



Introduction

PROGRAM QUESTION	What is Reconciliation?
UNIT	Introduction
TIMELINE	45-120 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the purpose and findings behind the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- To inform students on the effects of residential schools in Canada through individual's stories
- To reflect on what reconciliation means to us and honour the truth through a digital art tile

CONTENT

This introductory session will inform youth about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and explain Canada's residential school system. Canada's residential school system was created to weaken Indigenous cultures and assimilate them to a Euro-centric way-of-knowing. These schools existed for more than a century, but survivors' experiences and abuses were hidden for most of Canada's history.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission "spent six years travelling to all parts of Canada to hear from the Aboriginal people who had been taken from their families as children, forcibly if necessary, and placed for much of their childhoods in residential schools" ([Preface, Executive Summary](#)).

The Final Report shares these survivor stories and seeks out further evidence to understand Canada's residential school system. It is imperative that Canadians know the truth of Canada's history and no longer hide behind a multicultural and democratic global reputation. This is not intended to place blame or shame; only when we know the truth can we start our journey toward reconciliation.



“Reconciliation requires that a new vision, based on a commitment to mutual respect, be developed. It also requires an understanding that the most harmful impacts of residential schools have been the loss of pride and self-respect of Aboriginal people, and the lack of respect that non-Aboriginal people have been raised to have for their Aboriginal neighbours. Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian one. Virtually all aspects of Canadian society may need to be reconsidered” (VI, Truth & Reconciliation Commission).

ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY	Where are the children?	
TIMELINE	45-90 minutes	
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are the children? Click here to access the webpage • Reconciliation Google Slide - Click here to access • MS Paint, Photoshop, or art utensils - canvas or paper, crayons/markers/paint 	
1 Explore the Google slide as a group. Afterwards, ask learners to explore the “Where are the children?” webpage, and to choose a story to listen to. Warn them that the stories may be difficult to listen to, or may be triggering.	2 Discuss as a group or in small groups, using the prompts below.	3 Create the Project of Heart Tiles - see “Challenge” section below.

Prompts :

Which story did you listen to? Tell your group about it.

How did the story make you feel? Why do you think it made you feel that way?

What kind of damage did the residential schools create?

What can be done to make amends for this damage?

What action can you take to promote healing from this damage? What actions could your school take? Your community?

How is listening to a residential school survivor’s story an act of reconciliation?



RESOURCES / NOTES

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada – Reconciliation:

<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1400782178444/1529183710887>

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada – TRC:

<https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525>

Spirit Bear’s Guide to the Calls to Action:

https://fncaringociety.com/sites/default/files/child_friendly_calls_to_action_web.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2gGiknDZA7CAcdQP0X4mfYWrf35HcxlcvxKyETBjr9zeE9flQ9QBfK_Kc

Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada:

http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Final%20Reports/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada – Educating our youth:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=rRZYRIC69Bw

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada – Calls to Action:

http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

Where are the Children: <http://wherearethechildren.ca/en/stories/>

CHALLENGE

Project of Heart Tiles

Learners are asked to create virtual “tiles” (in MS Paint, Photoshop, or on paper and photographed) for the [Project of Heart](#) and to share them on Experiences Canada’s Reconciliation Conversations [Facebook group](#).

In reaction to the activity and/or Experiences Canada’s webinar, learners should colour the tile to commemorate a child who died in residential school or to honour a survivor.

A mosaic will be made with all submissions and shared afterwards.

Physical tiles can also be purchased from Project of Heart here: <http://projectofheart.ca/tiles/>