

Lesson Focus: How is the environment important to First Peoples in the Southern Interior?

Materials:

- Internet access for videos
- Notebook, pencil

Invitation to Learn: You will be analyzing evidence to help you draw conclusions about the importance of the environment to First Peoples in the Southern Interior.

Watch and read the following. Be ready to discuss what you have learned.

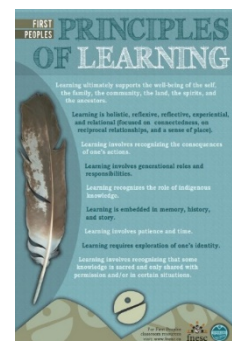
- [How Food was Given](#) (Okanagan Captikwl story)
- [Seasonal Rounds with Secwepemc People](#)
- [Through the Eyes of Elders](#)

Ask/Discuss:

- The environment can include natural features (e.g., rivers, animals, plants, climate) and human-made features (e.g., houses).
- Watch Again: How Food Was Given
 - What can you tell about the importance of plants and animals to the Okanagan people from this legend?
 - Discuss the importance of plants and animals in their life.
 - What are some plants, animals or other features of your environment that you feel are important to you and your community?

Learning from First Peoples

First People believe that there is a connection between culture, human needs, and the natural world and the land in which culture develops.





Conservation Practices



Location

“ We call the Grizzly our brother,
and so are using them as an umbrella species.
If you look after the Grizzlies, everything
else will be looked after. ”

— Randy James, Tsal'alh, St'at'imc Nation



Culture



Culture



Seasonal Activities



Four Food Chiefs



Beliefs

Look closely at the images above.

Have a discussion:

Review the terms:

- *stewards: one who cares for the Earth*
- *umbrella species: a species that when protected results in the protection of other species within its habitat*

What features of the environment do you see?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• mountains, forests, lakes, rivers, plants, animals
How do you think these features (e.g., landscapes, animals, plants) affect the First Peoples' way of life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Example: They believe that animals, plants, people, and water are all connected and they have the responsibility to care for the Earth.
What can you learn from this evidence about the environment in the Southern interior?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Example: About half of St'at'imc territory is protected space for grizzly bears.

Conservation Practice

- First Peoples in the Southern Interior of B.C. use their traditional knowledge of and respect for the environment to keep it healthy. The St'at'imc for example,

have created grizzly protection areas in their territory, using traditional knowledge of the grizzly's habitat and migration routes. Grizzlies need large areas of land, therefore maintaining their habitat helps to protect many other species with the St'at'imc territory.

Location

- The Southern interior region of B.C. is home to several different First Peoples including the St'at'imc, Secwepemc, Nlak'pamux, Okanagan and Ktunaxa.

Culture

- The St'at'imc have a strong cultural connection with the grizzly bear. It has a role in many of their stories, songs, and dances. The man, in the picture, is a St'at'imc Bear Dancer from Xwisten First Nation.

Beliefs

- The Okanagan (Syilx) people see themselves as caretakers of the land. They believe all living things are connected and need each other for their health and well-being.

Seasonal Activities

- When certain plants seed or blossom, this tells the Okanagan to begin a certain activity. Today, as in the past, the Okanagan rely on their traditional knowledge of the environment to know when and where to fish, hunt, and gather food.

Four Food Chiefs

- The Salmon is one of the Okanagan's four food chiefs. It is Chief of Beings that Live in the Water. The other food chiefs are Bear (Chief of Animals that Live on the Land), Bitterroot (Chief of Foods that Grow Beneath the Ground), and Saskatoon Berry (Chief of Foods that Grow Above the Land).

Notebook Time: (Answer in your notebook or on the attached worksheet)

Review all of the images and information from this lesson to complete your thoughts.

Important Features of the Environment in the Southern Interior

1. In the first column below, list or draw Important features of the environment for First Peoples in this region.
2. Circle one feature. In the second column, write or show why this feature is important to First Peoples in the Southern Interior. (You can record in point form – this is called a phrase.)

Feature of the Environment	Why It Is Important

3. Write 1 or 2 sentences about how their environment affects First Peoples in the Southern Interior and how they affect their environment.
