

FROM APOLOGY TO  
RECONCILIATION

The Project



# THE PROJECT

*From Apology to Reconciliation: Residential School Survivors* was developed in response to the Government of Canada's formal apology to Aboriginal people who attended residential schools. The project was created to help Manitoba students in Grades 9 and 11 understand the history of the residential school experience, its influence on contemporary Canada, and our responsibilities as Canadian citizens.

## Project Components

The project includes a DVD and this accompanying Teacher's Guide, as well as an interactive website with a variety of resources, such as an annotated bibliography, a speakers bureau, and examples of student work. The annotated bibliography includes a variety of media, including print and electronic resources. The speakers bureau includes a list of residential school survivors in Manitoba who have had their stories recorded and made available through the DVD or online. Many of these individuals are also able to visit classrooms, if requested. The student work includes an interactive Gallery Walk of art and stories developed by students.

### ■ The DVD

*From Apology to Reconciliation: Manitoba Residential School Survivors – A Resource for Grades 9 and 11 Social Studies in Manitoba*

The DVD is intended to support teaching and learning about residential schools in Grades 9 and 11 Social Studies. It provides an Aboriginal perspective on the residential school experience, and is organized into the following three sections: the Past, the Present, and the Future. The DVD includes the following:

- archival footage and historical images of residential schools
- footage of the apology by Prime Minister Harper in the House of Commons
- responses to the apology by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leaders
- footage of the response to the apology delivered by Premier Gary Doer in the Manitoba Legislature
- a statement by Manitoba government Cabinet Minister Eric Robison, a residential schools survivor
- interviews with 11 residential school survivors, as well as family members (Survivors speak of their experiences in the schools, life before school, and the impacts that the residential school experience had on individuals, family, and community. In addition, survivors discuss the significance of the apology and their hopes for healing and reconciliation.)

- “A Conversation about *From Apology to Reconciliation*,” a short segment that features diverse Manitobans, including teachers, students, and others, discussing the DVD (This segment is intended to provide a model for classroom discussions about the DVD and residential schools.)
- a four-minute trailer giving an overview of the DVD can be accessed at [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/far/apology.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/far/apology.html)
- Teacher’s Guide

This Teacher’s Guide has also been created as part of the *From Apology to Reconciliation* project. It is intended to support teachers in teaching about residential schools in Canada and in using the DVD. The guide includes the following:

- a transcript of survivor interviews from the DVD
- suggested learning experiences
- strategies for teaching, learning, and assessment that are linked to relevant Manitoba-specific teacher resources
- blackline masters to support teaching and learning

Additional print copies of the Teacher’s Guide may be obtained from the Manitoba Text Book Bureau (stock number 80678), and a digital version is available at [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/docs.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/docs.html) or [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/abedu/cur.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/abedu/cur.html).

## Important Notes to Teachers

### 1.

*The residential school experience can be a very sensitive subject for both adults and children. It is very important that this topic be approached with respect. The following general guidelines are intended to assist teachers in dealing with controversial issues in the classroom.*

### Dealing with Controversial Issues

A fundamental aspect of social studies learning and teaching—at all grade levels, but particularly in the Senior Years—is the consideration of controversial issues—issues that involve ethics, principles, beliefs, and values. Teachers should not avoid controversial issues. Diversity of perspectives, beliefs, and values, as well as disagreement and dissension, are all part of living in a democratic and diverse society. Furthermore, discussion and debate concerning ethical or existential questions serve to motivate students and make learning more personally meaningful. The classroom provides a safe and supportive environment for students to meaningfully explore such topics.

The following guidelines will assist teachers in dealing with controversial issues in the classroom:

- approach all issues with sensitivity
- clearly define the issues
- establish a clear purpose for discussions
- establish parameters for discussions
- ensure that the issues do not become personalized or directed at individual students
- protect the interests of individual students by finding out in advance whether any student would be personally affected by the discussion (For example, teachers may ask students to respond to a written questionnaire in advance of the learning experience. Subsequently, an interview may be arranged with any student whose response indicates that he or she may be personally affected. This will provide an opportunity to discuss the student's concerns and to explore options, such as an alternate or adapted learning experience. The interview might include a guidance counselor or other staff member with whom the student is comfortable, such as a teacher or teacher's aide. Monitor student reactions in the classroom to gauge discomfort or stress. Formulate a policy and procedures in collaboration with students for those who are unexpectedly affected by classroom discussions or learning/teaching materials: "If you're feeling uncomfortable, what should be done?")
- exercise flexibility by permitting students to choose alternative assignments
- accept the fact that there may not be a single "right answer" to a question or issue
- respect every student's right to voice opinions or perspectives or *to remain silent*
- help students clarify the distinction between informed opinion and bias
- help students seek sufficient and reliable information to support various perspectives
- allow time to present all relevant perspectives fairly and to reflect upon their validity
- encourage students to share their thoughts and feelings with their families

Adapted from *Grade 9 Social Studies: Canada in the Contemporary World: A Foundation for Implementation*. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2007.

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**2.**

*Students may have a parent and/or other relative at home or within the extended family or community who is a residential school survivor. When a child shares his or her learning about residential schools with family or community members, it may be the first time that the subject has been discussed in the home, as survivors are often reluctant to talk about their experiences. This may trigger an emotional reaction in a survivor who has buried painful memories of the school experience.*

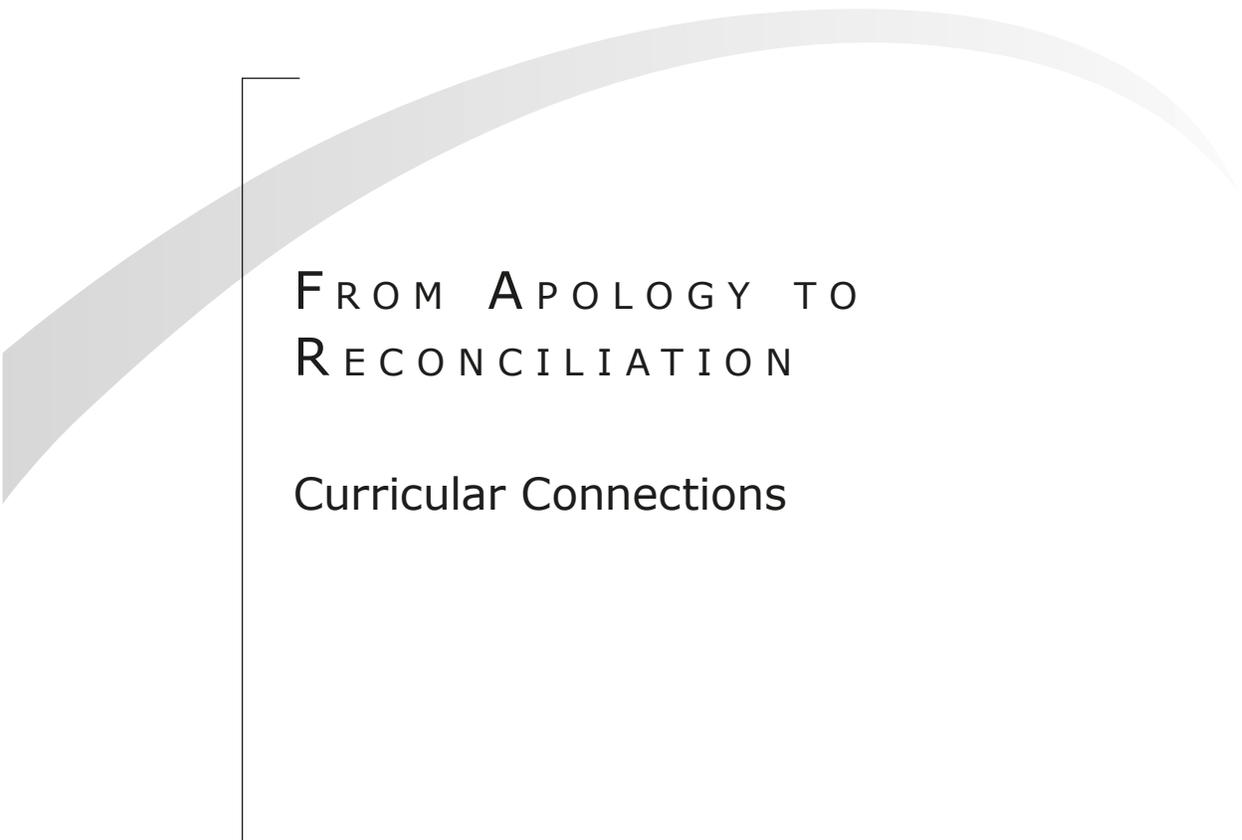
It is recommended that parents or caregivers be informed well in advance that their child will be learning about residential schools and that supports be made available to families, whether through school staff or by referral to an outside agency.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has a website that offers a 24-hour Indian Residential School Crisis Line “for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of his or her residential school experience.” The crisis line also offers information on other health supports provided by the Health Canada Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s website may be accessed at [www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=9](http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=9).

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**3.**

*The teaching of controversial or sensitive topics, such as residential schools, may be a cause for concern to some parents. It is recommended that school divisions address the issue of parental concern proactively by sending informational letters alerting parents when topics that may be controversial in nature are being taught, and/or inviting parents to a meeting to discuss the issue with teachers and administrators. Parents can then make an informed choice whether to allow their children to participate.*



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Curricular Connections



# CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

*From Apology to Reconciliation: A Resource and Guide for Grades 9 and 11 Social Studies Teachers in Manitoba* is intended to support teaching and learning about residential schools in the Grades 9 and 11 social studies curriculum. Intended to reflect the many voices and stories that comprise the Canadian experience, past and present, this curriculum is inclusive of Aboriginal, francophone, and diverse cultural perspectives.

## Core Concepts

Citizenship education is fundamental to living in a democratic society. A critical consideration of citizenship provides students with opportunities to explore democratic values, and to determine their responsibilities and rights as participants in civil society. Students explore the complexities of citizenship in Canada and in the global context, as well as environmental citizenship and citizenship for the future.

## General Learning Outcomes

The general learning outcomes (GLOs) are the basis for the specific learning outcomes (SLOs), and provide a conceptual structure for social studies. Six GLOs are identified for all grades: Identity, Culture, and Community; The Land: Places and People; Historical Connections; Global Interdependence; Power and Authority; and Economics and Resources.

## Contemporary Values

Important student values and attitudes that are developed in Grade 9 include a commitment to democratic values, a willingness to take appropriate and ethical social action, and an appreciation of cultural diversity. Students explore the historical and contemporary complexities of citizenship and identity, considering the challenges and opportunities that emerge when groups with differing identities and perspectives interact with one another.

## Historical Perspectives: Grade 11

The Grade 11 History of Canada curriculum supports citizenship as a core concept and engages students in historical inquiry. Through this process, students become historically literate and better able to understand the Canada of today. Students learn to take a historical perspective in order to interpret the past as it may have been experienced by the people who lived in it. Students learn to consider the moral dimension of events in the past and the value judgments that may influence historical accounts.

## Kindergarten to Grade 8 Prior Knowledge

Elements of the Manitoba residential school experience can be introduced to students through the social studies curriculum as early as Grade 4. However, due to the sensitive nature of the topic and the controversial issues that might arise, the residential school experience must be approached with respect and sensitivity.

- Grade 4 focuses on living in Canada and Manitoba as well as the history of Manitoba
- Grade 5 explores people and stories of Canada to 1867
- Grade 6 explores Canada from 1867 to the present
- Grade 7 focuses on people and places in other places
- Grade 8 examines societies of the past

## *Grade 9: Canada in the Contemporary World*

### Grade 9

In Grade 9, students study Canada in the contemporary world.

- The first cluster of Grade 9 is “Diversity and Pluralism in Canada,” which explores Canadian diversity and social injustices in history.
- Cluster 2, “Democracy and Governance in Canada,” examines the relationship among democracy, justice, and Canadian citizens.
- Cluster 3, “Canada in the Global Context,” focuses on the dynamic relationship between national and global citizenship.
- Cluster 4, “Canada: Opportunities and Challenges,” explores the emerging Canadian society through diversity, social justice, the effects of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the effects of exclusion and discrimination, the effects of societal and technological changes, the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, and the environment.

## *Grade 11: History of Canada*

### Grade 11

In Grade 11, students study the history of Canada and how it has shaped the Canada of today. Students examine the history of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, as defined by the following Enduring Understandings from the Grade 11 Social Studies curriculum:

- The relationship between First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples moved from autonomous coexistence to colonialism to the present stage of renegotiation and renewal.
- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples have achieved constitutional recognition of their unique status as Aboriginal peoples in Canada, along

with recognition and affirmation of their existing Aboriginal and treaty rights.

The Grade 11 Social Studies curriculum is organized into five thematic/chronological clusters:

Cluster 1 (to 1763): First Peoples and Nouvelle-France

Cluster 2 (1763–1867): British North America

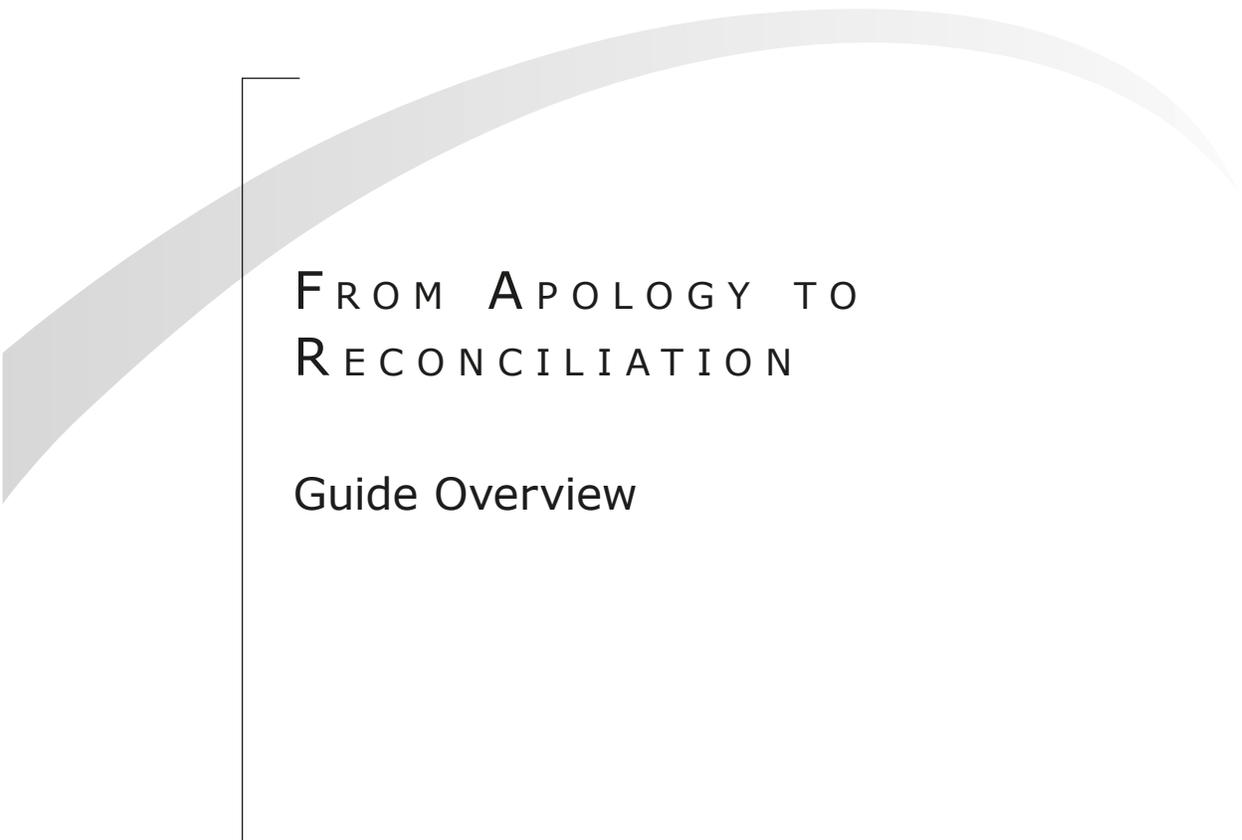
Cluster 3 (1867–1931): Becoming a Sovereign Nation

Cluster 4 (1931–1982): Achievements and Challenges

Cluster 5 (1982–present): Defining Contemporary Canada

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## Notes



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Guide Overview



# GUIDE OVERVIEW

This teacher's guide is divided into three clusters:

**Cluster 1**—"The Past" explores the history of residential schools, traditional Indigenous cultures, their practices and world views, and the changes brought about by residential schools in Canada. It includes reflections from survivors.

**Cluster 2**—"The Present" examines Indigenous perspectives of life in Canada beginning with the events that led up to the historical apology. It includes reflections from survivors.

**Cluster 3**—"The Future" explores the next steps toward reconciliation, including the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada as well as a comparative look at international initiatives that focus on life after residential schools. It includes reflections from survivors and family members.

## Cluster Overviews

Each cluster begins with an **overview** and includes connections to the Grades 9 and 11 Social Studies curricula. Each learning experience within a cluster focuses on a concept related to the cluster. Each cluster includes a learning experience entitled "**Survivors Speak**," which features strategies that focus on survivor statements from the DVD. Each cluster concludes with "**Looking Back**," a learning experience that includes strategies that may be used for assessment of learning. Learning experiences may be taught as "stand-alone" studies or consecutively as one large cluster.

**In each learning experience, there are numerous teaching/learning strategies. Teachers are not expected to use each strategy. However, depending on the student grouping, the time devoted to the learning experience, and the additional supports, more than one strategy may be used.**

This guide can be used to support both Grades 9 and 11 Social Studies, as outlined earlier. Strategies are open-ended and should be adapted to meet learners' needs

## Assessment *for* and *as* Learning

Most learning strategies are accompanied by a blackline master (BLM). These BLMs can be reviewed, discussed, or assessed to determine where students are at in their learning and to plan for next steps. Where BLMs are not possible, strategies include actions that can be observed as assessments *for* and *as* learning.

## Assessment of Learning

Each cluster concludes with a “**Looking Back**” learning experience, which provides an opportunity to review and to assess student learning. Teachers may use one or more of the “Looking Back” teaching/learning strategies as the basis of a summative assessment.

## Suggested Teaching Time

Teachers should plan for a minimum of six hours of classroom time to address the material in this guide.

## Voices of Survivors: Excerpts from the DVD Interviews

Teachers may use “Voices of Survivors” as an activating strategy to introduce students to the topic of residential schools. Themes include diversity of experiences, responses to the experience of residential schools, and survivor issues. For example, students may read and respond to selected quotes in a class discussion, or discuss the quotes in small groups and record their responses in their journals. Teachers may assess student responses to determine prior knowledge and to determine teaching and learning strategies.

“What I remember about growing up in Norway House as a small child is that we all lived on the reserve there and it was still a very natural place. There were no roads—[it was] what I guess what people would call isolated today. The mail plane came in once a week. And there were hardly any motorboats, outboard motors, or Skidoos or vehicles of any type. We were still very much living off the land.”

— **Kathy Bird**, residential school survivor

“I remember when we were growing up as Michif [Métis] people, there was no English. There was just Michif language and a Michif way of life.”

— **Grace Zoldy**, residential school survivor

“During the 11 years that I lived at that school, I was systematically stripped of dignity and pride, and I really hated myself for who I was, as an Indian.”

— **Mary Courchene**, residential school survivor

“...I was in school when Ronnie S died. From September to the end of October, we used to hear him cry on the other side, on the boys’ side...Every night we’d hear him crying....But one morning we didn’t hear no sound. We looked at each other and wondered why. Next morning we learned that he had died during the night.”

— **Ann Callahan**, residential school survivor

“People who are my age and older have children and grandchildren: those ones also pick up the behaviours, the thought patterns of the people who have raised them. So you end up having multiple generations who aren’t actually in boarding school but are being affected by it. When we look at Aboriginal gangs, domestic violence, poverty, disease, we see the results of boarding school. If we look at all of these different things, we can see what it is that we need to deal with.”

— **Dan Thomas**, residential school survivor

“I think that the federal apology means that the government has realized and accepted their mistake. They have seen the harm it has done to all of us. Apology meant they have taken the responsibility. Because of all that, I think we have to forgive also.”

— **Flora Zaharia**, residential school survivor

“... to me the apology is just words, because it has no impact upon me other than somebody spoke some words. They said, ‘I’m sorry, but I’m continuing business as usual.’ So I haven’t seen any changes come about in the lives of our people and certainly none that I’ve experienced personally. The housing budget hasn’t changed. The health budget hasn’t changed. Nobody’s putting in the roads that people need. Nobody seems to be addressing the high rate of suicide that we have in our communities. Educational budgets haven’t changed. What’s the difference after the apology? To me, it was just words if it’s not followed up by action.”

— **Dan Thomas**, residential school survivor

## A Conversation about *From Apology to Reconciliation*

Manitoba Education brought together a diverse group of Manitobans, including teachers, students, and other Manitobans, to view and discuss the DVD *From Apology to Reconciliation*. The conversation was filmed and the approximately half-hour long segment has been included in the DVD.

“A Conversation about *From Apology to Reconciliation*” is intended to provide a model that teachers can use to create discussions in the classroom about *From Apology to Reconciliation* or about residential schools in general.

The accompanying **Questions Toolkit** (Appendix 5) includes the questions discussed by the participants in the Conversation segment. The toolkit may be used as a starting point for discussion about the DVD and residential schools. Teachers may wish to adapt the questions or to substitute other questions to suit the grade level, makeup, background, and knowledge of the class, or to align more closely to a particular course of inquiry.

Suggestions for using the **Question Toolkit** are included. See Appendix 5.

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## Notes