



THE FIRST CHALLENGE

WALKING WITH MISKWAADESI

THE FIRST CHALLENGE

THIRTEEN MOONS ON A TURTLE'S BACK

Who is Miskwaadesi and what does she need?

How important is the Turtle to the people of the world?

Can you describe the year in your language or culture according to the 13 moons?

Will you accept Miskwaadesi's challenges and help to make your community and your wetland world a healthier place for everyone and everything?



"..come and walk in my footsteps. Bring your grandchildren and great grandchildren, and learn about me and my clan brothers and sisters. Will you help me find a safe and healthy place for my clan brothers and sisters to live? "

"Will you tell the people that everyone needs to work together to make our space a healthy one again?"

Miskwaadesi's 1st challenge.

EXPECTATIONS

PRACTICING THE LEARNING | FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS

TITLE OF ACTIVITY	ONTARIO CURRICULUM EXPECTATION	WORKSHEET
Introduction to Miskwaadesi's challenges	4e4, 4e5, 4e26	1a - 13 challenges
Turtles of the World	4z47, 4z35	1b - Turtles of the World

DEMONSTRATING THE LEARNING | MAKING OUR OWN FOOTSTEPS

TITLE OF ACTIVITY	ONTARIO CURRICULUM EXPECTATION	WORKSHEET
A Year of the Turtle - 13 moons	4a43, 4a44, 4a45	Calendar
Journal Reflection	4a43	Cover page
Reflection no. 1	4e56	

ONE STEP MORE (individual student optional adventures in learning)

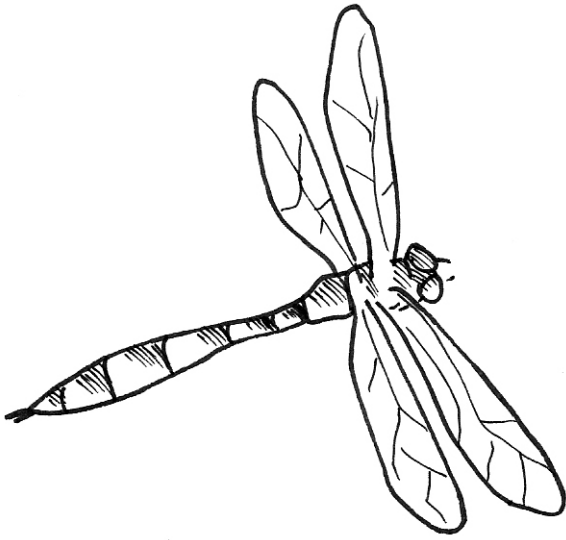
1. Research traditional teachings and stories about turtles

2. Tortoises of the World

WORD WALL:

Miskwaadesi, calendar, challenge, tortoise, teaching, Pleiades, symbol, emblem,

LINKS TO OTHER CURRICULUM



1st CHALLENGE

Ways of Knowing Guide — Relationship — the Sky World pg 75

http://www.torontozoo.com/pdfs/Stewardship_Guide.pdf

Turtle Curriculum

<http://www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond/turtleCurriculum.asp>

KOKOM ANNIE'S JOURNAL

THE STORY BEGINS...



"...Ahniin my grandchildren,
Are you coming to spend the summer with me and
your cousins here at Wasauksing? I need your help
with a special project. Everything is ready for you. I
will meet you at the bus stop.

Kokom Annie"



Seegwun read the note over one last time as the bus turned off highway 69 and began to pull into the stop at Parry Sound. With a smile she put the piece of paper into her backpack, nudged her brother Nodin awake and gathered up her belongings - the adventure was about to begin!

Kokom was waiting and gathered the children up in her arms in a big hug of welcome. "Ahniin! Ahniin! My beautiful grandchildren - I am so glad that you have come. We will have a wonderful summer together!"



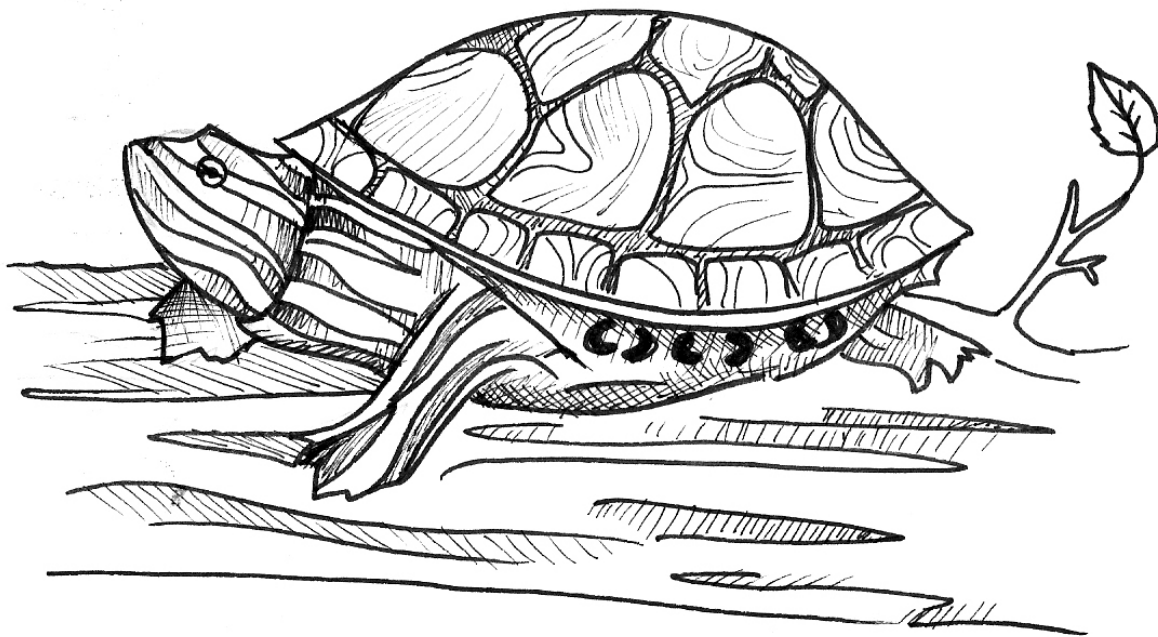
When Kokom Annie and her grandchildren arrived at Kokom's little house Auntie Lily was waiting for them with a fresh pan of baked bannock and some fish. There were fresh heartberries on the counter... mmm - it was going to be a great visit!

After supper everyone went out to sit and watch the sunset over the water. Auntie and Kokom talked quietly while the children played the listening game - how many different sounds could they distinguish as the birds and other members of Creation sang a good-night song to the sun. There were so many different sounds out here at Kokom Annie's place than there were in the city! Just as the mosquitoes started to buzz and frogs began to call, cousin Waubun drove up on his bike.

"Ahniin Kokom Annie- are they here yet? Oh great - hey there Nodin - look how you've grown! Seegwun, what's new with you? Did your Kokom tell you about the good work she is doing this summer? Kokom is helping me down at the marsh. You should see her in her hip waders - you'd think she was a teenager again! Kokom - tell us about your dream again."

As the sky began to darken and evening arrived, Kokom Annie pulled her shawl up over her shoulders and settled into her favourite chair. Nodin and Seegwun curled up at her feet. Seegwun noticed that Kokom was wearing a nice pair of moccasins and there were turtles beaded on each one. She hoped that Kokom would help her make herself some new slippers to go with her regalia - the pow-wow was just a few weekends away. Lily sat beside Kokom, while Waubun leaned on the railing.

The first stars were beginning to sparkle in the night sky as Kokom began to tell her story.



"I had a dream in the late winter - right before Maple Moon, just as we were starting to get ready for change of seasons time. I dreamed that it was late spring, just before heartberry moon and I was down by the marsh looking for wea-kay root to use for medicine. I had put down my tobacco and I was talking to those medicine plants that grow along the edge of the marsh. I was about to ask the plants for their permission and help so that I could make medicine root tea for my community. While I was sitting at the edge of the water by that large mishomis (rock), a very old Miskwaadesi (turtle) - you know the clan I'm talking about - the turtle that has the colours of the sunset on its back - well, it came swimming up towards me. This Miskwaadesi was wearing a coat of algae on the edges of her shell, from spending the winter at the bottom of the pond. Her shell was marked and scratched. Very slowly and deliberately Miskwaadesi crawled out of the water and up onto a log. I thought at first that she did not see me, but once she was settled on the log she slowly turned and looked directly at me. I was so surprised when she began to speak."



"Ah - ho - grandmother - Nokomis" she spoke in a low, quiet, but tired voice. I had to listen very hard to hear all of Miskwaadesi's words. The turtle's words came slowly and she paused between each sentence.

*"Nokomis, I have been chosen to come and talk to you.
We, the turtle clans need your help!"*

The Miskwaadesi family and their clan cousins have lived in the waterways and wetlands of Turtle Island since Creation. Some of us have lived for over one hundred years.

As the keepers of the stories and knowledge of the water and the wetlands, we have responsibilities to our communities and to the Creator.

We have a responsibility to communicate between species who live in and around the water and with the Creator.

We are the keepers of the water in the wetlands.

We make sure that the edges of the wetlands are kept clean- we find and eat anything that is no longer living.

We help to control the numbers of insects and frogs and minnows that live in the wet places.

We live a very long life and we carry the story of our wetland and our watershed within us.

However, something is happening to our wetland homes. There are eight turtle clans in Ontario, but seven of the clans are in danger- every year there are less and less of my turtle clan cousins.

Many of the wetlands in our traditional homeland (the Great Lakes watershed) have disappeared - people have drained them, dumped their trash onto them, and sometimes have flooded them by building dams nearby.

New subdivisions and development have paved over all of the edges and covered those places where the turtle clans used to dig our nests in the springtime.

We are having trouble finding good places to sit in the sun to warm our shells.

The only places left to lay our eggs are along roadsides, and it is very dangerous for us to cross the roads to find nesting sites. Many of my turtle clan cousins are killed every spring trying to cross roads and streets.



Our eggs sit in water while they are underground, and the groundwater is full of pollution.

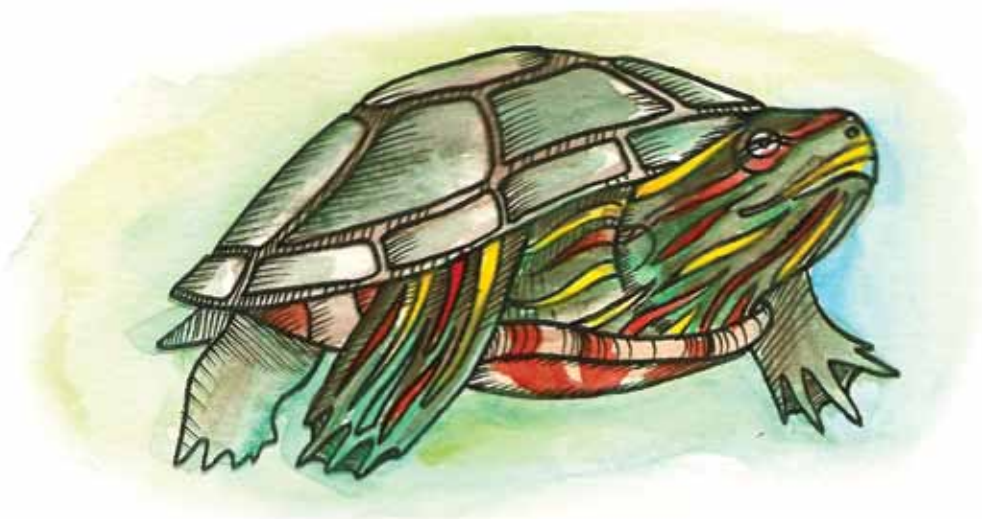
The water passes through the egg shells and it is hurting our turtle-babies as they grow.

Our turtle children cannot find healthy food to eat - the minnows, frogs, and small insects are getting sick.

In some places the worms are not even good to eat anymore.

We are getting sore eyes from the pollution in the water.

There are less and less of us to take care of the wetlands and water. Some of my turtle cousins - the turtle with the sun under its chin, the turtle that wears a watershed on his back, the turtle with the stars on his back are now called "species at risk" by western scientists.



There are less and less of us to fulfil our responsibilities that were given to us by The Great Mystery.

When we are gone, who will take over our responsibilities?

Kokum Annie - can you help us? I am getting old and my voice is becoming more and more quiet -many of my turtle clan relatives have become silent. Who will speak for the turtle clans?

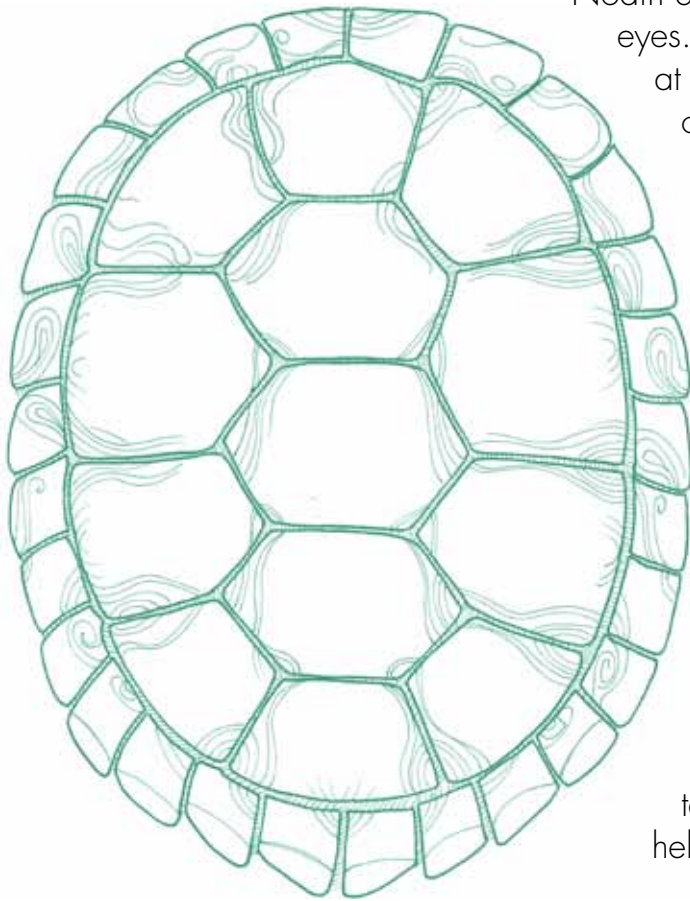
Find some young ones from your community to walk with me, Miskwaadesi.

Kokom Annie - come and walk in my footsteps. Bring your grandchildren and great grandchildren, and learn about me and my clan brothers and sisters. Will you help me find a safe and healthy place for my clan brothers and sisters to live?

Will you tell the people that everyone needs to work together to make our space a healthy one again?"

Kokom Annie paused for a few moments with her eyes closed, remembering the words and the sad voice that Miskwaadesi had used while everyone thought about Miskwaadesi's words. Kokom remembered the tears that had fallen from Miskwaadesi's eyes as the turtle pleaded for help.

Kokom told the children that she had been having the same dream several times throughout the early spring and she knew that she had to do something to help Miskwaadesi and the turtle clans.



Nodin and Seegwun looked at each other with troubled eyes. They had been learning about frogs and toads at school and they had an understanding of some of the problems that the amphibians were having. It sounded like the turtle clan was also having a hard time in the wetlands. Nodin tried to remember when he had last seen a turtle in the city...but even when his class went on their field trip to the nearby wet space in the park, there had been no turtles to be found.

"What are you going to do about the dreams Kokom Annie?" Asked Seegwun.

"Well my girl - the first thing I did was to talk to Miskwaadesi in my dream to let her know that I had understood her request and that I would walk with her. Miskwaadesi asked me to go to the school to talk to the kids and their teachers because she knew that I would need helpers."

"Miskwaadesi used her claws to draw a turtle shell in the soft sand at the edge of the marsh. She cut the shell into 13 parts. She reminded me that her shell is our calendar - the thirteen scutes remind us of the thirteen moons in the year and the twenty-eight little plates that go around the scutes remind us of the number of days in each moon."

"Miskwaadesi said that there were 13 challenges - one for each scute. Each challenge would help me to understand Miskwaadesi and her world and would help me come up with ideas for things I could do to make her world a better place. Miskwaadesi said that when her world becomes a healthier place, then our world will be healthier as well. She reminded me of how we are tied to the turtle and its world just as it is tied to ours. She said that she would come back to me in my dreams to tell me about the challenges."

Kokom Annie sat up straight in her chair, and reaching inside the pocket of her skirt, took out a little journal that looked very full. She opened the journal to a page marked with a piece of paper. Nodin and Seegwun could see the outline of a turtle shell on the page that was open.

"When I woke up, I wrote down everything that I could remember of what Miskwaadesi told me. I drew a turtle shell on my page and divided it into the thirteen scutes that the turtle carries on its back."

"Miskwaadesi gave me 13 challenges to accomplish as I walk with her..."



The First Challenge - "Bring your grandchildren and great grandchildren and learn about me and my clan brothers and sisters."

The Second Challenge - "Go and find young people who have heard our Creation teaching and remind them of kindness, love and caring..."

The Third Challenge - "Who are the turtle clans in Ontario and why are they a Species at Risk?"

The Fourth Challenge - "Find out what turtle needs to thrive and survive."

The Fifth Challenge - "Who are my friends and neighbours in the watersheds?"

The Sixth Challenge - "Find out some First Nation teachings and stories about my turtle clan."

The Seventh Challenge - "Find out about my clan members that live far away."

The Eighth Challenge - "Walk for the water, for the turtle, for yourself and your future."

The Ninth Challenge - "How much water is there?"

The Tenth Challenge - "What do my frog neighbours say and sing about?"

The Eleventh Challenge - "How many turtle species live in the water near us?"

The Twelfth Challenge - "What will you do to help the turtle family?"

The Thirteenth Challenge - "Celebrate with a Feast for your Turtles."

MISKWAADESI'S 13 CHALLENGES




The First Challenge - *"...come and walk in my footsteps. Bring your grandchildren and great grandchildren, and learn about me and my clan brothers and sisters. Will you help me find a safe and healthy place for my clan brothers and sisters to live? Will you tell the people that everyone needs to work together to make our space a healthy one again?"*

We are asked to find out how important turtles are to many Nations and peoples around the world. The challenge asks us to learn the names of each of the 13 moons of the year. Miskwaadesi and her clan carry our calendar on their back and she reminded me that we need to find out about each of the 13 moons because each one has a challenge for us! We need to talk to our language keepers to find out what the Elders call each of the moons. The first challenge asks us to create a calendar for our community, using the 13 moons and recording the important things that happen in our community on the calendar.



The Second Challenge - *"Grandmother - your 2nd challenge is to go and find young people who have heard our Creation teachings. They will have some understanding of the responsibilities that were given to the Turtle Clan People and they may have some knowledge of how humans and turtles are connected. Talk to the young ones about our Creation teachings and remind them to be grateful and thankful for the beautiful gifts that The Great Mystery has provided. Remind them of the kindness and love and caring that were part of the creation of all life forms."*

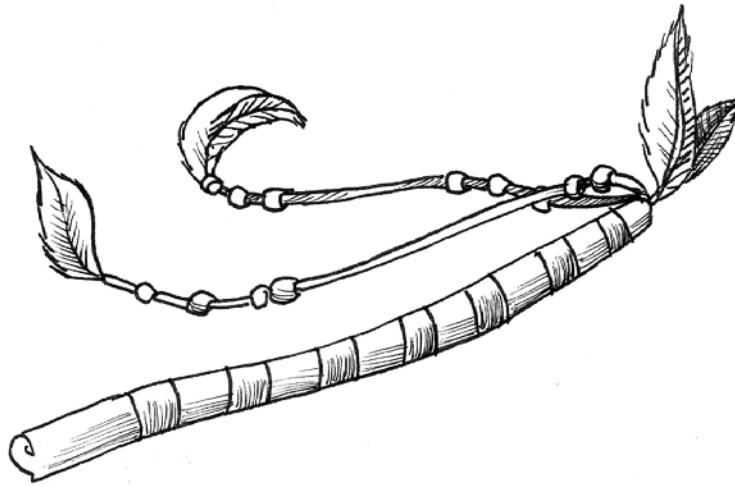
Remember The First Nations CREATION STORIES and the importance of the Miskwaadesi People to all First Nations. Remind everyone about TURTLE CLAN RESPONSIBILITIES. Learn about the Thanksgiving Address of the Haudenosaunee People and the morning prayer of the Anishinaabe because they will teach us to be grateful for the wonderful gifts of Creation and they will remind you of the responsibilities of all members of Creation.



The Third Challenge - The old turtle's voice sounded out the 3rd challenge. *"Who are the turtle clans in Ontario and what do they look like? Where can you find them? Why are my turtle clan family members on the Species at Risk list?"* Meet and greet the 8 turtle clan cousins that are living in Ontario now. Some of them are in great danger because of loss of habitat and bad food. All of them are getting sick from the water that they live in.

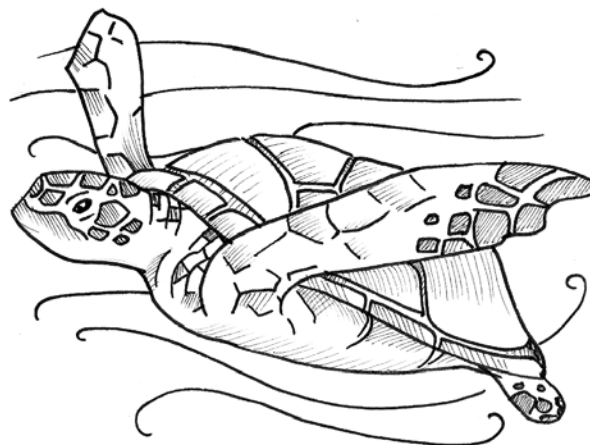
The Fourth Challenge - *"My 4th challenge asks you to find out what turtles need to thrive and survive. What does a healthy habitat look like for a turtle? Do you think that the habitat in your community is a healthy one for me?"* Learn about what our 8 MISKWAADESI CLANS need for good habitat, and see if you can find good habitat where the clans can live. Find other groups and organizations that are working to make wetland habitats healthy again.

The Fifth Challenge - *"My 5th challenge to you is to find out who are my friends and neighbours in the waters and watersheds? All the animals and plants are woven together in the web of life and I need all of them if I am to be healthy and well. How are all the plants and animals related?"* The 8 Turtle clans have NEIGHBOURS AND FRIENDS who live in the wetlands with them. Many of these neighbours and friends depend upon the turtles and the turtles depend on their neighbours and friends. We are all related.



The Sixth Challenge - *"My 6th challenge,"* said the old turtle, *"asks that you find out some of the teachings and stories about my turtle clan. Every Nation has stories and teachings that include turtles. Which ones do you know? Can you retell one of the stories?"* Many of the First Nations have TEACHINGS and STORIES about turtles. Ask the Elders and the teachers to help you find out about the teachings. Listen to the stories and learn from them. Share the stories with other people so that they will become familiar with the teachings. Make a talking stick to help you remember the teaching.

The Seventh Challenge - *"The 7th challenge will be a difficult one. You will need to find a helper. I want you to find out about my clan relatives who live far far away. They swim where the waters are salty and they nest where there are warm winters and summers. First Nations and Aboriginal peoples throughout the world have close relationships with turtles, tortoises and terrapins - we are all the same big family. Look for stories and teachings and share what you find your children and grandchildren. My sea turtle clan cousins are in great danger and they are asking for help!"* Use the library and computer to study the life story of turtles all over Turtle Island and beyond. Find out about other Miskwaadesi clans that live in the oceans. Are they also endangered? Share what you learn with others who are also completing the challenges. Have some fun playing games and puzzles about Turtles!



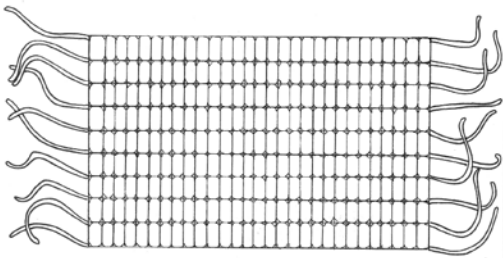
The Eighth Challenge - *"My 8th challenge - walk for the water, walk for the turtle, walk for yourself and your future."* The Turtle clans need a good supply of clean water if they are to survive. Find out about water in your own backyard. Participate in a WATERWALK somewhere in your own watershed. Follow in the footsteps of Miskwaadesi and of Josephine Mandamin who has walked around each of the Great Lakes. Get acquainted with your water by carrying a bucket around your wetland, stream, pond, river, lake, or bay.

The Ninth Challenge - *"It's all about the water that humans use for themselves. Find out how much water you use in a week"* came the soft voice from the turtle on the log. *"What do you use water for?"* How much water do YOU use every day? Find out how big your PERSONAL WATERMARK is. How much can you conserve? String the beads and make a commitment string to remind yourself that you are making a life decision to protect the water.



The Tenth Challenge - *"My 10th Challenge - who else is living in my wetland? What do my frog neighbours say and sing about? Write a report card for my wetland"* Who is living in your neighbourhood wetland? What song(s) are being sung by the frog people? Go out and listen for frogs and record when you hear them welcome the new season with their songs. Complete the pond study and give your wetland its very own health report card.

The Eleventh Challenge - *"Come down to the water and visit with me and my relatives. This is my 11th challenge- count all of the turtle species in your waters. Come down to the water, Kokom. Bring your young ones with you."* Take part in the Toronto Zoo's annual Turtle Tally. Search out nest sites. Protect nesting turtles. Put up turtle crossing signs.



The Twelfth Challenge - *"My 12th Challenge is this - what will you do to help my turtle family? Can you work with your class to create a project that will make things better for the turtles of the seven generations to come? What will you do with the information that I have shared with you? Create a project to help the turtles in your community watershed and you will improve the health and wellness for not just the turtles but for everyone and everything. Plan, organize, act, and report!"* Plan and complete a project to honour the turtle. Use the information learned to improve the

health and wellness of the turtle population. Start your own group to look after your wetland. Make a poster, write a poem or a story, let everyone know how important your wetlands are and how we need to welcome our turtles and their wetland friends.

The Thirteenth Challenge - FEAST YOUR TURTLES! Celebrate - when you have finished all the other challenges, take some time to celebrate what you have learned and done, and to have a feast to honour the turtles in your community. What will you remember about the turtle?





"Then, I talked to some of the other grandmothers and the aunties because it is women who have the responsibility for looking after the water, and it seems as though one of the biggest issues Miskwaadesi has is with the quality and the amount of water that is available to the turtle clans. As a group, we decided to go and visit the Environmental staff at the Band Office. We asked for a map of Wasauksing and we decided to look at the wetlands and wet spaces right around here. We asked Waubun to help us because he is young and stronger than we are! We want to go and look at all the wetlands on the reserve and find out who lives there. We are going to find out how clean the water is because we get most of our medicine plants from in and around the wet places. The water has to be clean not just for Miskwaadesi but for us as well. Then we are going to tell everyone that we have to start looking after our water so that all the animals and plants will be healthy.

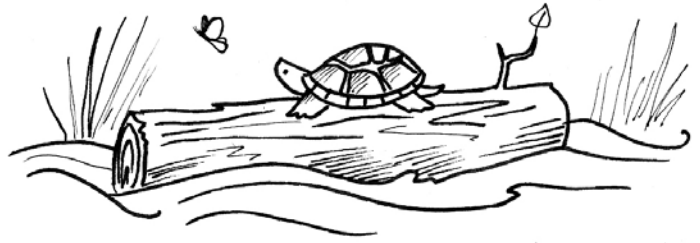
There are some very large wetlands around our community and we need help to complete our challenges. Waubun has some students from the school who will work with him through the summer and I thought that you, Nodin and Seegwun, would be good helpers as well. So - are you ready to accept Miskwaadesi's challenges?"

Nodin and Seegwun agreed at once. "When do we start?" Asked Seegwun.

"Tomorrow morning - let's meet at the Environmental Office and we'll start looking at the turtle posters. See you right after breakfast. Be on time because the wildlife biologists from the Toronto Zoo are here to help us!" And with that, Waubun took off on his bike. Auntie Lily helped Nodin and Seegwun unpack and get ready for bed.

It was going to be a great adventure! Imagine - a whole summer to spend with Kokom Annie, and a chance to walk with Miskwaadesi too!!

TEACHER BACKGROUND



Turtles have a special place in the history of the world. Turtles have been walking and swimming on planet earth for at least 250 million years! Many Nations and cultures have a special relationship with the turtle and the turtle is very important in the traditional teachings of many Nations.

One of the interesting teachings concerns the lunar calendar - the 13 scutes and the 28 plates on the upper shell of the turtle represent this calendar and have been used from ancient times to teach the calendar and time. Teachers are encouraged to share the following short video with their class as Jan Longboat, an Elder from Six Nations shares her understanding of the calendar on the back of the turtle -

http://www.dodemkanonhsa.ca/videos/turtle_teaching.htm

Most Turtle species and many tortoises as well have become endangered and are considered species-at-risk for many reasons. Turtles are associated with water and because they are a species that is unique in their ability to live both in water and on land, they are very special. Turtles need clean water and healthy habitats for survival, just as we, the youngest members of Creation, need clean water and healthy habitat. If the turtles cannot survive in their present environment, it will not be long until we are unable to survive as well.

It is very important that we develop an appreciation and understanding of the role the turtle plays within the environment because we depend upon the turtle and upon all of the other members of Creation for our own health and wellness.

In North America, turtle habitat has been negatively impacted as wetlands have been drained and water tables degraded, lowered, and changed through development and pollution.

First Nations people who live in present-day Ontario have a long traditional relationship with the turtles that have made their home in the wetlands, woodlands, and waters of the Great Lakes region south of the boreal forest of the north. In traditional times before the arrival of settlers and explorers from other countries, the First Nations people could see turtles throughout their environment on a daily basis, because the early roads were the waterways, and most pathways followed the edges of the water. Turtles could be seen sunning themselves, hunting for food, laying eggs, and going about their turtle business every day from spring until late fall.



First Nations teachings were shared with the children and youth in the winter time when the snow blanketed the earth, and the teachings began with a re-telling of the Creation story (see the 2nd challenge). The turtle has been given special responsibilities in creation and we are asked to be grateful to the turtle for continuing to honour its responsibilities. The turtle carries the Earth on its back - the origins of Turtle Island talk about the great kindness and love that was expressed by the turtle in agreeing to carry the soil, the plants, animals, and the humans on its back after the great flood. First Nations peoples have the turtle as one of their clans and honour the turtle in rock paintings and in the Petroglyphs. The characteristics of the turtle are remembered in the teachings that are passed on during special ceremonies and celebrations and feasts.

Miskwaadesi is one turtle species that is often recognized by children - the painted turtle who beautifully wears its colours is the only one of Ontario's turtles that has not yet been named to the endangered species list. As such, it was Miskwaadesi who has been chosen to speak on behalf of her turtle clan members and cousins.

Teachers and leaders using these challenges are asked to provide their children with a reflective journal to use with each challenge to record observations and questions and 'I wonder' ideas. Students will also need a duo-tang or notebook where they can keep their worksheets organized and neat.



Teachers are encouraged to complete as many of the challenges as they can within their classrooms and to invite those students who become interested in pursuing a challenge on their own to enjoy the 'One More Step' activities and ideas. Some challenges could be done by small groups who would then come back to the class to report upon the learning.

PRACTICING THE LEARNING

FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS



1. INTRODUCTION TO MISKWADESI'S CHALLENGE

Read the challenge story that introduces the unit. With the class discuss the story and the challenges.

Make a chart of the 13 challenges and provide students with a blank chart to copy each challenge onto.

Create and post a large copy of the turtle shell outline in the classroom to record the completion of each challenge. When all work on this 1st challenge is completed, decide upon symbols or illustrations that will represent the completion of the 1st challenge. Place these symbols/illustrations on one of the scutes on the turtle shell.

Students will decide upon their own individual way of recording the completion of their 1st challenge and they will place it on the cover page of their journal when this challenge is completed. See page 54 and 55 for turtle shell templates. The template can be copied for students to use and can be enlarged to help create a posters-sized shell for the classroom.

2. TURTLES OF THE WORLD

Materials: "Turtles of the World" worksheet - one per student, outline map of the world - one per student, atlas - one per group or pair of students.

Many Nations and cultures around the world have a special respect for and understanding of turtles and they honour the turtle in a variety of ways. Introduce the students to some of these understandings and traditions with the information on the student worksheet - "TURTLES OF THE WORLD". Read through the facts. Identify the characteristics that people identify with turtles.

Ask students to work in pairs or small groups with an atlas and the worksheet. Find the countries that have a special relationship with turtles and record them on the world map. Create a legend on the map to identify the various places and nations.

DEMONSTRATING THE LEARNING

MAKING YOUR OWN FOOTSTEPS



1. A YEAR OF THE TURTLE - 13 MOONS

Take a look at what Jan Longboat, an Elder from 6 - Nations says about the turtle and you will learn about the calendar that is found on the turtle's shell.

http://www.dodemkanonhsa.ca/videos/turtle_teaching.htm

There are 28 small plates around the edge of the turtle's shell - one for each day in the lunar month. As well, there are 13 scutes or sections on the turtle's back - one for each of the moons in the year.

Each First Nation has a unique understanding and a description of the 13 moons. Learn about the 13 moons that make up the calendar for your culture.

Ask your Native Language teacher to help you learn the names of each moon and find out why the moon has that particular name. Take a look at the chart on [Student Worksheet 1c](#) - can you read the names of the Anishinaabek moons from Wasauksing and of the Haudenosaunee moons from Tyendinega - what does your community call the 13 moons? Fill in the chart (student worksheet 1c) and use the information to complete the activity on the 13 moons after you have looked at the book "Thirteen Moons on Turtle's Back, A Native American Year of Moons" by Joseph Bruchac to get an idea of some of the different names that have been given to the moons of the year by some of the Nations who have walked and lived on Turtle Island. Each page in Joseph's book has a beautiful illustration and a poem that describes the moon. Think about how you might illustrate the moons.

Use your best language (vocabulary) to describe each moon. Illustrate each moon on a scute on the turtle shell from the second page of the student worksheet 1c to make your own personal calendar.

Compare your calendar with the calendar of another First Nation community. How are they the same? Why might some of the moons be called by a different name?

The traditional calendar of the Saanich Nation on Vancouver Island reflects the environment and the life of the people and is different from the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee calendars of the east - see <http://www.racerocks.com/racerock/firstnations/13moons/13moons.htm> and click on the Wsanec link. The site also shows illustrations of each moon using west coast art.

Work together with your class to create a moon calendar for your community. Design an illustration for each moon. List all of the important dates that will occur during each moon - pow-wows, ceremonies, important gatherings, birthdays, etc. Publish your calendar as a fund-raiser for your class!



2. MY TURTLE JOURNAL

Begin your journal today - Make a copy of the turtle shell outline from [student worksheet 1c](#) to use as a cover page, or make your own cover page that looks similar to the worksheet - make sure there are 13 scutes and 28 plates on your turtle shell.

Paste the worksheet into your journal and record what you have done to solve the challenge. As you complete each challenge, make a drawing or symbol to represent the work that you have accomplished.

Make a copy of student worksheet 1a - Miskwaadesi's Challenge for your journal. Use the worksheet to briefly summarize the challenges, and to record your own personal responses to the challenges as you complete each one.



3. JOURNAL REFLECTION

Think about these questions and respond to them in your journal.

What is your favourite moon? Why?

Look at the map of the world that you have completed. Were you surprised to discover that many cultures and Nations of the world have a special relationship with the turtle?

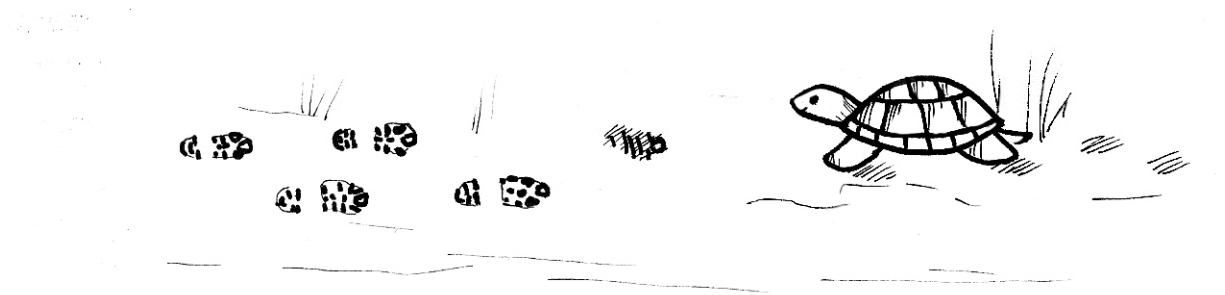
Why do you think so many peoples have these teachings in their traditions?

What more would you like to learn about turtles? Write down your questions here and see if you can find the answers within Miskwaadesi's 13 challenges.

ONE STEP MORE

DID YOU LEARN SOMETHING THAT MADE YOU WANT TO DO MORE?

1. Look at the map of the world again. The turtles of the world live along the waterways of the world. Pick a country that you have not yet identified on your map. Do some research and find out if the people of that country have traditional stories and legends about turtles. When you find something new, add it to your map and record the information in your journal. Share what you have learned with your class.
2. Research the tortoises of the world - they live in the land areas that are dry and do not seem to have the need to be so close to water. What can you find out about the tortoises of the world? Do the countries in desert areas have stories about tortoises?
3. What is your own cultural background? Are there teachings, stories, or legends about turtles? What do they say?



Student Worksheet

1A - MISWAADESI'S CHALLENGES



MISKWAADESI'S CHALLENGES

WHAT I DID TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.



Student Worksheet

1B - TURTLES OF THE WORLD 1/2



1. NORTH AMERICA

"Turtle Island" - In many First Nations creation stories, the turtle has the responsibility for carrying the Earth on her back.

Turtle Island - Iroquois and Anishinaabeg peoples - The great turtle that holds up the earth is a symbol of wisdom and kindness. Turtle rattles used in ceremonies.

2. INDIA

The tortoise is supported by the elephant and the elephant holds up the world.

3. CHINA

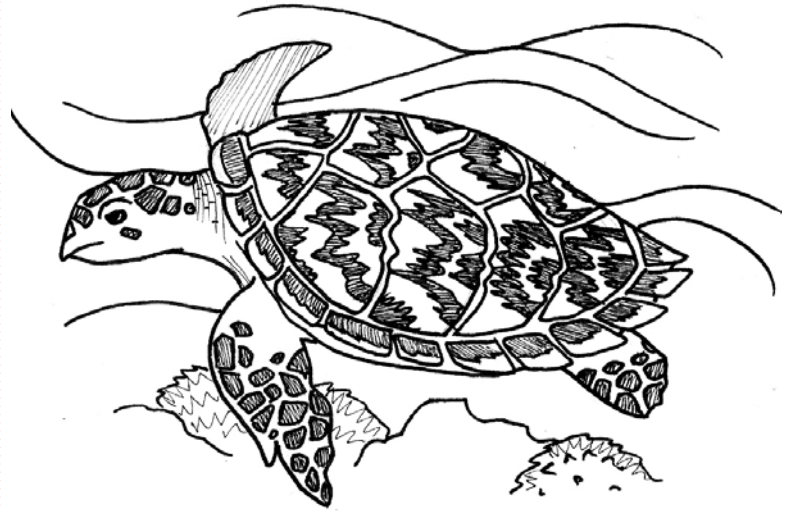
The turtle represents strength, endurance, slowness, long life, fertility, and it is shown on the imperial banner as an emblem of protection in war.

4. JAPAN

The sea turtle represents Kumpira, the protector of sailors.

5. AFRICA

Tortoise is an emblem of protection and is a masculine symbol of fertility.



6. GREECE

In ancient times, turtles were emblems of Aphrodite because the turtle was associated with females and water.

7. MAYANS (ancient Mexico)

The turtle was associated with water, land, and thunder.

8. TONGA

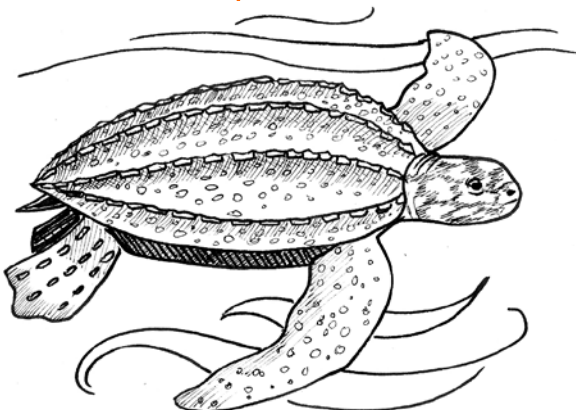
Sea turtles - Special symbol of longevity and good fortune and fertility.

9. SAMOA

Sea turtle is a graceful swimmer and also represents freedom.

10. NEW ZEALAND

Sea turtle - Unique because it has flippers instead of feet but it must still leave its 'home' in the ocean to crawl ashore, dragging its great shell without complaining or hurrying to lay its eggs. Perseverance, patience, and virtue are also identified with sea turtles.



Student Worksheet

1B - TURTLES OF THE WORLD (CONTINUED 2/2)



10. FIJI

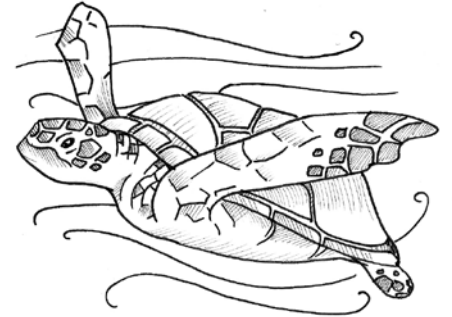
Baby sea turtles represent determination and bravery in their struggle to survive - they must take their first steps, defenceless, across the sand, facing danger from many predators as they make their way to the sea. The baby turtles are also associated with the star constellation the Pleiades (the Seven Sisters) because the constellation first appears in the predawn time as the baby turtles are hatching, helping to guide them to the sea. The Pleiades constellation is also a very special group of stars for First Nations in North America who believe that the Pleiades is the doorway to the star world.

11. POLYNESIA

Many peoples who live in this group of islands wear tattoos of turtles to honour the sacredness of the turtle to their culture, and have ancient carvings of turtles as symbols of leadership and fertility.

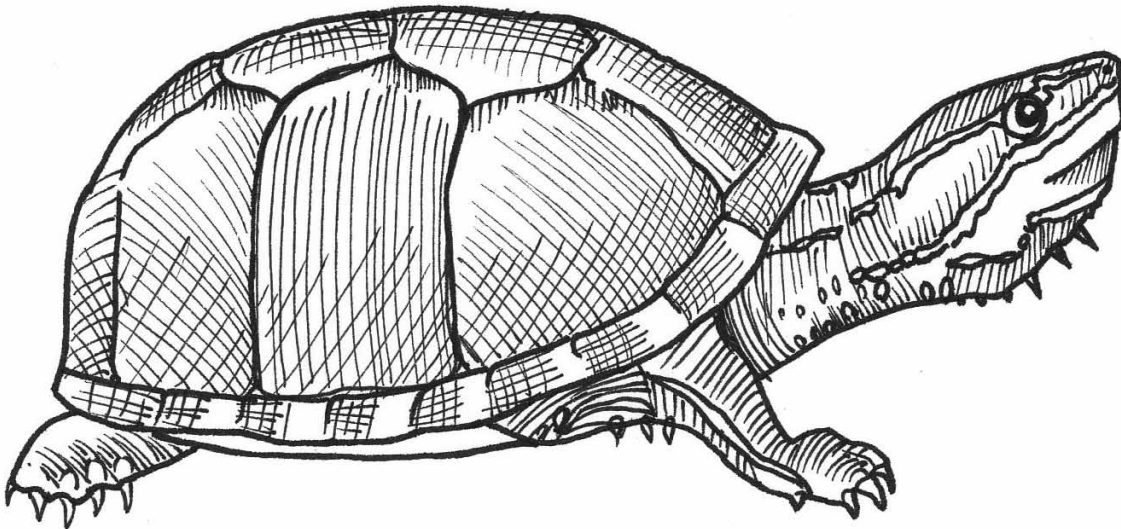
12. HAWAII

The green sea turtle is especially honoured because one of the ancient teachings tells how a Hawaiian turtle could transform itself into a human form if needed, to protect children playing at the ocean's edge and to provide good drinking water.



13. AUSTRALIA AND TORRES ISLAND

Coastal communities in Northern Australia have honoured the turtle for its leadership, patience, fertility, and determination to find its way home during nesting time, and have depended upon it as an important source of food. Turtle oil is used as a medicine.

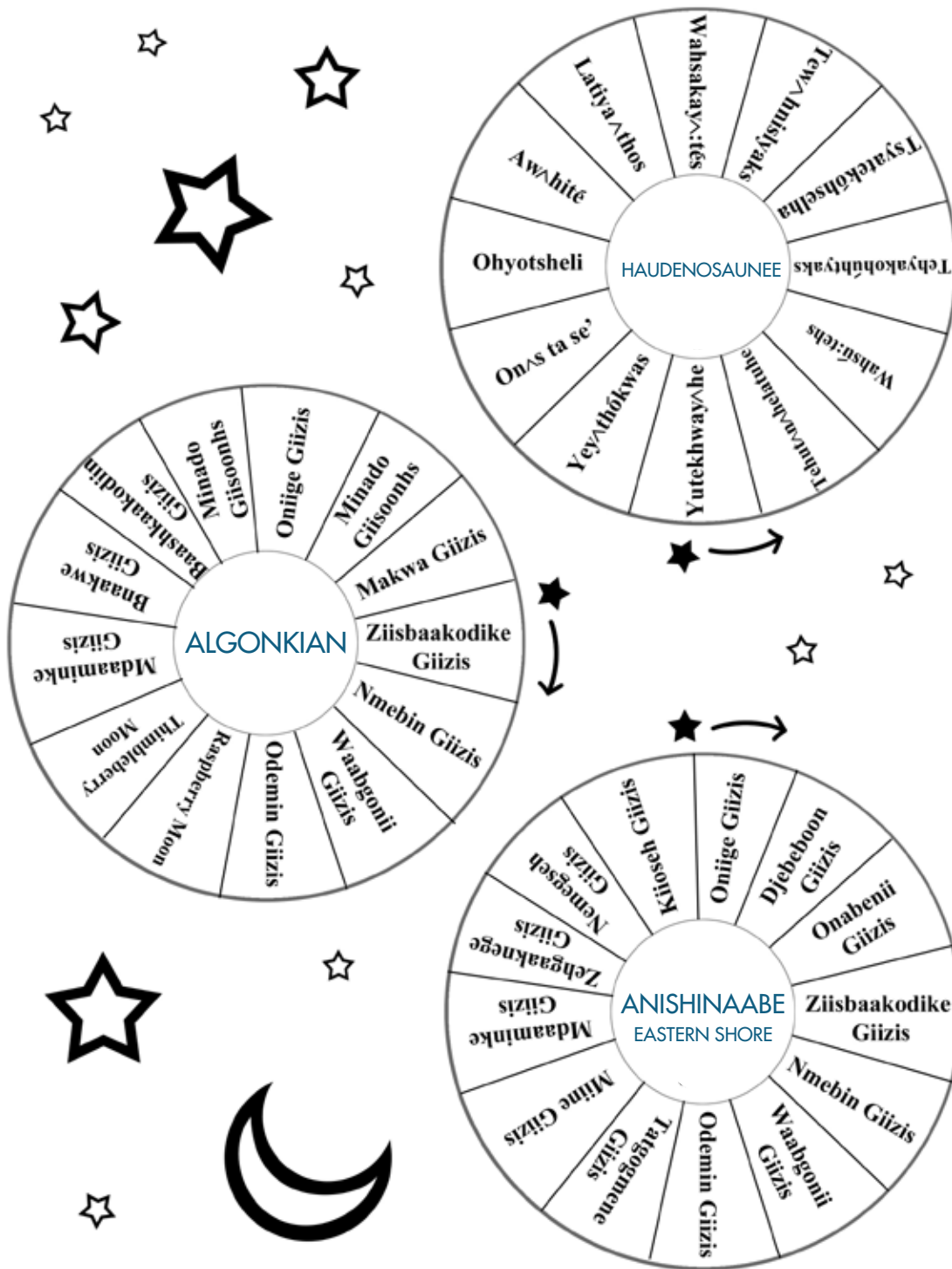


13 Moons



Student Worksheet

1C - 13 MOONS ON A TURTLE'S BACK 1/4



The Haudenosaunee year begins with the Mid-winter ceremonies. Mid-winter ceremonies take place over several days in January.

Student Worksheet

1C - 13 MOONS ON A TURTLE'S BACK (CONTINUED 2/4)



Student Worksheet

1C - 13 MOONS ON A TURTLE'S BACK (CONTINUED 3/4)



Mid-Winter is a multi-day ceremony for the beginning of the New Year. The ceremony that follows is Giving Thanks to the Maple as it is taught that the Maple tree is the leader of all the trees in the natural world. The running of the Maple sap marks the re-awakening of Mother Earth after her long winter sleep.

The *Thunder Ceremony* is held when we hear the first thunder in Spring, to welcome back our Grandfathers - The Thunder Beings, so that they may resume their task of cleansing the air and replenishing the waters of Mother Earth. *The Seed Ceremony* is to give thanks to the seeds whose power provides food for the people. *The Strawberry Ceremony* occurs in June, when the wild strawberries are ripe. The Strawberry is recognized as the leader of all of the medicine plants.

The String Bean and Green Corn Ceremonies are held next. Beans, Corn and Squash are the staples of our traditional diet and are known as *The Three Sisters*. *The Harvest Ceremony* marks the end of the ceremonial cycle.

At that time, we acknowledge our Mother the Earth for providing us with all that we need to survive as all of our ceremonies revolve around giving thanks for the gifts that we have been given.



MY JOURNAL

CHALLENGE:

