

PROGRAM: *Collecting Memory*

GRADE(S): 7 - 9

COST: \$2.00/Student

OFFERED: School Groups

DURATION: 60 minutes

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Collecting Memory:

Collecting Memory is a community-centred exhibition that considers how memory, history, and heritage are passed from one generation to the next – what do we choose to remember, and what is forgotten? As individuals and as a community, we take part in the process of experiencing, remembering, sharing, and reinterpreting. Our memories become part of a community narrative; a *collective memory*. Through artifacts, photographs, and interactive storytelling spaces, *Collecting Memory* invites students to reflect on the ways we remember, what we choose to keep, and how we can tell our stories together in the future.

This program will focus on how institutions like the Chilliwack Museum and Archives played a role in prioritizing dominant European colonial narratives while ignoring and overlooking the lived experiences of marginalized peoples. Students will learn about how the tradition of Coast Salish Weaving was lost due to colonization and cultural disruption, and how the technique was revived, preserved, and passed down to the new generation. By recognizing the varying consequences of colonization on underrepresented minorities in Canada, an inclusive narrative of our community's memory, history, and heritage can be shared in the future.

Program Objectives: Students will...

- Learn about the Stó:lō people through artworks and cultural belongings
- Know that colonization and forced assimilation caused many indigenous cultures, traditions, and belongings to be lost and continue to today.
- Acknowledge that museums have colonial roots and are taking steps towards diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Program Activities:

The program will run approximately 60 minutes, consisting of a guided tour of the semi-permanent exhibit, *Collecting Memory*, and a hands-on activity.

Guided Tour:

- *Collecting Memory* – Explore Chilliwack museum’s semi-permanent exhibit that looks at the community’s collective memory through a decolonizing lens.

Hands-on Activity:

- *Cardboard Loom Weaving* – Give weaving a try using your very own personal loom! Learn how skills and traditions can be passed down to generations and keep heritage alive.

BC Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies 7

- Big Ideas
 - o Economic specialization and trade networks can lead to conflict and co-operation between societies.
- Content
 - o Interactions and exchanges between past civilizations and cultures, including conflict, peace, trade, expansion, and migration.

Social Studies 8

- Big Ideas
 - o Exploration, expansion, and colonization had varying consequences for different groups.
- Content
 - o Interactions and exchanges of resources, ideas, arts, and culture between and among different civilizations.

Social Studies 9

- Big Ideas
 - o Collective identity is constructed and can change over time.
- Content
 - o Discriminatory policies and injustices in Canada and the world, such as the Head Tax, the *Komagata Maru* incident, residential schools, and World War I internment.

Arts Education 7

- Big Ideas
 - Through **art** making, one's sense of identity and community continually evolves.
 - Engaging in the arts develops people's ability to understand and express complex ideas.
- Content
 - Manipulation of elements and principles to create meaning in the arts, including but not limited to:
 - Visual arts: elements of design: line, shape, texture, colour, **form, value; principles of design: pattern, repetition, balance**, contrast, emphasis, **rhythm, movement**, variety, **proportion, unity, harmony**
 - **Ethical considerations** and **cultural appropriation** related to the arts

Arts Education 8

- Big Ideas
 - Individual and collective expression can be achieved through the **arts**.
 - **Artists** often **challenge the status quo** and open us to new perspectives and experiences.
- Content
 - Traditional and contemporary **Aboriginal arts** and arts-making processes
 - A variety of national and international **works of art** and artistic traditions from diverse cultures, communities, times, and places
 - **Ethical considerations** and **cultural appropriation** related to the arts

Arts Education 9

- Big Ideas
 - Identity is explored, expressed, and impacted through arts experiences.
 - The arts provide opportunities to gain insight into the perspectives and experiences of people from a variety of times, places, and cultures.
- Content
 - Traditional and contemporary Aboriginal worldviews and cross-cultural perspectives communicated through artistic works
 - The ethics of cultural appropriation and plagiarism

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Introduction

The program facilitator will greet the class in the Museum gift shop for a brief welcome and introduction of the program and activities. The facilitator will share guiding questions and provide an overview of behaviour expectations.

Guided Exhibit Visit

The students will be guided through the exhibit, *Collecting Memory* and be invited to make observations about how institutions like the museum have played a role in the colonialization of a community's memory and history. Students will be encouraged to think about how a community's history is formed and presented, and what can be done in the future to create a more inclusive narrative.

Hands-on Activity

After the tour, students will be led to the Curiosity Studio to participate in a hands-on activity inspired by Coast Salish Weaving. Students will learn the technical aspects of weaving, what a "warp" and "weft" are, and the techniques utilized in Coast Salish weaving and other traditional textiles.

Wrap-up and Discussion

The visit will finish off with discussion questions and reflections on the day. Students will talk about the techniques and symbols they used during the activity and reflect on how techniques and skills are also part of our heritage; along with objects, buildings, and even people.

IN-CLASS RESOURCES

The lessons and resources will allow the students to preview the themes and learning objectives of the museum program. While optional, the lessons will better prepare the students for the visit by allowing them to engage in the core themes such as heritage and community, as well as how lost traditions can be revived and continue to be passed down generations.

Pre-Visit Lesson Plans:

Weaving the Path: Forgotten Culture, Forgotten History

Grade Level: G7 – 9

Learning Objective:

Introduction:

Watch: [Weaving the Path](#) – Documentary with the Vancouver Mural Festival

Discussion Points:

- Coast Salish Weaving as a “way of life”
 - o What roles do these hand-woven blankets have for the Coast Salish people?
- Colonialism and the “Sleeping” Tradition
 - o Debra Sparrow says the weaving traditions didn’t “disappear” but says they were “put to sleep” for almost 100 years. Why does she use this phrase over “lost” or “extinct”? What does this tell us about the resilience of tradition and community?
- Heritage & Passing Down Traditions
 - o Think about a story, skill, recipe, or a tradition in your own family or culture that has been passed down through generations. Why is it important to protect those traditions, and what might happen if they aren’t actively shared with future generations?

Activity:

Students will write an exhibit label (around 100-150 words) that describes a Coast Salish blanket in a museum gallery. Below are examples of images of blankets that can be shown to students:

- [Twined Salish Weaving Sampler - Stonington Gallery](#)
- [Salish Blanket Co. | Granville Island B.C](#)
- [Weaving \(Sto:lo\) - 2019.026.004 | Chilliwack Museum & Archives](#)

The label must include:

- A title to draw the visitor’s attention and describe the blanket in a glance.
- History/significance of Coast Salish weaving
- The symbolism behind the pattern/colour (they can be creative with this)
- Why this blanket is valuable for future generations.

The Dogs That Grew Wool and the People Who Love Them: How to Read an article

Grade Level: G7 – 9

Learning Objective:

Introduction:

Listen to/read [The Dogs That Grew Wool and the People Who Love Them – Hakai Magazine](#) by Virginia Morell and narrated by Adam Dubose

Activity:

Split the class into groups of 4 and assign each group a section of the article. Each group will read, identify, and discuss:

- **Section 1: The Island Caretakers & their Dogs**
 - How did Coast Salish women keep the woolly dogs isolated on islands (like Chrome Island) so they wouldn't breed with hunting dogs?
 - What special diet did the Coast Salish people feed the dogs to keep their fur healthy?
- **Section 2: The European First Impressions**
 - What did explorers like Captain George and naturalist Archibald Menzies notice and write down in their journals in 1792?
 - How did they describe the appearance of the dogs and the texture of the fleeces?
- **Section 3: The Value of Coast Salish blankets**
 - How were these dog-hair blankets used?
 - How did they represent wealth, status, and generosity during events like marriages or potlatches?
- **Section 4: The Trade Shift & Disappearance**
 - What happened when the Hudson's Bay Company arrived with cheap, machine-made wool blankets?
 - Why did the practice of breeding and shearing wool dogs eventually fade away?

Get the class to come back together, then each group will share their findings. If there are multiple groups for each section, ask students to notice how each group observed similar and different points within the same section and the same article.

Finally, each student will use a standalone prompt to write a paragraph based on their group work and what the other groups shared with the class. If needed, run through the structure of a paragraph (Point, Evidence, and Explanation or PEE paragraph).

Prompt:

- According to this article by Virginia Morell, why did the arrival of European traders cause the extinction of the Coast Salish Woolly dog?

Recommended books and Audiovisual Resources:

- [Coast Salish Wool Weaving Center](#) is an organization dedicated to preserving and sharing generational knowledge on the tradition of Coast Salish weaving and spreading the joy, art, and lessons learned through the journey.
- [The Teachings of Mutton: A Coast Salish Woolly Dog](#) by Liz Hammond-Kaarremaa. Now extinct, the Coast Salish Woolly Dog used to be sheared like sheep to provide wool for the Coast Salish weaving. Hammond-Kaarremaa follows the story of a single dog, Mutton, whose pelt is being kept at the Smithsonian. Interviewing seven Coast Salish people in British Columbia and Washington, Hammond attempts to trace back the history of the Coast Salish Woolly dog, their significance, and their connection with the Coast Salish people.
- [The Fabric of Canada: Coast Salish Weaving - YouTube](#) In this short documentary video, hereditary Chief Janice George speaks about her love of Coast Salish weaving and the difficulty of finding someone who still holds the knowledge and tradition.
- [shishalh Weaving Workshop - Diamonds and Triangles](#) shíshálh weaver Raquel Joe explains the symbolism and patterns on her weaving as she shows how to weave on a traditional loom.
- [Coast Salish Textile Weaving – Slides – NLPS Learns](#) This set of slides from Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools show how sheep wool is processed and spun before being used for weavings.