



Wanuskewin

kiskêyihtamowin

learning through experiences

*An educational virtual video tour of the stories and traditions
of the Indigenous people of the Northern Plains*



Wanuskewin is a proposed UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

“Wanuskewin Heritage Park now offers an educational video series regarding essential, land based learning topics. These topics are viewed through a western science lens as well as with Northern Plains Indigenous ways of knowing, highlighting the strengths of each. This “two eyed seeing” is the essence of Wanuskewin, which offers cultural and scientific perspectives to illustrate Indigenous and non Indigenous relationships. These videos can act as a critical teaching tool in classrooms, as these virtual tours provide important lessons in both pre and post contact history, culture and tradition, in an authentic and meaningful manner. The website clearly lays out curriculum connections and learning outcomes which makes it a valuable and convenient tool for educators. These videos provide safe virtual learning experiences at a time when student and staff safety are of the utmost importance in our society.”

*- George Rathwell
Former Director of Education
Saskatoon Public Schools*

“Indigenous people’s narratives speak of the resiliency and help learners to understand the natural world around them by building cultural awareness. These stories help reinforce our mental, spiritual, physical, and emotional development. This notion of Indigenous worldview grounds us and give us a foundational understanding through both traditional wisdom and knowledge shared orally since time and immemorial. As Indigenous people, we must never underestimate the power of our own stories and actively seek to incorporate them into our educational, and teaching practices, our daily lives, in our decision as a means of enhancing our well-being. Indigenous people have preserved their language, traditions, and culture, by retaining their oral stories, so that there is always a way to return to the original teachings. This is a process of going back, not just to discover their teachings, but to help them return to the good road and continue to be long life learners.”

*- TJ Warren
Masters in Education, University of Saskatchewan
Diné Nation RedMesa Az*

Our Story...

Wanuskewin's doors opened in 1992, as a non-for-profit board governed heritage park, located just on the periphery of Saskatoon. For nearly 30 years we have been providing thousands of educational tour experiences for students and visitors interested in learning about Northern Plains Indigenous culture and history. We are a proud National Historic Site with proposed UNESCO World Heritage Site designation, and winner and recipient of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Award (2016). We are proud partners in tourism within Saskatchewan and Canada. As industry leaders, with nearly 30 years of experience, we are confident that our expertise can enhance Indigenous curriculum learning competencies in school divisions across the country.

Six thousand years ago, Wanuskewin echoed with the thundering hooves of bison and the voices of Indigenous peoples from across the Northern Plains; the land still echoes with these stories that Wanuskewin is proud to share. Today visitors can relive the stories of a people who came here to hunt bison, gather edible plants, and escape the winter winds. Walking in their footsteps, you will understand why this site was a place of gathering, celebration, and of renewal with the natural world.



The story of Wanuskewin is just beginning to be uncovered. Some archaeological sites date back 6000 years with multiple occupation periods, making them special locations people returned to for generations; these sites provide clues to the daily existence of these early people. Tipi rings, stones cairns, pottery fragments, plant seeds, projectile points, egg shell fragments and animal bones all give evidence of active thriving societies. While some sites teach us about life on the Plains thousands of years ago, other sites like the Medicine Wheel still remain shrouded in mystery.



When we understand our connection to the land and the story of the first people, then we create environmental and social connections that relate to our actions and behaviors.

Let's Inspire Together

With nearly 30 years of experience providing educational programming and learning opportunities for students and educators, Wanuskewin has built a reputation in Saskatchewan, and Western Canada, that educators have come to trust and rely on to assist with integrating Indigenous perspectives and Ways of Knowing into curriculum content. Each year, we host thousands of students and visitors at our site seeking culturally relevant hands-on learning experiences. However, due to the current health crisis we are facing as an international community, many of these out-of-classroom learning opportunities have been put on-hold. Wanuskewin has worked to address this challenge by developing an online virtual tour program designed to engage educators and students from across the country right in their very own classroom or learning setting. The educational video tour programs are sold as a subscription package, at an affordable rate, based on a tier pricing system to accommodate the varying student populations in each school division.

Our programs have been developed in partnership with Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Indigenous educators to provide an authentic opportunity to learn about the cultures, land, languages, and pre-history of the people of the Northern plains. The programming was designed for Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 and are accompanied by curriculum connections (*Saskatchewan Curriculum Standard*), along with Pre-and-Post learning activities for teachers to incorporate into their lesson plans. The programs are culturally and territorially relevant for Western Canadian provinces, regions of Ontario, and mid-Northern States, but would be appreciated by any viewer curious to learn more about Indigenous world-views and land-based teachings from the Northern Plains region.



Exploring Together

We specialize in cultural and science based programming and land based learning. Without leaving the classroom, students will explore the history and culture of the Northern Plains people through the lens of interpreters who have developed programming based on Elder teachings, archaeological expertise and powwow presenter stories and teachings.

Pre-K - Grade 4

Puppet Tales & Cultural Awareness

Our Puppet Tales and Cultural Awareness program is designed to explore Northern Plains Indigenous cultures, languages and spirituality through the lens of language, traditions, and the various powwow dance styles. This program incorporates a 17-minute puppet show where a granddaughter learns about the powwow and a few Indigenous dance styles from across North America as told by her grandmother (kôhkom). Students will learn about the origin of the different dance styles and the stories behind the regalia the dancers wear.



Pre-K - Grade 12

Tipi Teachings

The Tipi Teachings we share were gifted to Wanuskewin by Elder Mary Lee, and are shared as a storytelling session. The Plains Cree style has a total of 15 poles and each has a value or lesson we learn in the four stages of life. This program incorporates elements of the Tipi ceremony and protocol important to the way of life of the Plains people. This program is a great way to begin the discussion of Residential School impacts on Indigenous families in the classroom as we integrate the importance of family values from an Indigenous world view.



Exploring Together

Grade 4 - Grade 12

Archaeology Walk

The Archaeology program looks at the history of the Opimihaw Valley and how people lived on the Great Plains for thousands of years before European contact. Home to 19 pre-contact sites, our archaeologists will explore some of the archaeological finds discovered at the park over the last 40 years. As the longest running research dig site in North America, Wanuskewin is rich in artifacts and discoveries which teach us how people lived on the landscape, hunted bison, and practiced spirituality for thousands of years here on the Plains.



Grade 4 - Grade 12

Native Plant Walk

For thousands of years people would travel great distances to gather plants from the valley throughout the year. The Opimihaw Valley has an abundance of medicinal and edible plants that were used in various situations. This program is an ecological exploration into the connection human beings have to the land and how it provides us with what we need to survive. Based on oral history, the Native Plant Walk has been created in partnership with Elders who have generously shared their knowledge so that students would have the opportunity to evolve as stewards and protectors of the land.



Grade 4 - Grade 12

wâhkôtowin: Bison Kinship - Parts I and II

wâhkôtowin: Bison Kinship is a two hour specialty program that provides the scientific and cultural importance of bison to the Great Plains and to the Northern Plains Indigenous peoples. Part I explores ecological concepts like keystone species, the grassland habitats, and how bison played an integral role in our grassland restoration here at Wanuskewin. Part II explores the understanding the Indigenous peoples have with bison which had been built over thousands of years. Relating to the natural law teaching of wâhkôtowin, the teaching of the circle, and importance of giving thanks, this second part will help students understand the Indigenous relationship to the land both spiritually and physically.



PreK - Grade 3

Bison Walk for Young Learners

The Bison Walk explores the largest land mammal in North America: the bison and how they impacted the lives of Northern Plains people. This program explores the characteristics of bison and how people used every part of the animal as food, tools, and clothing. It explores the Indigenous relationship to the land both spiritually and physically.



Exploring Together

All Grades

Dance Styles

This program is an exploration of various powwow dance styles. Students will learn about what different dance styles represent, learn about dancer regalia and ceremony. Lessons about the drum are also included.



Get in Touch

Thank you for considering our programs within your schools and classrooms. Our goal is to work with our administrators and educators to give them the tools and confidence they need to succeed in teaching Indigenous content in the classroom.

If you choose to subscribe you will be given a username, password, and a link that will allow your schools to access the videos and supporting content.

If you have questions please contact us :

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