning and Teachings – Part 7 – Smoking a Buffalo Hide.	

## HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

*This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been developed with a focus on:*

Language and Culture
N/A

**Relationship with family, ancestors**

N/A

**Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders**

Were Elders or Knowledge Holders involved in the development of this Lesson Plan? No  
Can Elders or Knowledge Holders be invited to help teach part of this lesson plan? Yes

**Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders****Healthy relationship with self and identity**

Students are asked to reflect on their identity and the identities of Indigenous peoples by considering the following questions:

1. How was the bison attached or linked to an Indigenous identity?
2. Brainstorm why the bison were special to Indigenous Peoples.

## OTHER DETAILS

This Lesson Plan aims to meet curriculum expectations or outcomes for: Saskatchewan Yes

Unit Plan Title: Bison Unit: Lesson 2 of 5

Stream: General, Academic

## RELATED LESSON PLANS

- [Bison Unit: Lesson 4](#)
- [Bison Unit: Lesson 2](#)
- [Bison Unit: Lesson 3](#)
- [Bison Unit: Lesson 5](#)
- [Bison Unit: Lesson 1 – Connection and Interdependence Between Humans, Animals, and the Natural World](#)

## CONTRIBUTORS

Name	Role/Job Title	Place
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## QUESTIONS/MORE DETAILS

For Questions contact: [Bettina Schneider \(bschneider@fnuniv.ca\)](mailto:bschneider@fnuniv.ca) for more information.