

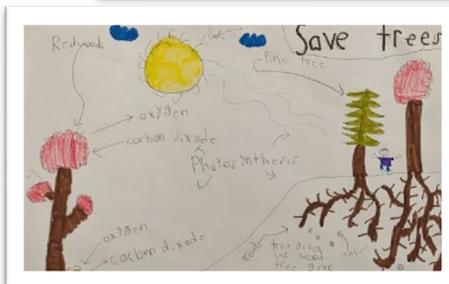


Stories of Climate Change Education

Toronto District School Board - Climate Literacy & Leadership Program

Kinship With Nature: Learning Climate Responsibility Through Reciprocal Relationships

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Learning Outcomes:

Students will...

- reflect on their existing knowledge and understanding of relationships
- explain the meaning of relationships and identify different types of relationships
- describe reciprocal relationships between people and nature, specifically plants

Climate Concepts:

- **Ability to make a difference:** Our choices impact ourselves, our communities and our world. Everyone can and does influence nature in a positive and negative way. We can mitigate climate change by being more mindful of our actions
- **Community:** Communities are made of the people, animals and plants that live in them. Each person is part of multiple communities. Connecting students with nature and the community involves building relationships within those communities.
- **Interdependence:** All living things are connected. Human systems depend on natural systems. We can engage in acts of reciprocity with natural systems to ensure a healthy future for all life.

Learning Activities:

Collaborative Inquiry Question: *How can we build healthy and reciprocal relationships between all our community (kin*)?*

- Students discussed what the word relationship means to them and worked together to come up with a definition
- Students explored trees (living and non-living) on the school grounds using their five senses and made observations
- Students worked together in groups to record their observations about nature
- Students created nature journals and drew pictures and recorded what they saw around the school grounds
- Students learned about the similarities and differences between humans and plants (specifically trees) and worked in small groups to create Venn diagrams
- Students explored the reciprocal ways in which we help nature (plants) and nature (plants) helps us
- Students created reciprocal relationship posters
- Students made seed balls using old flyers and wildflower seeds that they can plant at home and in their community (with permission)



**A kincentric understanding views humans and nature "as part of an extended ecological family...It is an awareness that life in any environment is viable only when humans view the life surrounding them as kin. The kin, or relatives, include all the natural elements of an ecosystem" (Salmón, 2000, p. 1327).*

Salmón, E. (2000). Kincentric Ecology: Indigenous Perceptions of the Human–Nature Relationship. Ecological Applications, 10(5), 1327–1332.

Lessons Learned:

- Make learning more meaningful and engaging for students by connecting climate change education to the community around them
- Provide students with the opportunity to explore their local environment (school and community)
- Students know more about CCE than they think
- Allow students to develop agency and take action to address climate change

Key Resources:

- *Be Thankful for Trees How Trees Sustain Our Planet* by Harriet Ziefert
- *The Hike* by Alison Farrell