GORD DOWNIE & WENJACK CHANIE FUND

Lesson Plan

INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

The Truth in Truth and Reconciliation

Designed alongside Darin Corbiere, author and creator of The Truth in Truth and Reconciliation Game!

SUGGESTED AGES:

Grade 10 to Adult

SUGGESTED SUBJECT AREAS:

Indigenous Issues, Social Justice, Media Literacy, Creative Expression

DURATION:

90-140 minutes

Disclaimer: Educators and group leaders are responsible for ensuring lessons and materials presented in their classrooms or groups are appropriate for their unique students.

MATERIALS:

- Chart paper, sticky notes, or whiteboard
- Scissors and tape or glue
- Printed Truth and Consequence Cards and game board that represents Turtle Island (provided below)
- TRC Calls to Action Booklet (found in the Legacy Schools Toolkit or online at **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation**, **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action)**
- Images or video clips from the game's publisher – **Medicine Wheel Publishing**
- Journals or notebooks for personal reflection

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Identify ways in which colonialism has impacted Indigenous Peoples in Canada
- Reflect on the connections between land, language, culture, and identity
- Understand the role of truth as a foundation for reconciliation
- Further explore these themes through the full board game experience

INTRODUCTION

This lesson introduces learners to foundational concepts of truth and reconciliation in Canada. By engaging with a shortened version of The Truth in Truth and Reconciliation board game, participants will begin to understand how colonization impacted Indigenous communities and why truth is essential to reconciliation.

1. Land Acknowledgment & Introduction (10–20 minutes)

Begin with a Land Acknowledgment

- You can find guidance for crafting one on the DWF website, **Creating your own Land Acknowledgement**

Pose the central question:

  - "What does truth mean in the context of reconciliation?"

2. Theme Exploration with the Game (40-60 minutes)

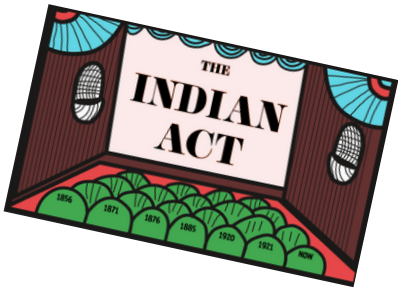
Introduce the board game

"In The Truth in Truth and Reconciliation board game, players experience how colonization disrupted Indigenous communities. The goal is to reclaim Land, Language, Culture, and Identity by collecting four Eagle Feathers, each symbolizing healing.

Players face obstacles and draw different cards during the game. One key card is the Shame Card, which highlights the lasting impacts of colonization. For example, players may get this card by answering a question incorrectly about residential schools, such as which churches have or haven't apologized. This encourages honest reflection on Canada's history."

SHOW THE GAME BOARD IMAGE AND SHARE 2–3 SAMPLE CARDS WITH THE GROUP.

ACTIVITY:



Research and add your own Truth card to the deck!

- In small groups, students research the History of Canada and compile facts (truths) which they can add to the deck.
- Categorize the cards in their respective decks. For example, if you find a fact about the **Indian Act**, add it to an 'Indian Act deck'.
- Come up with 'Consequences'. Did the truth or fact that you discovered have consequences? Who did they affect? Which of the four values are lost or gained? Is the fact something that earns a 'Shame Card'?

Discuss as a group:

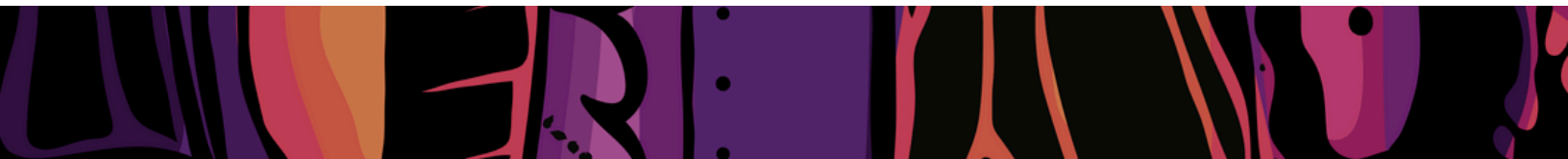
- What emotions do these scenarios bring up?
- How do these "game moments" reflect the real experiences of Indigenous people?

3. PARTNER OR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (10-15 MINUTES)

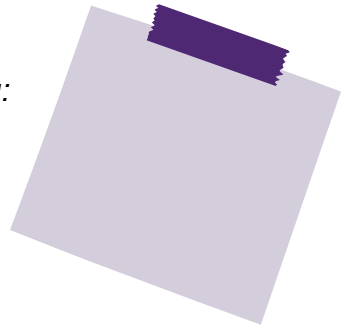
Encourage learners to take notes in a journal or notebook.

Choose 3–5 of the following reflection prompts:

- What does reconciliation mean to you personally?
- How do government actions still affect Indigenous communities today?
- What's the difference between "truth" and "consequence" in this context?
- How might it feel to lose access to your traditional land, language, ways of doing, culture, and other elements that make up your identity?
- What are some actions non-Indigenous people can take to support reconciliation?



4. PERSONAL REFLECTION (10-15 MINUTES)



Invite learners to journal or respond using sticky notes to the following:

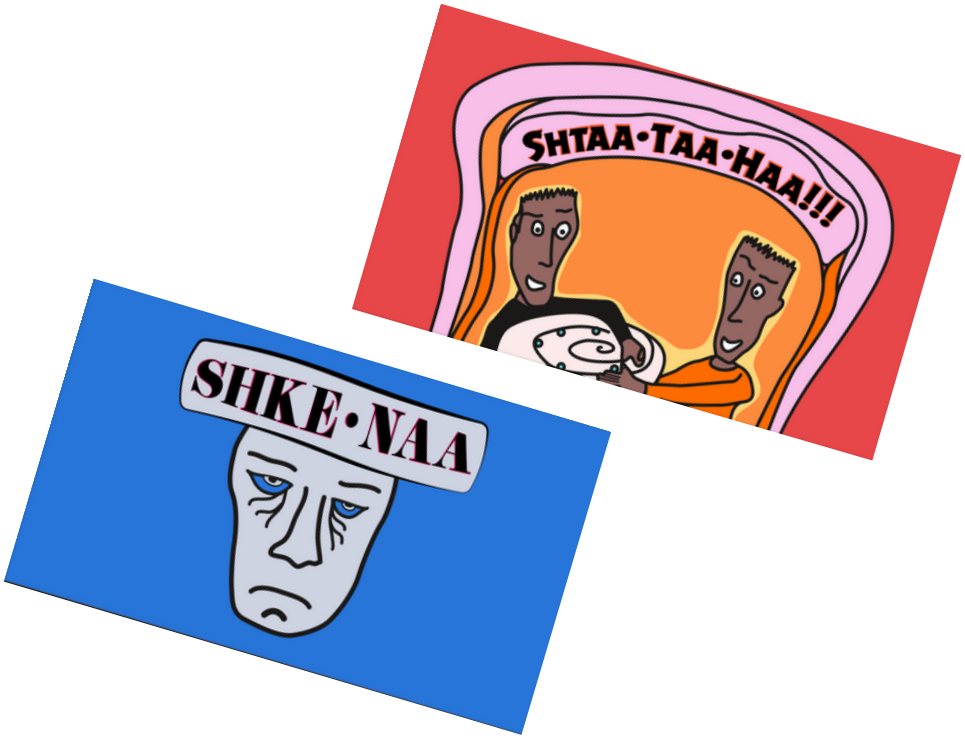
- “One thing I learned today that surprised me was…”
- “One question I still have is…”
- “One action I can take toward reconciliation is…”

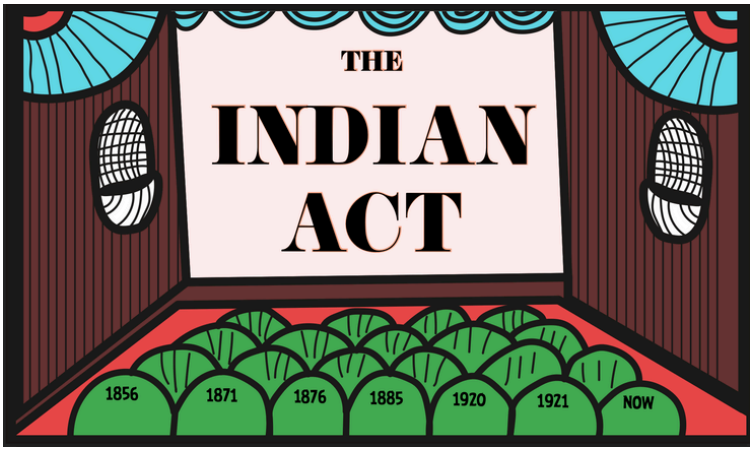
CLOSING NOTES:

This lesson is designed as an entry point for deeper engagement. Participants can explore the full **The Truth in Truth and Reconciliation board game** and continue learning through the resources provided by the **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation** and the **Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund**.

ASSESSMENT:

Assessment can be based on students' participation in discussions, engagement with the material, and the quality of their reflections during the activity.





Mica Bay Incident - November 1849

Anishinaabe Ojibwe and Metis leaders from Sault Ste. Marie seize an illegal mine at Mica Bay. One year later the Robinson Treaties are signed, and huge tracts of land are surrendered to the Crown. In spite of the Ojibwe chiefs' efforts, the Metis are excluded from these treaties.

Metis Player loses 1 Culture, 1 Identity and 1 Land Card.

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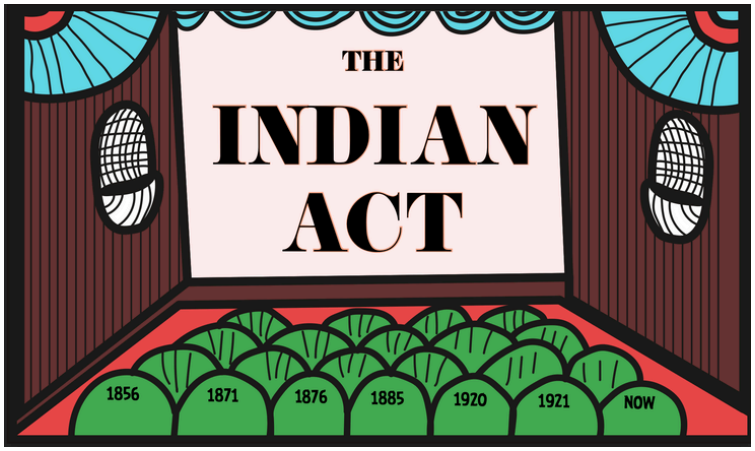

The Indian Residential School. You SPOKE your own Indigenous Language! Now you must be punished!

You MUST NOT SPEAK for the next Three Turns, and each Indigenous Player loses 2 Language Cards

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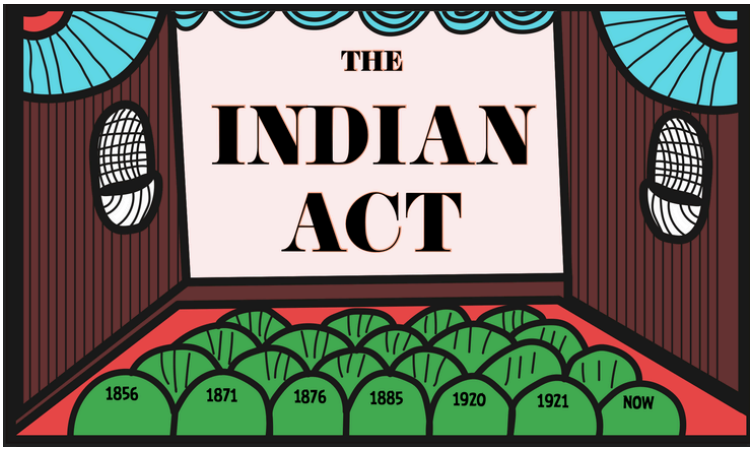

The Sixties Scoop

Over a period of 15 years from 1960, an estimated 16,000 Indigenous children were removed from their families by Children's Aid Societies and adopted out to non-indigenous people. The impact was devastating.

Indigenous Players Lose 1 Language, 1 Culture and 1 Identity Card

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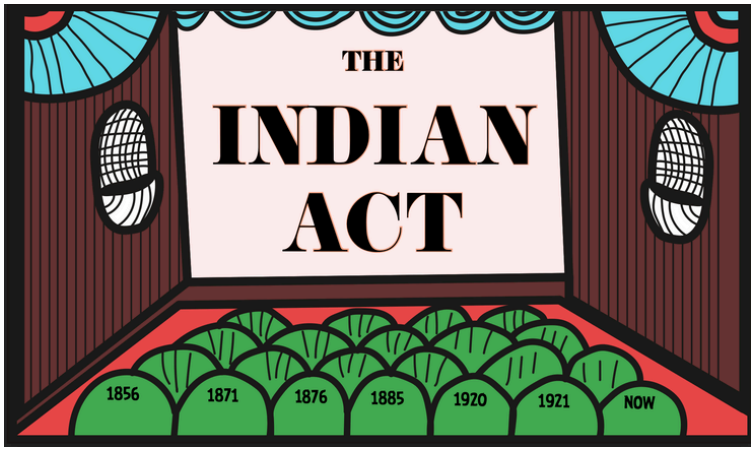

The Millennial Scoop

After generations of losing children to the Indian Residential Schools and the 60's Scoop, indigenous children continue to be removed from their homes at very high rates.

Indigenous Players lose 1 Language, 1 Culture and 1 Identity Card

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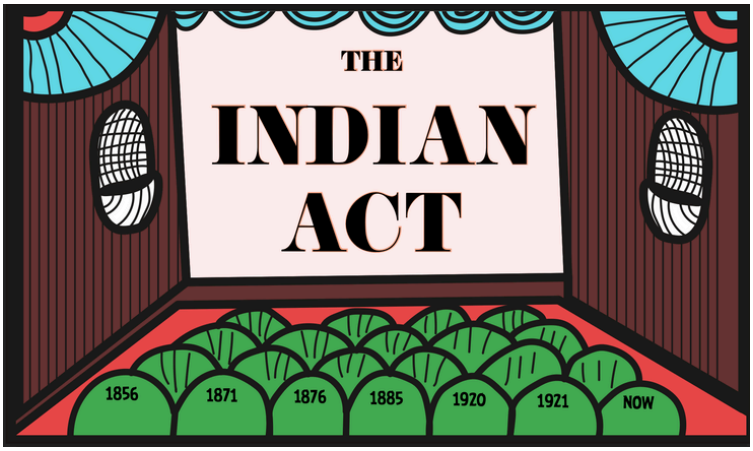

Six Nations, Ontario 1923

On the orders of the Crown, the RCMP storm the territory and overthrow the traditional Long House government, replacing it with an Indian Act government.

Indigenous players lose 2 Culture and 2 Identity Cards

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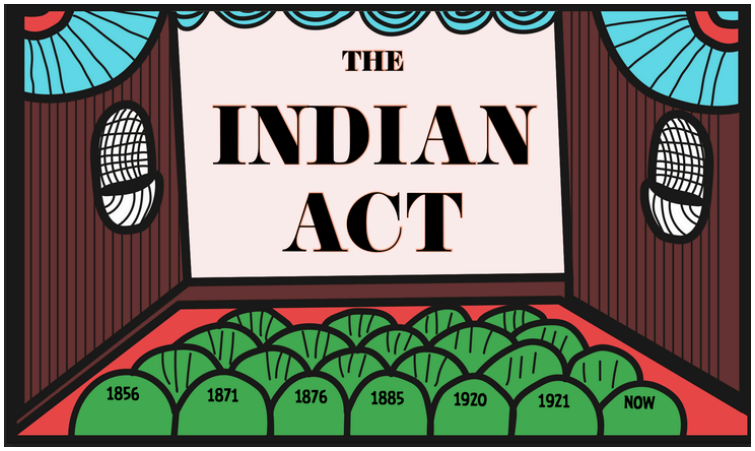

Written tests are given to inmates at various institutions. Those who fail the test are sterilized (their ability to have children is removed). Nearly 2,700 people undergo this process, the majority are Indigenous.

This happened in Alberta from 1928 to 1972 under the "Sexual Sterilization Act".

Indigenous Players lose 1 Culture and Identity Card

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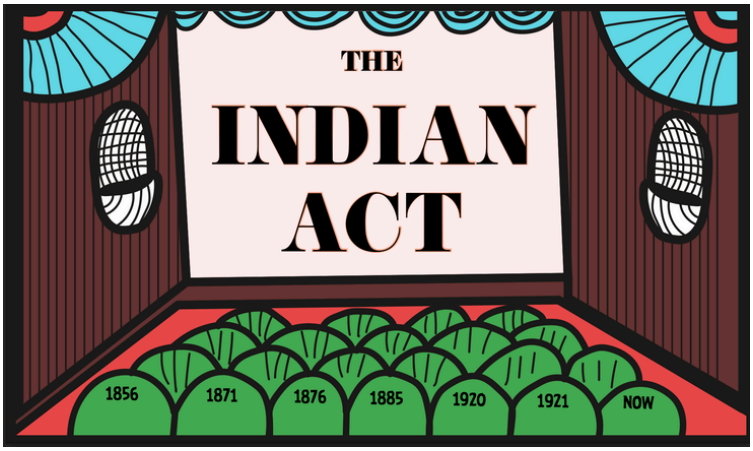

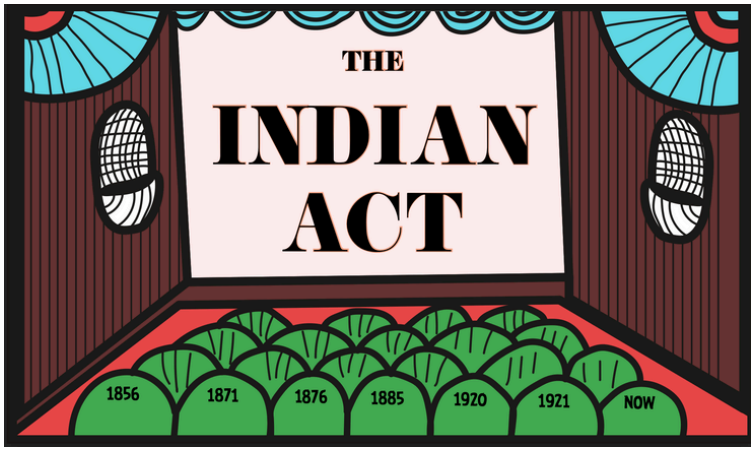

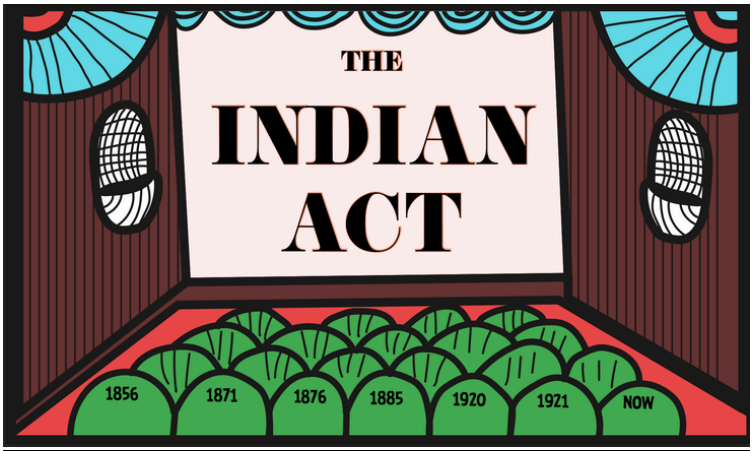
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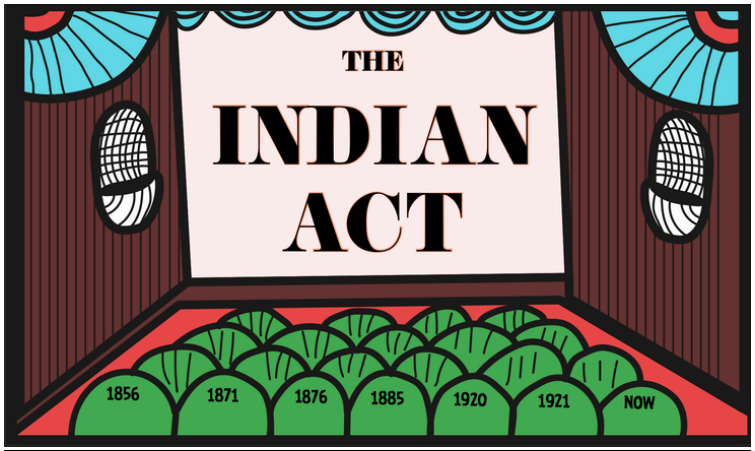
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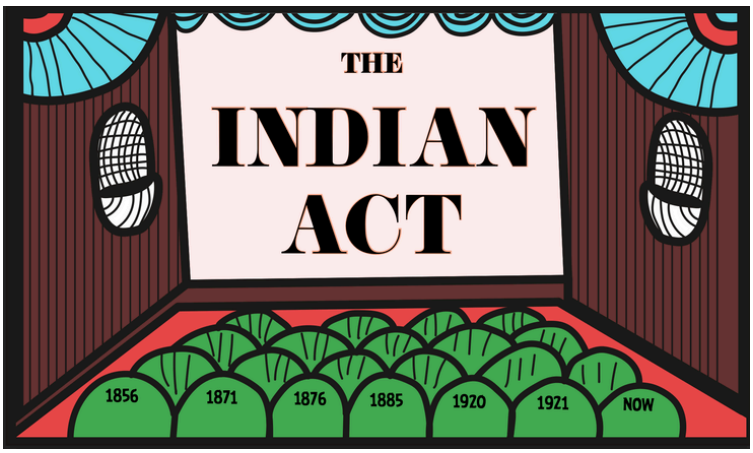
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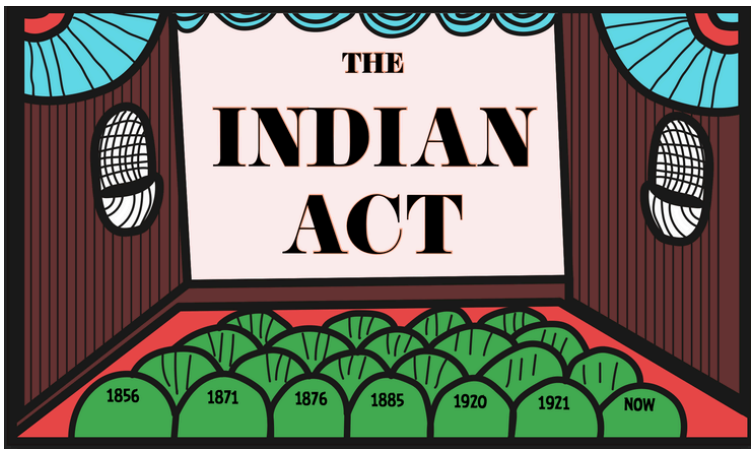
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