

How can we live in harmony and relationship with the natural world?

Students learn about the importance of respecting all things of the earth and acquire ways to build relationships with all things of the planet.

Learning Intentions

1. What gifts do we receive from the earth?
2. How can we live in a positive relationship with all living beings?

Blackline Masters

- Learning Intention 1: *Seasonal Gifts*
- Learning Intention 2: *Building Positive Relationships with Living Things*
- Learning Intention 2: *Building a Relationship with My Plant*

Curricular Connections

Refer to the “Curriculum” drop-down option under the “Learn” tab of the Great Bear Rainforest Education and Awareness website.

Curriculum Alignment: Great Bear Rainforest Education and Awareness Trust

<https://greatbearrainforesttrust.org/curriculum/>

Learning Intention 1

What gifts does the earth give us?

Experiences and Observations

- Tell students the phrase “all my relations” is used by many First Nations People to acknowledge the interconnectedness of everything within the earth and in the universe. All things are relatives and so all things deserve respect and need to be treated equally. Humans are no greater than anything else. People have a responsibility to care for all things and always give back for the gifts given to them (reciprocity).
- Have students listen to the Syilx story of *How Food Was Given* (Sarah Alexis)

How Food Was Given: An Okanagan Legend (3:41)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfF-XR_DxJw&t=4s

- Brainstorm with student gifts the earth gives to people (water for drinking, washing, cleaning, swimming; animals for food, clothing, drums; shelter from trees, materials such as cotton and hemp).
- Have each student complete the blackline master *Seasonal Gifts*. Students draw or write different gifts from the earth from each of the four seasons. Examples: winter- wood for fires or to build toboggans; spring- flowers to make us happy or for salads; summer- water for swimming or growing gardens; fall- food like apples and pumpkins)
- Inquire: Where we live, what things are natural and what are man-made? Build a chart to record ideas (as a class, in groups, in partners, or as individuals). They can start local by going on a walk and recording what they see.

Possible Topics/Key Vocabulary

- All my relations
- Reciprocity
- Gifts from the earth
- Natural vs. manmade products (examples: wood vs plastic; polyester and nylon vs cotton) chart or other record

Reflections on Learning

- Blackline master *Seasonal Gifts*
- Students research evidence on natural and man-made products (oral, written, poster)

Suggested Resources

Stand Like a Cedar

Print resource for grades 1-4 by Nicola I. Campbell

<https://focusedresources.ca/en/k-12-evaluated-resource-collection/stand-cedar>

Siha Tooskin Knows the Offering of Tobacco

This print resource for grades 4-6 by Charlene Bearhead and Wilson Bearhead teaches about reciprocity

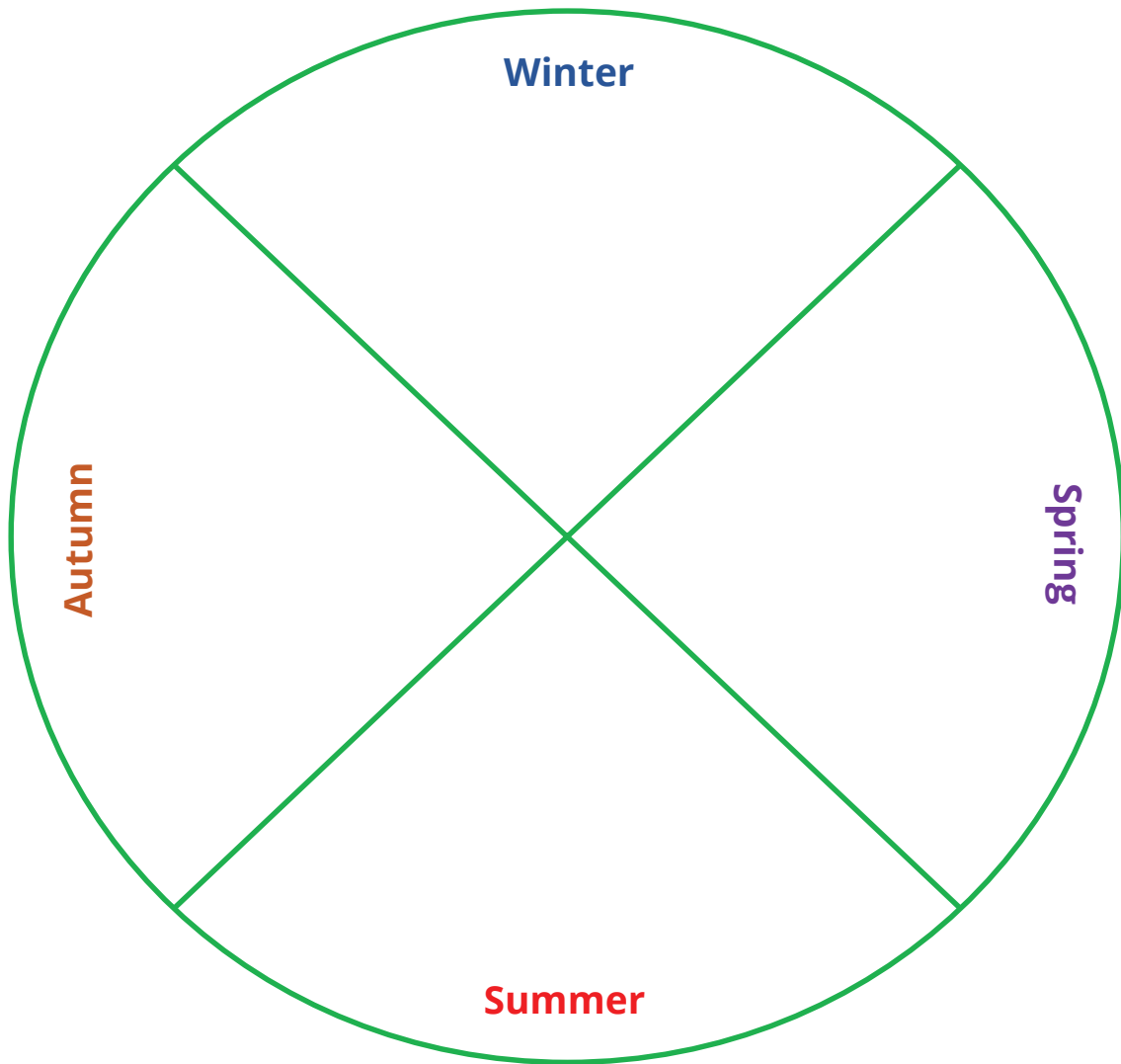
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AEx5LyRm48&list=PLeahEV3iEvnol5VsoZ3YP4rOKPMmhh9fi&index=3>

Extensions

- Invite students to investigate rivers (and a mountain) that have been given rights as human beings (Whanganui River and Mount Taranaki in New Zealand and Magpie River in Quebec). Have students discuss and share what local river or mountain (or other earth relation) they would like to see given human status. What impacts would this have on sustainability and conservation?
- Students create pages for a class booklet of “all my relations” with a brief writing on a favoured animal, plant, or mineral (mountain, river, etc.) and what it gives to them. They create illustrations as well.
- Students can investigate Indigenous use of capitalizing names of plants and animals such as Salmon and Cedar within stories and to create equity with humans and thereby build stronger relationships and respect to all things of earth (*Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer).

Seasonal Gifts

Draw or write different gifts from the earth within each of the four seasons.



Learning Intention 2

How can we live in positive relationship with all living beings?

Experiences and observations

- Read *Be a Good Ancestor* by Leona Prince and Gabrielle Prince.

Be a Good Ancestor

<https://focusedresources.ca/en/k-12-evaluated-resource-collection/be-good-ancestor>

Then listen to Leona Prince share about the book

Leona Prince introduces *Be a Good Ancestor*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syHTe5J_tpA&t=75s

- Discuss: What kind of language do we use to describe other living beings? How do people treat plants and animals? What are the disadvantages or advantages to animals in zoos and aquariums? Should there be rules in place for zoos and aquariums?
- Indigenous Peoples have had interconnected relationships with living things of the earth for thousands of years. The values and principles they live by have worked, and continue to work, to build these relationships. Discuss with students three important Indigenous values/principles (can be important to other people as well): respect, responsibility, reciprocity. Ask: What would these look like? What behaviors would you exhibit to demonstrate these? (Note: in an Indigenous way, reciprocity is seen to support or build relationships and does not have to be as what many consider as an equal exchange of goods or favours. It is not the value or size of the gift or action, but the gesture.) Have them complete blackline master *Building Positive Relationships with Living Things*
- Let the artist Carla Joseph inspire the students to create an art piece with painting, drawing, pastels, or chalk. Begin by having students think about the water, land, swimmers, walkers, people. Tell them after they do their art piece, they will add words that represent thoughts, actions, movements, and change. These words can contain values and principles that help us live in positive relationships with all living things.
- Students engage in planting a food or pollinator garden or a planter. Have

students reflect on and record observations through the process. How do we tend to our garden? How are they building a relationship with the garden or planter? Refer to attached lessons.

- OR- Have the student raise a plant (individually or in small groups). These can be from the seed (birth) or a seedling (adoption). Use the blackline master, *Building a Relationship with My Plant* to guide them within their relationships with their plant. (May choose to use extra seeds or seedlings to set aside to see if they grow differently than those nurtured by the students). Can connect with local community organization(s) regarding indigenous species to avoid invasive species.

Possible Topics / Key Vocabulary

- Ancestors
- Values and principles
- Interconnected relationships
- Plants and gardens

Reflections on Learning

- Carla Joseph inspired artwork
- Blackline master *Building Positive Relationships with Living Things*.
- Reflections and observations on growing the planter or garden or the blackline master: *Building a Relationship with my Plant*

Suggested Resources

The Earth's Blanket: Traditional Teachings for Sustainable Living

This book by Nancy Turner about ecological knowledge and connections to the land is suitable as a teacher resource and for grade 10 to adult readers.

<https://uwapress.uw.edu/book/9780295984742/the-earths-blanket/>

My Life with the Salmon

Print resource for grades 7-9 by Diane Jacobson. This book has connections between Land, water, people and finding a sense of place.

<https://www.theytus.com/Books/M/My-Life-with-the-Salmon>

Relatives With Roots

Print resource for grades 3-5 by Leah Marie Dorion.

<https://gdins.org/product/relatives-with-roots/>

The Whale Child

Chapter book for grades 2-5 by Chenoa T. Y. Egawa and Keith T. A. Egawa

<https://focusedresources.ca/en/k-12-evaluated-resource-collection/whale-child>

Extensions

- Students can build wonderings or questions on one item they identified and search for more info (individually, with partners, or in small groups).
- Butterfly project: students raise and release painted lady butterflies in the classroom

Painted Lady Butterfly Kits

<https://www.educationalscience.com/butterfly-kits/painted-lady-kits>

- More connections through art: students listen to and then draw, paint, colour, etc. a place (land) they love and feel connected to with an animal from that place. (Resource: *This Land is My Land* by George Littlechild)

Lesson 2, Traditional Knowledge

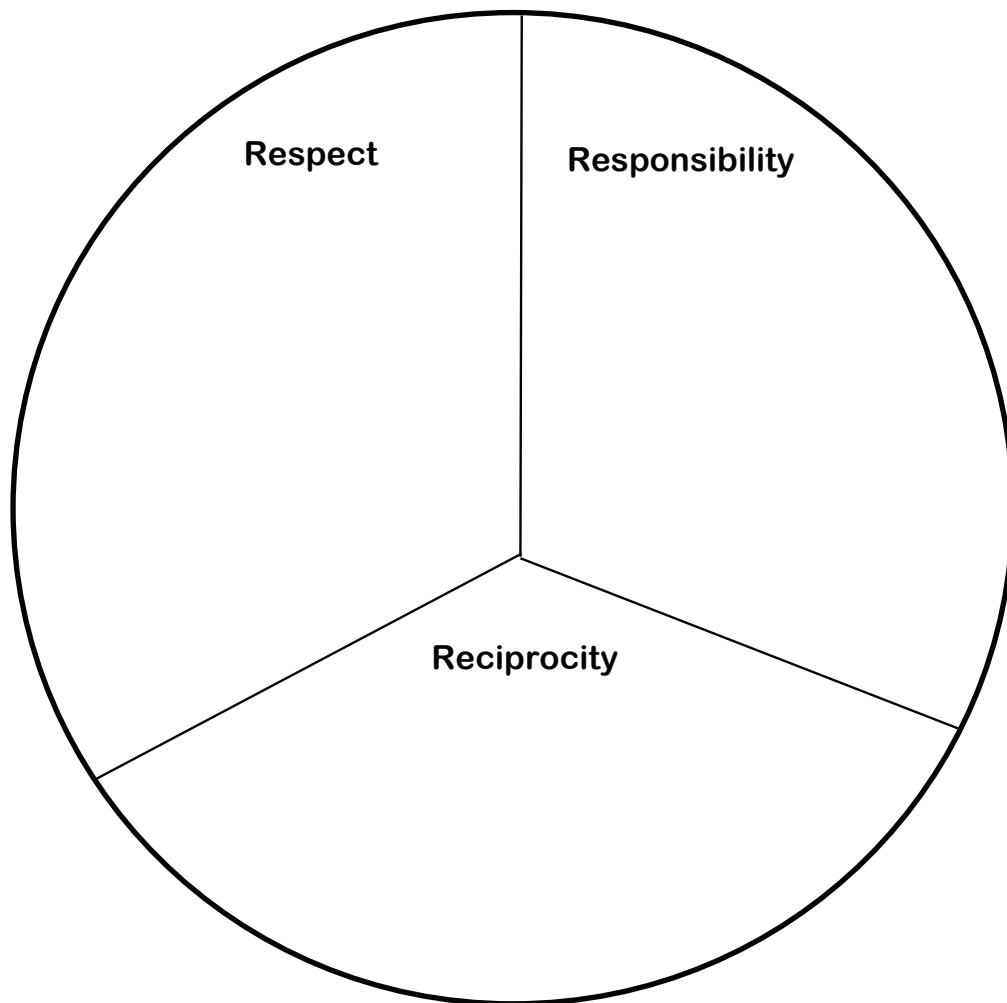
Great Bear Sea website

<https://greatbearsea.net/elementary-curriculum/lesson-2/>



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Building Positive **Relationships** with Living Beings



Respect: consideration; thoughtfulness; a deep feeling of admiration; attentiveness; politeness

Responsibility: having a task, job or role; the act of being accountable or answerable; trustworthiness

Reciprocity: an exchange of gifts or actions; a way of supporting others

Building a relationship with my plant, _____

(plant's name)

Record when you take care of
their **physical** needs.

Record when you take care of
their **emotional** needs.

Reciprocity: Record what you do for
(or give to) each other and when?

