



Learn with Louis

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Métis Cultural Connections

OUR DISTINCT MÉTIS CULTURE DEFINES US AS ONE OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. MAKE CONNECTIONS TO YOUR MÉTIS CULTURE AND LEARN WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE.

The Métis Sash

“Wearing the sash connects Métis people with the ancestors and their Métis identity.”

– *Kaa-wichihitoyaak: We Take Care of Each Other*



Métis Sash

The Métis sash is considered by many Métis to be a visible symbol of Métis identity. It was originally known as une ceinture fléchée (or en saeñcheur fleshii) in Southern/Heritage Michif meaning “arrow belt” because of the zig-zag pattern. They were created from European wool, using a First Nations finger weaving technique that is often still used today.

The sash was not just a decorative item. It was used for many practical purposes, including the following:

- Holding the coat closed or the pants up.
- Muffler or scarf
- Sling, bandage, or tourniquet
- Washcloth
- Bridle/saddle blanket
- Trail marker or sewing kit (by removing the threads at the end of the sash)
- Pocket
- Back support when holding heavy objects.
- A rope (useful to portage canoes)
- Identifying one's kill in a buffalo hunt
- As a calendar system (the threads were used to mark days on the trapline)



The sash is typically worn wrapped around the waist for men or over the shoulder for women. Today the sash is often worn as ceremonial dress to honour people for achievements and recognize membership in a Métis community.

Do you have a Métis sash? We would love for you to send us your photo proudly wearing your sash so that we can share it in Learn with Louis in future editions. Submit to metisearlyyears@mnhbc.ca.

Sources:

- *Kaa-wichihitoyaak: We Take Care of Each Other* Métis Perspectives on Cultural Wellness.
- Métis Nation BC- Ministry of Culture Heritage and Language.
- Gabriel Dumont Institute [Métis Culture | Gabriel Dumont Institute \(gdins.org\)](http://MétisCulture|GabrielDumontInstitute.gdins.org)

Buffalo Bulletin

MÉTIS TRADITIONAL LIFE WAYS CONNECT US TO THE LAND AND OUR ANCESTORS AND TRANSMITS KNOWLEDGE TO OUR CHILDREN. LEARN TO ACKNOWLEDGE, HARVEST, GATHER, AND SHARE NATURAL RESOURCES.

Red River Bannock Recipe

Bannock is a traditional food that has been prepared and enjoyed by Métis people for generations. When Métis people were exclusively living off the land, bannock provided essential energy during times of scarcity and when the food supply was limited. Its simple combination of flour and lard made it a staple for Métis people to feed themselves and their families. Families would prepare bannock over an open fire and would often pair it with fish or dried fruit. Today, bannock continues to be prepared and enjoyed by Métis people, both as a delicious treat and as a connection to their culture and heritage. Although modern recipes vary, the comforting taste of warm, toasty bannock remains the same. Pair it with your favourite jam or serve it alongside some hamburger soup for a nostalgic and tasty treat!

Ingredients:

- 6 cups flour
- 1 cup lard (or margarine or shortening)
- 3 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp salt
- 3 cups of water

Directions:

- In a medium sized mixing bowl, mix the flour and lard together by hand.
- Next, add the baking powder and salt.
- Once this is done, add the water and work the ingredients into a dough.
- Next, you have two options: the campfire or the oven.
- **CAMPFIRE:** divide the dough into four lumps and firmly wrap each lump around the end of a four-foot stick and prop securely over the fire until golden brown.
- **IN OVEN:** spread the dough out into a 16" square cake pan and bake at 425° for about 20 minutes or until golden brown. Enjoy!



Don't forget to wash your hands before you start preparing your bannock! Wash your hands with Kokum Betty [here](#).

Source:

- [Métis Cookbook and Guide to Healthy Living — Nourish Leadership](#)
- Family favourite recipe shared by Region 3 Métis Family Connections Navigator



Louis Kid's Club

The Métis Flag is the oldest flag Indigenous to Canada and was made over 150

years before the Canadian maple leaf flag. The flag, either red or blue in colour, has a white infinity symbol in the middle. The Métis flag is a symbol of Métis identity, and flying the flag demonstrates Métis pride. The infinity symbol on the Métis flag represents the joining of two cultures and that the Métis Nation is strong and will carry on forever.

Below are some opportunities for children to explore their Métis flag with pride.

- Engage your children in conversations about the concept of infinity: infinity represents something that is boundless or endless; something that goes on and on forever. Invite your children to think of some examples of things that are infinite.
- Read the book *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Numeroff. A delightful story for the early

years that has no ending but instead brings you back to the same dilemma of what might happen if you give a mouse a cookie. The possibilities are endless.



- Provide materials for your children to create their own flags by putting out items such as straws, popsicles sticks, scissors, tape, paper, crayons, and markers.
- Turn on some fiddle music and dance with your children while waving your DIY flags with pride!

Sources:

- Métis Nation BC Ministry of Culture and Heritage and Language
- "Aansaambaenkiskayhtaamuk 🌀 Learning Together" Cultural Resource Guide

Service Provider Highlight

Métis Nation British Columbia works in collaboration with our five Métis Service Providers.

Region 1 – [Island Métis Family and Community Services Society](#)

Region 2 – [Métis Family Services](#)

Region 3 – [Métis Community Services and Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Family & Community Services](#)

Region 5 – [Niwikowin Metis Family Services](#)

Each service provider has so much to offer our Métis children and families. Please stay tuned to future editions where we will highlight each one.

What's your name, where you from?

Who was Gabriel Dumont?

Gabriel Dumont is an important person in Métis history, he is one of the founders of the Métis Nation and a hero to Métis people. He was born in 1837 in the Red River Settlement, of what is now the province of Manitoba, to Isidore Dumont, known as Ekapow, and Louise Laframboise. The Dumont family were important Métis buffalo hunters and made their living trading pemmican and buffalo hides with the Hudson's Bay Company.



During the North-West Resistance in 1885, Gabriel Dumont was appointed general of the Métis soldiers and fought bravely alongside Louis Riel and others to defend his people and their land. On May 12, 1885, the Métis lost the Battle of Batoche to the Canadian government soldiers, Louis Riel surrendered and was hung for treason, Dumont escaped to the United States. Gabriel Dumont went back to Canada in 1893 and returned to his old homestead near Batoche, Saskatchewan where he remained until his death in May 1906.

Did you know?

Gabriel Dumont could speak seven languages including Michif, the language of the Métis. What languages do you and your family speak?

Gabriel Dumont had extensive knowledge about the geography and people of the plains, and he was an excellent sharpshooter with a bow as well as a rifle and was skilled at riding horses and hunting buffalo. Gabriel Dumont was elected buffalo hunt chief for the Saskatchewan Métis in 1863 and remained in that prominent position until 1881. During the 1870s and 1880s, he had a farm and owned and ran a ferry at Gabriel's Crossing on the South Saskatchewan River where many Métis families lived after losing their land in Manitoba. Dumont also became a political leader of the Métis people in Saskatchewan and led their government based on the buffalo hunt laws and the Métis system of landholding.

Did you know?

During his time in the United States, Gabriel Dumont worked for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and was a trick shooter with Annie Oakley.

Sources:

- [Métis | Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada](#)
- [Biography – DUMONT, GABRIEL – Volume XIII \(1901-1910\) – Dictionary of Canadian Biography \(biographi.ca\)](#)
- [Gabriel Dumont | The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)
Article by [Adam Gaudry](#)
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Good Beginnings Growing Our Children

Are you currently providing child care for two children or interested in providing family child care in your home? Did you know you could take a 30-hour course to become a Registered License-Not-Required provider in your home?

MNBC Ministry of Education is excited to share that the Good Beginnings - Growing Our Children course will be offered this fall starting September 12, 2023, until October 19, 2023, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Register today for the upcoming course!

For further information and to apply please contact metisearlyyears@mnbcc.ca

Michif with Maddy the Magpie

THE NATIONAL MÉTIS LANGUAGE IS MICHIF, A DISTINCT LANGUAGE DEVELOPED FROM FRENCH, CREE AND OTHER FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES. HAVE FUN LEARNING MICHIF WITH MADDY THE MAGPIE.

Michif is upheld as the national Métis language. It is a unique language that developed in the Red River valley in the early 1800s. Michif is a mixed language that contains Plains Cree verbs and French nouns and noun structure, as well as some vocabulary and structures from Saulteaux and English.

There are three types of Michif:

- Métis French (also called Michif-French)
- Métis Cree (also called Northern Michif or Île-à-la-Crosse Michif)
- Southern Michif (also called Turtle Mountain Michif, Chippewa-Cree, or Heritage Michif)

The Words of Our Ancestors: An Introduction to Michif and Indigenous Language Revitalization

The Words of Our Ancestors is now available online to download! This guide is for both individuals and communities to learn more about the Michif languages, language learning journeys, and language revitalization.

This educational resource was created by the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Language and is available online, and in print, by request.

[Read the Words of Our Ancestors Resource](#)

The words shared by Maddy the Magpie listed here are from the Gabriel Dumont Institute [The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture \(metismuseum.ca\)](#)



The dialect shared is Heritage Michif which was originally translated by Elder Norman Fleury.

Louis' Journey in the Garden



FOLLOW ALONG AS LOUIS TRAVELS. FULL OF CURIOSITY AND A LOVE OF LEARNING, LOUIS WILL BRING JOY AND LAUGHTER TO CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE. SHARE WITH US YOUR LOUIS' JOURNEY BY SUBMITTING PHOTOS AND A BRIEF DESCRIPTION TO METISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA.

As a buffalo who has spent most of my life grazing and wandering around the vast open fields, I never thought that I would be interested in planting seeds. However, everything changed when I met Family Connections Navigator Tayler and her furry four-legged friend Mr. Bojangles, my new gardening friends.

Mr. Bojangles and Tayler introduced me to the world of gardening, and I was instantly fascinated by the idea of growing my own food. They showed me how to plant thyme seeds in containers, and I was eager to try it out for myself. We started by gathering the necessary materials: containers, soil, thyme seeds, and water. Then, Tayler taught us the proper

way to prepare the soil and create a suitable environment for the seeds to grow.

As we started planting the seeds, I couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement and anticipation. I carefully placed the seeds in the soil, making sure to give them enough space and water. Mr. Bojangles and Tayler showed me how to cover the seeds with soil, and we waited for the magic to happen.

Over the next few weeks, we monitored the seeds' growth, making sure to water them regularly and keep them in a warm and sunny spot. We watched as the tiny thyme plants sprouted from the soil and grew taller and stronger each day. It was incredible to see the transformation from a small seed to a thriving plant.

As the thyme plants continued to grow, we learned more about the importance of gardening and the benefits of growing our own food. We discussed how gardening can help us connect with nature, reduce our carbon footprint, and provide us with fresh and healthy produce.

Looking back on our experience, I feel grateful for Mr. Bojangles and Tayler's guidance and knowledge on the beautiful land of the ɫəkʷəŋəŋ and W̱SÁNEĆ people and the chosen home of Métis Nation of Greater Victoria. They showed me that gardening is not only a fun and rewarding hobby but also a way to connect with the land and contribute to a sustainable future.



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Family Gatherings

The Ministry of Education has been connecting with Métis Chartered Communities to support them in offering family gatherings across the regions. Family gatherings could include food, music, traditional games and so much more. Please reach out to us for further information and to find out what family gatherings are being offered in your community. If you have a suggestion of when and where you would like to see one planned, we would love to hear from you at metisearlyyears@mNBC.ca



Storybook Walk

On June 20, 2023, MNBC in partnership with the Ladysmith Resource Centre Association, Ladysmith Family & Friends Resource Program (LaFF), Art Council of Ladysmith, Pacificare, Boys and Girls Club of Central Vancouver Island and Vancouver Island Regional Library to bring the Métis story "The Giving Tree" by Leah Dorion to the Storybook Walk project at Kinsmen/Brown Drive Park. The day was full of connection, with activities, refreshments, and resources for families.

A Storybook Walk is an innovative and engaging way for families to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time. Pages from a children's book are attached to stakes, which are then placed along an outdoor path.



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