

Subject: Indigenous Learning and Authentic Cultural Experiences

Grades: 3 – 12

Learning Outcomes

- Students explore a wide variety of arts expressions made by local Indigenous artists from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities.
- Students will learn how different art mediums and technology can tell a story.
- Students show respect and cultural sensitivity when discussing and analyzing artwork.



2021 Indigenous Placemaking at Calgary Public Library

Length: 7.5 minutes

calgarylibrary.ca/2021placemaking



2019 Indigenous Placemaking at Calgary Public Library

Length: 2 minutes

calgarylibrary.ca/2019placemaking



2018 Indigenous Placemaking at Calgary Public Library

Length: 2 minutes

calgarylibrary.ca/2018placemaking



NEXT



What is Indigenous Placemaking at Calgary Public Library?

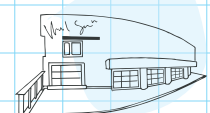
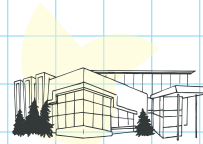
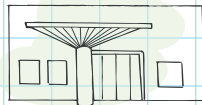
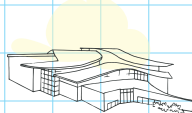
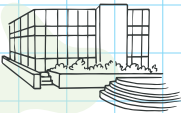
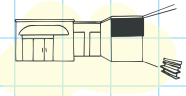
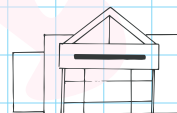
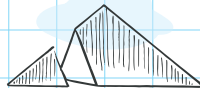
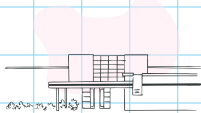
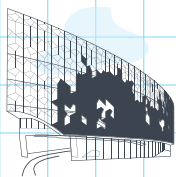
"To me, placemaking means being made to feel at home, welcome, seen, and represented in public spaces." Jasmine, Indigenous Placemaking Coordinator at Calgary Public Library

The Placemaking Art program at Calgary Public Library brings together artists, each with a connection to Treaty 7, to contribute art to ten public libraries. Indigenous artists create traditional and contemporary artworks that promote understanding of Indigenous peoples and cultures within Treaty 7 territory. These pieces make Indigenous visual and oral storytelling more prominent in Library locations.

The creation of these works inspires collaboration among artists of all disciplines, backgrounds, and experience levels. Having these pieces in the Library helps create an inclusive space for sharing and gathering of all Nations and communities to learn and grow together.

Learn about each artist and their work at calgarylibrary.ca/indigenous-placemaking

Library locations with Indigenous Placemaking: Central, Crowfoot, Fish Creek, Forest Lawn, Judith Umbach, Saddletowne, Seton, Signal Hill, Shawnessy, and Village Square libraries.



The City of Calgary also has a growing Indigenous Public Art program, with artwork installed in both indoor and outdoor spaces in the city. Learn more at calgary.ca/arts-culture/public-art/indigenous-works

Guidelines for Educators: Experiencing and Reflecting on Contemporary Indigenous Art

- 1. Take Time to Listen and Learn:** Engage with artist statements, curatorial notes, and interviews to understand the work and the artist's point of view.
 - a. Who made this work?
 - b. In which Nation, community, and / or on which treaty land was the artist born?
Where do they live and make work today?
 - c. What are the materials and technology the work is made with?
 - d. What does the work share with the viewer about land, society, and stories?
 - e. What are the differences between the artist's perspective and a western perspective of the work? How is that portrayed or shown?

2. Move Beyond "Artifact": View contemporary Indigenous work as a living, evolving expression rather than a historical artifact. While traditional methods like beadwork and carving may be used, these are often applied to contemporary themes.

a. What is the difference between cultural practice and art making? Consider these quotes from Indigenous artists:

- i. Artist Jeffrey Gibson from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw says: "[Cultural practice and art making] have completely different intentions, completely different narratives, completely different histories, and, again, I think that must come from Native people. Oftentimes, we talk about our work in terms of a very personal biography and narrative."
- ii. In *Canadian Art Magazine* (July 2018) Leanne Betasamosake Simpson writes that "For Indigenous peoples — the restriction of our knowledge production and our influence to the local or into confined Indigenous spaces, or to "culture" rather than it being positioned as affecting — not just for Indigenous peoples, but for the world."
- iii. Rebecca Belmore, of the Lac Seul First Nation (Anishinaabe), says "The role of an artist is a worker, art-making is a job ... I am the artist amongst my people. Every society has its artists, and we have the responsibility to speak about how we are collectively in this moment in time. We have the responsibility to carry the past and look towards the future."

3. Reflect and share appropriately: Some artists or communities may request no photography of their work, especially during certain ceremonies or exhibitions. Think about what the art teaches you. Don't be in a hurry to post pictures or explain what they mean. Let the story come first. Be careful when you share and give credit to the artist. Raise the words of Indigenous people. Be kind when you talk about what you've learned. Tell stories, but don't change them. Respecting the art that you talk about, strengthens it.

4. Appreciate without Appropriating: Lead students in a discussion about how they might look at and speak about Indigenous art in a respectful way. Emphasize that students should not appropriate an artist's style or make a copy of an artwork. Every artist has a distinctive personal style that expresses their own viewpoints and students should strive to do the same. However, students may choose to represent similar themes, such as respect for the land, or be inspired by a formal element, such as using bright colours.

Additional activities to encourage student reflection on art are available in the Caretakers of the Land Educators Guide at calgarylibrary.ca/caretakers-of-the-land

