

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY

Level 1





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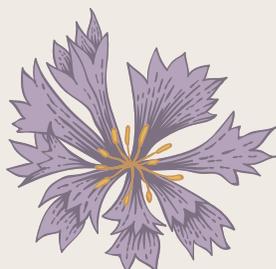


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OFFICE OF COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT



Foundation of Greater Montréal



CREATION STORY

For decades, Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island, Inuit Nunangat and the Métis Homeland have shared knowledge, personal experiences and cultural ways of living in order to raise awareness about the abusive and oppressive relationship between the colonial state and the rightful stewards of this land. In the beginning, efforts went largely unnoticed. Recently however, as more and more devastating facts surfaced, many non-Indigenous people began reflecting about their role as settlers and asking themselves what they could do. After numerous public inquiries, commissions, official reports, and media reports, the truth has become impossible to ignore. However, unaware of the deep roots of colonialism embedded in their minds and ways of living, many well-intentioned settlers set off on their personal allyship journeys inattentive to the cost of labour associated with having to constantly explain Indigenous realities to non-Indigenous people. It is with this context in mind and in this spirit that the Decolonial Toolbox was born.

In recent years, Concordia University's Office of Community Engagement has worked to cultivate relationships with organizations that centre the leadership and expertise of Indigenous communities. In 2020, Concordia approached Mikana, an Indigenous-led organization with an educational mission to act on discrimination and racism against Indigenous Peoples, and the Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK, a community-led organization committed to improving the lives of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities living in the Greater Montreal area, to form a partnership. From then on, a tripartite collaboration was born.

From this partnership emerged a unified vision to provide opportunities for young Indigenous leaders to consider how Indigenous lives and wellbeing are affected by ongoing colonialism and offer Indigenous-driven solutions to bridge the inequality gap. Our minds were equally convinced of the need to alleviate the burden and emotional labour Indigenous Peoples so often carry when educating non-Indigenous folks.



NAVIGATING THE **PATHWAY**

The Office of Community Engagement, Mikana and the NETWORK have developed the Decolonial Toolbox, which includes a bilingual Educational Pathway that regroups resources for readers interested in learning about Indigenous realities. We recommend for readers to follow this multi-leveled path carefully paved by its creators in order to ensure knowledge progression in the least overwhelming manner. With accessibility and Indigenous expertise as foundational principles, we chose main resources that were free to the general public and Indigenous-written, or resources that respectfully incorporated Indigenous ways of knowing.

Additional resources were chosen to complement and enhance the knowledge gained through the main resources. These additional resources are often lengthier, more specific and sometimes come with a fee. We invite the reader to consider consulting both the main and additional resources. As you navigate through this pathway, we hope you treat the texts that have been chosen with respect and become cognizant of the privilege of engaging with Indigenous knowledge.

At the very core of this pathway is the concept of decolonization. Every resource is a heartbeat giving breath to a living document dedicated to decentering the deep-seated false narrative non-Indigenous people have been taught to believe. Two essential (and perhaps frustrating) realities must be made clear to the reader from the

start - the first is that there is no standard, universally-accepted definition of decolonization or how to go about it, and the second is that despite this, it is the responsibility of settlers to decolonize their minds, relations, knowledge and ways of living.

Do not fret or feel discouraged, dear reader. Our aim is to gradually provide resources, reflection questions and Indigenous expertise to help you understand the complexity of decolonizing and how to incorporate change in everyday life. We hope these stepping stones will guide you as you embark on your personal journeys toward decolonization and meaningful allyship.

NIÁ:WEN
TIAWENHK
CHI-MIIGWECH / MIK8ETC
MIKWETC
NAKURMIK
TSHINASHKUMITIN
WELA'LIN
ᑭᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎ (KINANÂSKOMITIN)
ᑭᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎ (CHINISKUMITIN)
WLIWNI (OLEOHNEH)
WOLIWON

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INTRODUCTION TO INDIGENOUS REALITIES

To begin this educational pathway, we will suggest some basic vocabulary when speaking about Indigenous people.

We want to help you understand why it is important to use the appropriate terminology. Once you familiarize yourself with the terms, we will talk about the notion of territory.

It is important for us to illustrate the distinction between Indigenous Peoples' traditional land and the reserve land on which they were displaced. This will help you understand how colonization disrupted Indigenous Peoples' relationship with the land. In the last sub-section, you will have the opportunity to listen to Indigenous Peoples' expertise.

TERMINOLOGY

Many of the labels given to Indigenous groups throughout history were imposed by Europeans: Indian, Savage, etc. By this process, Indigenous Peoples were stripped of their identities and belittled with denigrating labels.

For this reason, it is crucial to respect the process by which Indigenous groups reclaim their identity, their names, and the terms they use to describe themselves.



How to talk about Indigenous People

CBC Indigenous

In this video, Inuk journalist Ossie Michelin presents a friendly how-to guide on terminology. He explains the difference between the terms Indigenous, First Nation, Inuit and Métis.



A rose by any other name is a mihkokwaniy

Indigenous Issues 101, Chelsea Vowel.

In this online publication, Métis writer Chelsea Vowel explains why the terms used to refer to Indigenous Peoples keep changing and helps us understand the vocabulary used today by Indigenous Peoples when referring to themselves.



Identity

Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada [Métis section, Chapter 1]

This chapter from the Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada will help clarify the distinction between métis identity and Métis communities. This atlas was written in collaboration with the Métis National Council.



Lexicon of Terminology

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

This lexicon published by the "Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls" contains the definitions for many concepts and terms that are useful for understanding and talking about Indigenous realities.

INDIGENOUS TERRITORIES

You may have heard North America referred to as "Turtle Island." In many First Nations' Creation Stories, it is said that the territory where we live is carried on the back of a turtle. For example, the Kanien'kehá:ka say that the first inhabitants arrived from the sky onto the back of a turtle. They describe it as a big island in the middle of a large body of water.

▶ KANATA

In this pathway, the name *Kanata* is used to refer to the country of Canada. The word Canada comes directly from Indigenous Iroquoian languages. In Kanien'kéha (Mohawk), Kanata means "town" or "village".²

▶ KEPEK

In this pathway, we have chosen to use the word Kepek to refer to the Province of Quebec. The name Quebec actually originates from the word *kepek* or *kapak*, an expression that means "get off" or "disembark" in Atikamekw Nehirowimowin, Innu-Aimun¹ and other Indigenous languages.

In this subsection, we invite you to learn about the history and long relationship that Indigenous Peoples have with the land and to deconstruct colonial concepts of borders and nations.

Native Land

[Native Land Digital](#)

This interactive map is designed to help users identify Indigenous Nations, territories and communities. It includes information on the languages spoken in each territory and the division of Indigenous traditional territories by treaty.

11 Nations Map

[Amnesty International](#)

This map identifies the 10 First Nations and Inuit that live in Kepek. It shows the location of the 55 Indigenous communities. These territories are land that has been colonially delineated by the federal government. It is therefore not necessarily their traditional or ancestral territory.

Territorial Acknowledgement

[Indigenous Directions Leadership Group, Concordia University](#)

This resource was prepared by the Indigenous Directions Leadership Group of Concordia University. It provides a detailed explanation of how to pronounce a territorial acknowledgement for events that take place in Tiohtià:ke, the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) word used to refer to Montreal, and explains its importance.

Beyond Territorial Acknowledgements

[âpihtawikosisân, Chelsea Vowell](#)

In this blog post, Métis writer Chelsea Vowell gives her opinion on territorial acknowledgements. She provides suggestions in order to prevent territorial acknowledgements from being stripped of their power through repetition. See [updated post here](#).

¹ Desjardins, C. *Guide d'accompagnement. Je m'appelle humain.* (2021).

² *The Origin of the name Canada, Canadian Encyclopedia.* (2019)

UNLEARNING COLONIAL HISTORY

The history of Kanata was written by the settlers. Indigenous Peoples, though their bodies and voices, were erased from the narrative. In this section, you will have the opportunity to listen to Indigenous Peoples share their experiences and expertise.



Discovery

Telling our Twisted Histories, CBC Podcasts

In the first episode of Telling our Twisted Histories, host Kaniehti:io Horn asks Indigenous Peoples what the word “discovery” means to them, in order to see how they envision decolonizing the word and to rewrite this part of history from an Indigenous perspective.



Colonization Road

First Hand, CBC Docs

Anishinaabe comedian Ryan McMahon talks about the structure of colonization and the way in which roads were used to displace Indigenous Peoples by invading territory without consent. The documentary also explains the “logic” behind settler colonialism.

Borders

Thomas King



In this short story, Cherokee author Thomas King invites his readers to think about how colonial borders have disrupted the way in which Indigenous Peoples live on their traditional land.

Gifts of the Land | A Guided Nature Tour with Robin Wall Kimmerer

The Commons, Kansas University



Potawatomi botanist and author Robin Wall Kimmerer takes us on a guided tour in the forest. She talks about the land as a teacher, as a caretaker and she explains the relationality that links us to the territory.

Additional Resources

- 📖 **Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Issues in Canada**, Vowel, C. HighWater Press.
- 📖 **The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America**, King, T. University of Minnesota Press.
- 📖 **Our Story: Aboriginal Voices on Canada's Past**, M. Campbell and al., Anchor Canada.
- 📺 **You Are on Indian Land**, National Film Board of Canada.
- 📺 **Meaningful Land Acknowledgements**, Lindsay Brant, Center for Teaching & Learning, Queen's University.
- 📺 **Kabak**, Wapikoni.
- 🎧 **Telling our Twisted Histories**, Terre Innue and CBC Podcasts
- 🎧 **The Border Crossed Us**, All my Relations.
- 📖 **Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada**, Canadian Geographic.

