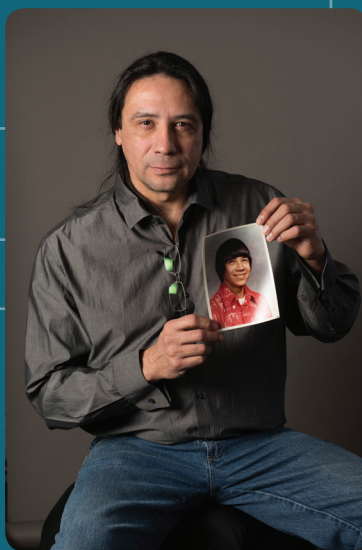


Bi-Giwen: Coming Home

Truth-Telling from the Sixties Scoop



**First Edition
October 2017**

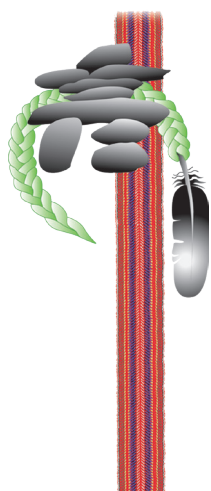
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The Legacy of Hope Foundation is a national Indigenous charitable organization whose purposes are to educate, to raise awareness and understanding of the Residential School System, including the effects and intergenerational impacts on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, and to support the ongoing healing process of Residential School Survivors. Fulfilling this mandate contributes towards Reconciliation among generations and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Acknowledgements

The LHF gratefully acknowledges and thanks all the contributors to this project, and in particular, honours the significant contribution by the Sixties Scoop Survivors.

Funding for this Guide was provided by the Department of Canadian Heritage and by the Legacy of Hope Foundation.

Canada

Please visit legacyofhope.ca for more information.

The LHF wishes to acknowledge that Lesley Parlane passed on to the spirit world on Saturday, November 24, 2018 after a courageous battle with cancer. Ms. Parlane (Dakota/Salteaux) was a member of Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan but made her home in Ottawa, Ontario.

Front cover (clockwise from top): Shaun Ladue, Tauni Sheldon, Christin Dennis, Colleen Cardinal

Back cover (from top): Lesley Parlane, Frank Delorme, Sharon Gladue-Paskimin, Duane Morrisseau-Beck, Carla Harris

All portraits by Fred Cattroll, 2017



About this Workshop Activity Guide

Thank you for choosing to use this Guide with your group. It is our hope that the information and activities contained herein will give both facilitators and participants the resources they need to examine aspects of the Sixties Scoop and to recognize the impact it has had and continues to have on generations of Indigenous Peoples, and all those who have relationships with them.

The Sixties Scoop is another example of the damages wrought against Indigenous Peoples and their families by the Residential School System. It is both a cause and result of the racism that is embedded in legislation, policies, and programs in Canada historically and present-day.

Considerations for this Workshop

The “Sixties Scoop” is a term used to describe the policies and practices in which Indigenous children were taken from their birth families and placed in either foster or adoptive care. It began in the early 1960s, continued through the 1980s, and arguably continues in present-day. Often Indigenous children were placed in non-Indigenous homes and taken a great distance away from where they were born, sometimes to the other side of the world. Separated from family and culture, these children were often subjected to racism and emotional, physical, mental, sexual, and spiritual abuse. Many Survivors of the Sixties Scoop have grappled with issues of identity – feeling that they belong in neither the Indigenous nor the non-Indigenous worlds.

The histories, memories, and impacts of the Sixties Scoop are complex. There are a number of details, policies, perspectives, and unique features that are challenging to fully understand even after years of study. What is clear to many is the pain and grief that Survivors have and continue to suffer. This exemplifies a strong need for healing and Reconciliation between Survivors and society at large.

Background for Our Exhibition, Bi-Giwen: Coming Home – Truth-Telling from the Sixties Scoop

Bi-Giwen is the Anishnaabe (Ojibway) word that means “coming home” and was given to Survivors by Algonquin Elder, Claudette Commanda. She believes this word explains what Survivors are doing in their life journeys – they are coming home to themselves, their cultures, their families and to one another.

These activities represent the first step for many Canadians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, in exploring these stories and the tragic impact of the Sixties Scoop.

Here are some important things to consider as you prepare to deliver these activities.

1. There are few generalizations that apply to all Sixties Scoop Survivors. Each Survivor’s experience will be unique. It is important to listen for, recognize, acknowledge, and discuss differences and honour each person. This should be made clear to participants.
2. It is easy to oversimplify and to emphasize the negative experiences of Sixties Scoop Survivors. It is important to note that some Survivors may feel conflicted because they may have also had positive experiences with their foster or adoptive families.
3. No one can know everything that happened to Sixties Scoop Survivors. Try not to position yourself as an “expert.” Even if you have a connection to the content, try to remain open to the possibility that participants may have more knowledge or experience than you and that experiences vary from Survivor to Survivor – and remember that no one journey is the same.
4. Some of the content in these activities deals with difficult subject matter and some participants may strongly identify with what is being shared in the testimonies. As a result, emotional responses may be triggered.

Non-Indigenous people may experience feelings of guilt and shame about what happened to Survivors. It is essential to explain to participants that they must channel those emotions into action because left undirected, those emotions will help no one and can foster negative feelings that don't contribute to change. It is vital to create a supportive environment when presenting these materials – one in which everyone can express their feelings and thoughts openly and, if needed, be directed to local support services should they choose to contact them.

It is important to explain that empathizing with Survivors is part of building Reconciliation. Dispelling myths and building allies where people will stand beside Survivors and say, "I will be part of the solution, speak up when I hear someone making racist remarks, and ensure this doesn't ever happen again in my lifetime," is critical to the Reconciliation process.

The Larger Context

Discussing the history of Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop frequently involves being confronted with stories of traumatic experiences such as separation from family, mistreatment, neglect, and a variety of abuses of which some children did not survive. This type of content can be defined as "difficult knowledge." While these experiences may seem to be from the distant past for many Canadians, in fact, the last Residential School closed just over 20 years ago, these experiences continue to be the unhealed reality of many Indigenous Peoples. This information may provoke strong emotions and feel close to home for participants. Strong feelings may unexpectedly present themselves seemingly without explanation and may connect to experiences non-Indigenous individuals have had themselves, or manifest as "vicarious trauma" (the transfer of trauma from the victim/Survivor onto the "Witness," or person who is hearing their story).

The impacts of the Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop continue to reverberate to this day and may still be seen in some Indigenous families and communities. And racism against Indigenous Peoples, fostered by the

mentality that pushed for the Residential School System, remains widespread in Canada today.

Children were taken from their families and communities and placed into institutions with strangers. They often experienced mental, physical, sexual, and spiritual abuse, and were not allowed to connect with family or speak their language. Some grew into adults who may not have had the same parenting skills that they would have learned had they remained at home as their socialization was disrupted. Many social problems and economic hardships that exist for Indigenous Peoples today can be attributed to the Residential School System.

As adults, Survivors of the Residential School System and the Sixties Scoop often partnered with other Survivors and became parents who may have lacked the skills and abilities to have healthy relationships. Violence and abuse may have become the norm in their relationships based on the social experiences that shaped their lives within the Residential School System or as a Survivor of the Sixties Scoop. As a way to deal with their pain, drinking and drug abuse often became coping strategies and rendered some Survivors unable to function according to societal expectations. Some Survivors were unable to work and build trust or establish healthy relationships – often due to their inability to cope with the abuse and trauma they suffered as children.

Many Survivors experienced feelings of extreme shame, abuse, and loneliness as a result of being forcefully disconnected from their cultures, families, and communities. Many Survivors suppressed the pain of their experiences for years causing further trauma and could result in the inability to function and properly parent their own children or relate to other family members. As well, Survivors may not have been able to secure employment because they were discriminated against. And many Survivors of both Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop often felt inferior or different because of their inability to speak their own language and their lack of cultural knowledge. All of these risk factors and other issues have contributed to self-harm or suicide stemming from their experiences.

Although there were instances where Indigenous children may have needed to be removed from their homes for their safety and well-being, many children were taken into the care of the child welfare system without parental consent and put into non-Indigenous foster and/or adoptive families. These foster families received payments that arguably could have been provided to Indigenous families who lived in poverty and which may have prevented the need for the child(ren) to be placed in care. Policies encouraging social workers to believe that Indigenous parenting styles were inferior fueled beliefs that children had to be apprehended and placed in non-Indigenous families in order to continue to “assimilate the Indian child.” The laws in place and views of superiority were often encouraged by federal and provincial governments further contributing to negative perceptions of Indigenous Peoples. The high rates of child apprehension explained through the stories of *Bi-Giwen* did not exist in each province and territory prior to the Residential School System.

It may be difficult to raise these issues when there are participants who are or may be directly affected by these situations. However, naming and talking about these issues openly is part of breaking the cycle of trauma.

As an attestation to their resiliency while on their healing journeys, many Survivors of the Sixties Scoop have shown courage in speaking out and a willingness to participate in the Reconciliation process. They have given us – all Canadians – their memories and stories as gifts so that we can be better informed in the present, contribute to constructing a better future, and ensure that we, as a society, learn from these horrific mistakes and from colonialism.

While it is sometimes difficult to make sense of what happened, listening is an important act of respect and support. The most important thing we can do is to acknowledge what happened, honour the Survivors, and ensure that we take action today to eliminate racist views by educating people about the real history and its impacts.

Self-care for Facilitators

It is important that facilitators practice self-care to ensure their well-being and because they are responsible for supporting the participants as they work through the activities. Facilitators may find this role to be emotionally difficult. Please keep in mind that these activities can be an important part of learning, Reconciliation, and the healing process. With support and assistance from colleagues and other community members, this learning experience can be a safe and powerful learning tool for everybody.

Activities that Accompany the Exhibition, *Bi-Giwen: Coming Home – Truth-Telling from the Sixties Scoop*

Bi-Giwen: Anishnaabe word that means “coming home”

The Sixties Scoop: This term was coined by Patrick Johnston, author of the 1983 report *Native Children and the Child Welfare System*. It refers to the mass removal of Aboriginal children from their families into the child welfare system, in most cases without the consent of their families or Bands. Begun in the 1960s, Indigenous children were taken from their families, often forcibly, and fostered and/or adopted out to non-Indigenous homes often far away from their communities and some across the globe.

The exhibition *Bi-Giwen: Coming Home – Truth-Telling from the Sixties Scoop*: The first of its kind, this exhibition explores the experiences of Survivors of the Sixties Scoop. Developed in partnership with the National Indigenous Survivors of Child Welfare Network and the Legacy of Hope Foundation, this innovative and challenging exhibition features the first-person testimonies of twelve Indigenous Survivors and reflects upon their pain and loss but also their enduring strength and resilience.

**"There's a reason we're
called Survivors because
we are still here and we
are resilient."
Adam North Peigan**



**"I dream of a day when all
seven of us are together."
Nina Segalowitz**



Photo on next page:
Family photo of sisters (from left to right)
Patricia, Gina, and Colleen Hele



Activity 1



Activity 1

Testimony

In this activity, participants gain a greater understanding of the Sixties Scoop by watching interviews with Survivors and learning the value of testimony in documenting difficult histories and experiences. Participants learn that testimony giving and receiving is part of a process of commemorating a historical event and that by bearing witness they can develop a deeper connection to the issue. By listening to these resilient Survivors, students gain a greater knowledge of how the Sixties Scoop is a legacy of colonization and of the Residential School System in contemporary child welfare.

Duration

60 minutes

Age level

12 and up

Supplies needed

- Access to video of Senator Murray Sinclair: <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-april-4-mmivg-ottawa-public-forum-1.4053431/how-senator-murray-sinclair-responds-to-why-don-t-residential-school-survivors-just-get-over-it-1.4053522>

How Senator Murray Sinclair responds to why don't Residential School Survivors just 'get over it'

"I spent all day telling people no comment but to those of you who are here, I'll say this. Many people have said over the years that I've been involved in the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: why can't we just get over it and move on? And my answer has always been why can't you always remember this because this is about memorializing those people who have been victims of a great wrong? Why don't you tell the United States to get over 9/11? Why don't you tell this country to get over all of the veterans who died in the Second World War instead of honouring them once a

year? Why don't you tell your families to stop thinking about all of your ancestors who died? Why don't you turn down and burn down all of those headstones that you put up for all of your friends and relatives over the years? It's because it's important for us to remember. We learn from it. And until people show that they have learned from this, we will never forget and we should never forget even once they have learned from it, because this is a part of who we are. It's not just a part of who we are as survivors and children of survivors and relatives of survivors, but as part of who we are as a nation and this nation must never forget what it once did to its most vulnerable people."

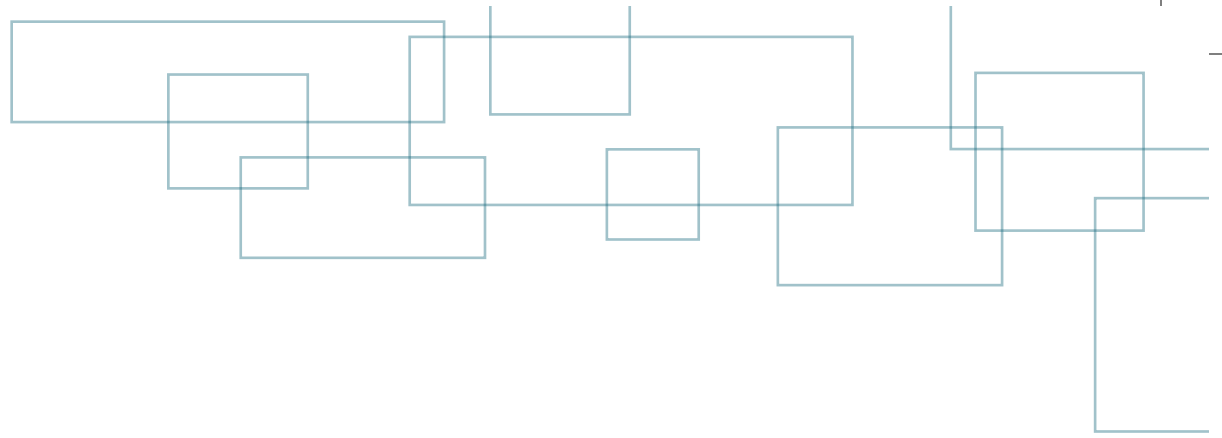
- Access to Sixties Scoop Survivor testimonies at legacyofhope.ca

Facilitator preparation

1. Watch the video of Senator Murray Sinclair at <http://tvo.org/article/current-affairs/shared-values/just-what-was-the-sixties-scoop> or https://fncaringociety.com/sites/default/files/online-journal/vol3num1/Sinclair_pp65.pdf
2. Assess participants' knowledge about the Sixties Scoop in general. Write the words "Sixties Scoop" on the board and ask participants to come up with words or ideas to describe what they think it means.

Activate

Placing the Survivors testimonies in a larger context can be crucial to students' understanding of the Sixties Scoop. Provide your students with more information which can be found via the links provided under Facilitator Preparation above.



Explore

Before viewing testimonies, have students watch the Senator Murray Sinclair video. Although in this clip he is referring to Survivors of the Residential School System, much of what he is saying could be said of Sixties Scoop Survivors. Many Sixties Scoop Survivors have a family lineage that traces back to a parent or grand-parent attending Residential School.

Prepare your students to watch the Sixties Scoop Survivor testimonies (at legacyofhope.ca). Suggest that as well as listening to what the speaker is saying, they should observe facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice. How are these elements important to the story being told?

As students watch the testimonies, ask them to consider the statement made by Senator Sinclair that you wouldn't tell families of 9/11 victims to get over it. Just as we must acknowledge and honour the Survivors and those murdered through slavery and the Holocaust, we must acknowledge the trauma caused to Indigenous Peoples in Canada and across the globe.

You may want to ask them "What are the elements of the Survivor testimonies that may be difficult for them to overcome?" Have students note their reactions to the testimonies by formulating a question, a comment, a reaction, an emotion, or a feeling as they watch. Ask them to think about what they would do differently if they could go back in time. Explain that they can make a difference today by their conduct, their decisions, by how they treat Indigenous Peoples, and by being an ally when someone says something that is racist against Indigenous Peoples.

Close

Post-viewing

After students have watched the testimonies allow time for questions and discussion to help students better understand and interpret what they have just seen and heard. Below are some questions to guide the discussion.

- What event is being described?
- When and where did it happen?
- Why did it happen?
- Who is involved?
- What were some of the consequences as a result of both the Residential School System and the Sixties Scoop?
- How does the speaker describe what happened to them? Do they use specific words, actions, expressions?
- After hearing this testimony do you have a better understanding of the Sixties Scoop? Why or why not?
- Can we truly understand the experience of a Sixties Scoop Survivor? What can we do to help?

Assessment

Assess students' understanding of the Sixties Scoop by asking them to fill out a KWHLAQ (Know, What, How, Learn, Actions, Questions) chart.

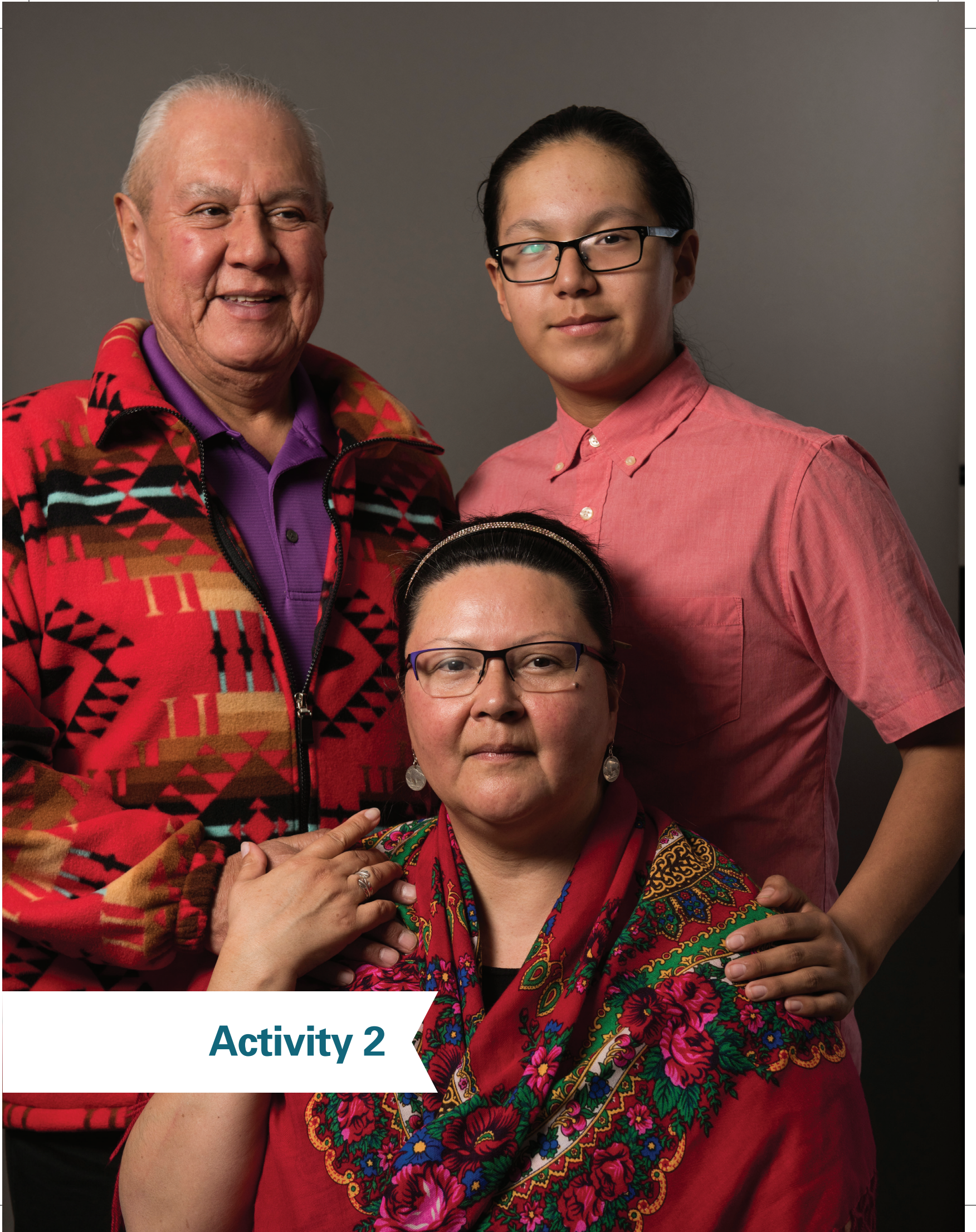
- What do I know?
- What do I want to know?
- How do I find out?
- What have I learned?
- What action will I take?
- What further questions do I have?

**"It's sad, all we wanted
to do was go home and
be a family."
Dorothy Cardinal**



**"It is up to us to
ensure that this never
happens again."
Brent Mitchell**

Photo on next page:
(clockwise from top left) Vincent Kicknosway of Potawatomi Nation;
Elaine Kicknosway of Swampy Cree and Chippewa Nation;
Theland Kicknosway of Potawatomi Cree Nation
Photo by Fred Cattroll, 2017



Activity 2



Activity 2

Where I'm From Exploring Identity Through Poetry

Using George Ella Lyon's poem, *Where I'm From*, students will explore their own identity and ponder how identity is formed. This self-reflection leads to a contemplation of what Sixties Scoop Survivors may have lost when they were removed from their birth families and communities and of their resiliency today as they work to reclaim their origins. If you don't know where you've come from, you don't know where you are at today, or you won't know where you're going.

Duration

60 minutes

Age level

12 and up

Supplies needed

- A copy of the George Ella Lyon's poem, *Where I'm From*, for each participant
- A copy of the poem template for each participant

Facilitator preparation

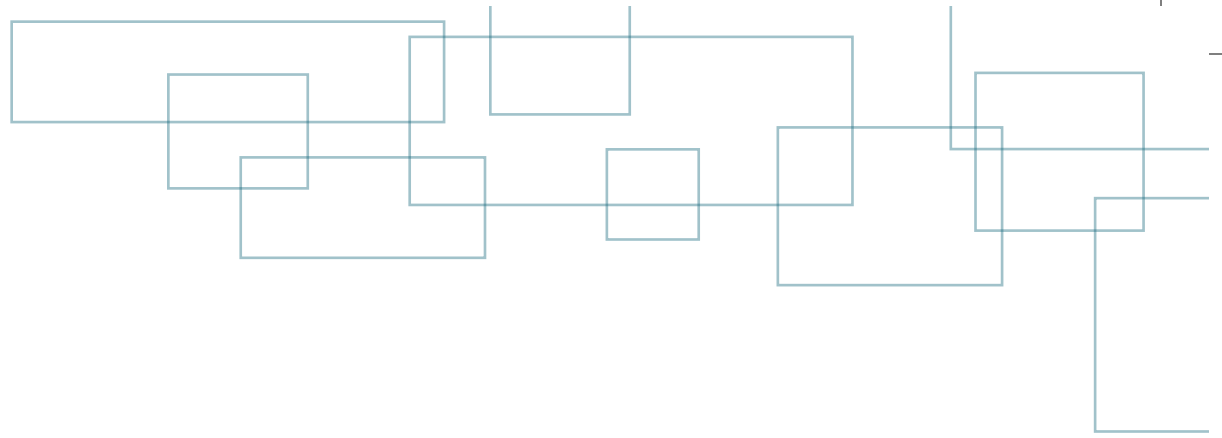
1. Visit <http://two.org/article/current-affairs/shared-values/just-what-was-the-sixties-scoop> or https://fnccaringociety.com/sites/default/files/online-journal/vol3num1/Sinclair_pp65.pdf
2. Review the poem and poem template. Make copies of both for each participant.

Assess

- Participants' knowledge about the Sixties Scoop in general
- Write the word "identity" on the board and ask participants to come up with words or ideas that contribute to how we form our identities
- If the participants already use poetry in its many forms for their own personal expression and, if so, how and in what formats?

Activate

- Distribute the poem and template.



Explore

- Read the *Where I'm From* poem aloud to the class.
- Explain that George Ella Lyon is the Poet Laureate for the State of Kentucky for 2015-16. Her poem was chosen as it provides a strong example of identity and origin and can easily be replicated via a template. There are many Indigenous poets that explore identity that can be discussed (see the list in the extension activities). Students can write about them for a follow-up activity.
- Have students fill in the poem template inspired by *Where I'm From*
- Read *Where I'm From*-type poems that others have written and encourage participants to contribute poems to the I Am From Project at <https://iamfromproject.com/>. George Ella Lyon welcomes poems from Canada.

Close

- Participants can choose to present their poems to the group and explain their choice of words.
- Ask participants to reflect upon and share how making their own poems impacts their understanding of and empathy for what Sixties Scoop Survivors lost by being removed from their home families and communities. How did writing the poem help their own self-awareness and sense of identity?

Extension activities

Think of other ideas to inspire poetry by participants. Remember that poetry can be found in many places and in many forms. Poems can be written from the perspective of inanimate objects like rocks or trees or a place like the community or city that you are from. Marty S. Dalton has some great ideas here: <http://anthempoe.com/on-writing/39/>

In these works by Indigenous poets, identity is often a theme. Explore these with your students or have them read a selection independently.

- *Arctic Dreams and Nightmares* by Alooook Ipellie
- *A Really Good Brown Girl* by Marilyn Dumont
- *Burning in this Midnight Dream* by Louise Bernice Halfe
- *Flint and Feather* by Emily Pauline Johnson
- *Homecoming* by Zondra M. Roy
- *I Am Canadian* by Duke Redbird
- *Mother Time: Poems New & Selected* by Joanne Arnot
- *Passage* by Gwen Benaway
- *Poems of Rita Joe* by Rita Joe
- *Sing: Poetry from the Indigenous Americas* by Tenille Campbell
- *The Random Flow of Blood & Flowers* by Greg Young-Ing
- *Totem Poles and Railroads* by Janet Rogers
- *Witness, I Am* by Gregory Scofield

The following is a list of Indigenous musical artists whose work includes poetic elements.

- A Tribe Called Red is an electronic music group that combines poetic lyrics with eclectic dance beats that incorporate hip-hop, dubstep, and First Nations sounds.
- Tara T-Rhyme Campbell is a Cree/Dene poet and hip-hop artist.
- The Jerry Cans are a folk-rock group who sing in Inuktitut and incorporate throat-singing into their unique sound.
- Taqralik Partridge is a poet and spoken word artist.
- Buffy St Marie is a timeless artist who combines strong, poetic lyrics with deep roots in the protest-song tradition.

Where I'm From

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening,
it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush
the Dutch elm
whose long-gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.

I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,
from Imogene and Alafair.
I'm from the know-it-alls
and the pass-it-ons,
from Perk up! and Pipe down!
I'm from He restoreth my soul
with a cottonball lamb
and ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,
fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost
to the auger,
the eye my father shut to keep his sight.

Under my bed was a dress box
spilling old pictures,
a sift of lost faces
to drift beneath my dreams.
I am from those moments--
snapped before I budded --
leaf-fall from the family tree.

George Ella Lyon

Poem Template

Inspired by George Ella Lyon's "Where I'm From" poem

I am (insert your name) _____

I am from (a specific item from your childhood home) _____

from (two products or objects from your past) _____

I am from (a phrase describing your childhood home) _____

and (more description of your childhood home) _____

I am from (a plant, tree or natural object from your past) _____

whose (personify that natural object) _____

I am from (two objects from your past) _____

from (two family names or ancestors) _____

and from (two family traits or tendencies) _____

from (another family trait, habit or tendency) _____

I am from (a religious memory or family tradition) _____

from (two foods from your family history) _____

from (a specific event in the life of an ancestor) _____

and from (another detail from the life of an ancestor) _____

I am (a memory or object you had as a child) _____

I am from the moments... _____

I am ... _____

(continue this thought or repeat a line or idea from earlier in the poem if you wish)

Visit <https://iamfromproject.com/> – a website started by the poet George Ella Lyon to collect poems that celebrate the diversity and beauty of who we are.



Extension Activity

Heart Prints

This activity was inspired by Sixties Scoop Survivor Angela Ashewasegai who was gifted a small beaded heart as a testament to her strength and courage. These small keepsakes, decorated individually, carry our fingerprints to serve as a reminder that we are all special, unique, and courageous in our own way. These clay hearts also make lovely ornaments, necklaces, or fridge magnets.

Duration

60 minutes

Age level

Can be done with younger students

Supplies needed

- No-bake, air-dry modeling clay
- Small heart-shaped cookie cutter
- Rolling pin
- Dark blue or black ink pad
- Small beads for decorating (optional)
- Small drinking straw
- Large keyring
- Magnets and glue, if making magnets
- Cord or string, if making necklaces or ornaments

Facilitator preparation

Assemble supplies for each student (including cutting lengths of cord if necessary)

Activate (see numbered images below)

1. Roll the clay into a ball.
2. Flatten the clay with a rolling pin until it's about 0.5cm thick.
3. Cut out a heart shape using the cookie cutter.
4. Trim away excess clay.
5. Press finger onto an ink pad and then onto the clay twice, slightly overlapped to make a heart shape. If desired, push small beads into the clay to decorate. Make a hole in the top of the heart by pressing a straw through the clay.
6. Let dry following the instructions on the air-dry modeling clay package.
7. When dry, add keyring (TIP: Use a staple remover to keep the keyring open as you slide it onto the heart) or cord to make a necklace or ornament.

Close

Participants can choose to present their heart pieces to the group and explain why they chose the colours, style, and decoration. Ask participants to reflect upon and share how making their own heart keepsake is a reflection of their own identity, and to think about what Sixties Scoop Survivors lost by being removed from their home families and communities.



