

## **High School Suggested activities to accompany reading The Orange Shirt Story by Phyllis Webstad:**

Indian Residential Schools were Government sponsored religious schools opened in 1831 and the last one closed in 1996. 150 000 First Nations children suffered injustices at residential schools across Canada. Orange shirt day is a commemorative day to honour those who survived Indian Residential Schools (IRS) and remember those that didn't.

The movement was sparked in 2013 by Phyllis Jack Webstad, a Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation Elder in Williams Lake. The Orange Shirt Story shares Phyllis' experience at St. Joseph Mission. "We honour the experiences and the experiences of their families." (Medicine Wheel Education, 2018)

The Canadian government believed that Aboriginal children should dress and speak and act like all the other children. Aboriginal children were taken from their families and brought to live at residential school where their hair was cut, they were all dressed the same, and were forbidden to speak their home languages. Only English or French were allowed. Children missed their families and forgot how to speak their language. Their communities missed them. This affected the communities and the future generations. Children were not allowed to speak with siblings or other family members. Students were not treated well. Families can still feel the effects of this treatment to their family members. Today we acknowledge this was wrong and we wear our orange to remember those children, and to remind us that it is okay to keep our traditions.

Resources on Residential Schools in Canada:

[Intermediate Carrier Natural Calendar Kit: Residential Schools](#)

[The Canadian Encyclopedia Historica Residential Schools in Canada](#)

[National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)

Connection to Place:

[Beyond 94 Interactive Map](#): Where was the closest school to you? Beyond 94 from CBC has created an interactive map to check the year you were born and address providing a connection through either place or time. Discussion could be around changes over time but always be aware that the last residential school closed.

Why Orange Shirts?

Listen to Phyllis introduce Orange Shirt Day (2 mins): [Phyllis Webstad Orange Shirt Day](#)

Remind students that it is very important to listen when an Elder is speaking, even if it's being shared digitally.

Read The Orange Shirt Story

Play music video (5mins) [Savage](#): depicts a young Ta'kaiya Blaney being taken to Residential School in the 1950's.

What are the feelings the children/mother experience?

How are they similar to what Phyllis experience?

Why is it important to know the history of residential schools in Canada?

Moving towards Reconciliation:

Reconciliation:

“Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.”- 3<sup>rd</sup> Principle of Reconciliation, TRC.

“In order to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission makes the following calls to action.” (Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, TRC)

### [Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action](#)

It is the responsibility of non-Indigenous and Indigenous people.

Discussion: What does “Truth Before Reconciliation” mean? We need to know the history before we can move forward.

Discussion: What acts of reconciliation can we do?

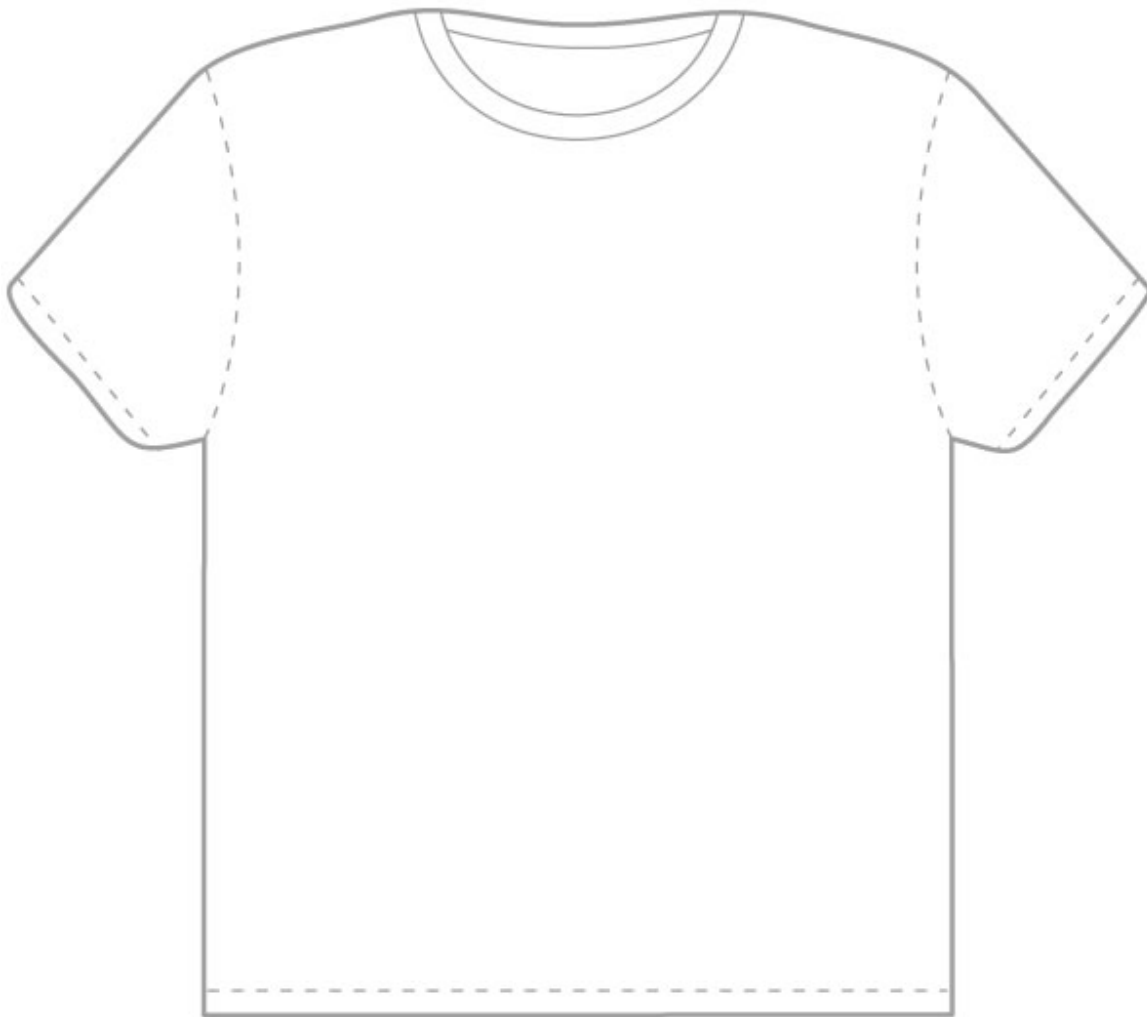
Crystal Fraser and Sara Komarnisky's [150 Acts of Reconciliation](#)

See what event and actions that have taken place towards the Truth and Reconciliation 94 Calls to Action. Discuss why these actions were called for and how they move us towards reconciliation. [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)

Activities based on the work of School District 36:

1. Cut out small T shirts from orange construction paper. (or print blank on for colouring)  
Students can decorate the shirts with images or quotes that reflect “Every Child Matters”
2. Trace hands on orange construction paper. Write an “act” we can do to help show every child matters or moves towards reconciliation,
3. Wear orange shirts or ribbons
4. Design a logo which conveys every child matters
5. Write a response to the The Orange Shirt Story
6. Write how we can move towards reconciliation
7. What are acts of reconciliation we can do? (see 150 Acts of Reconciliation)

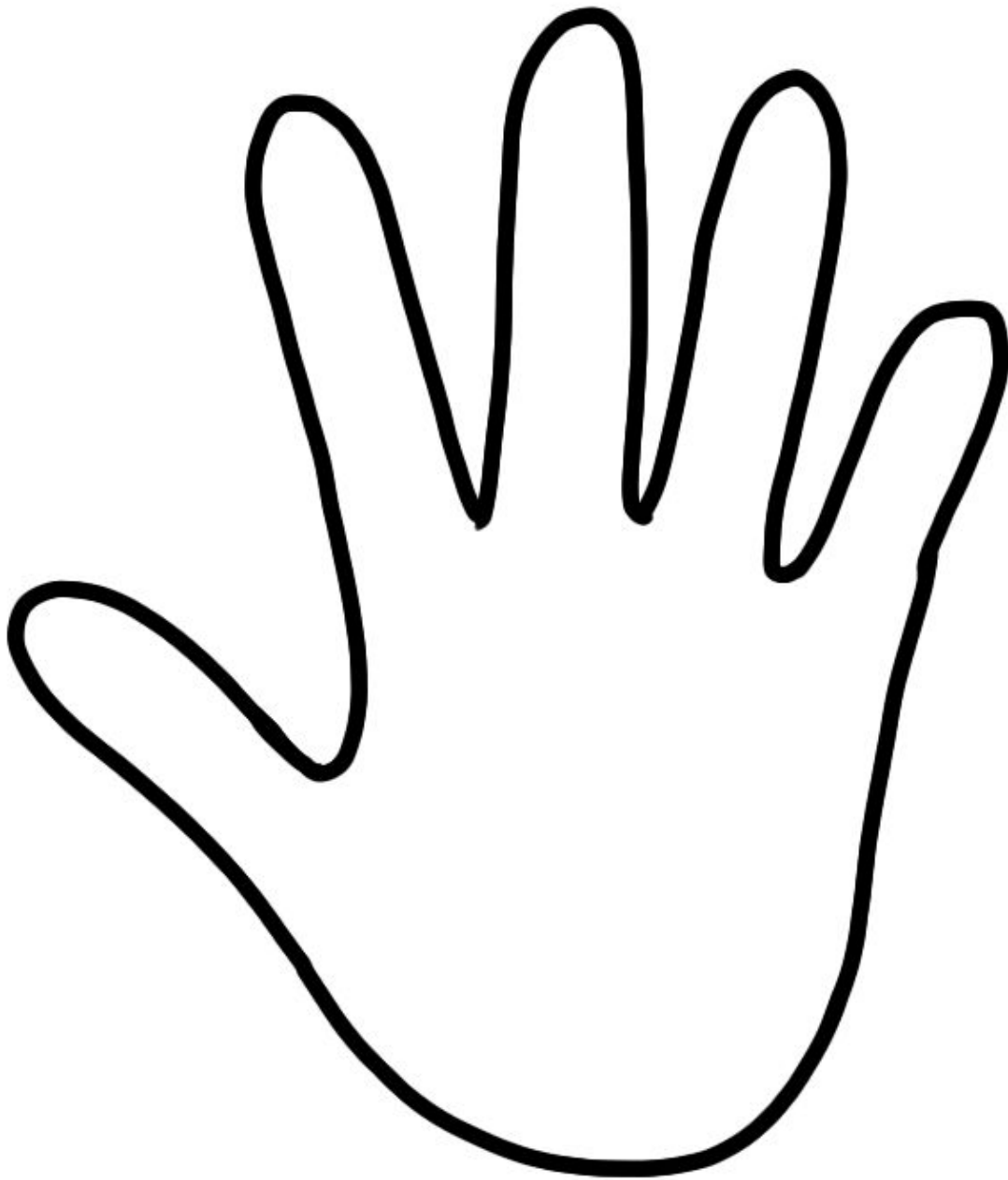
8. Track how Canada is doing in regards to 94 Calls to Action by the TRC with the [Beyond 94 website](#)
9. Make a piece of art that reflects every child matters
10. Join the conversation: #everychildmatter



Sourced from:

[Gordon Powell- District Admin -Aboriginal Education Dept- Surrey School District 36](#)

Compiled by Noelle Pepin, District Aboriginal Resource Teacher; School District 57 Learning Innovations Department and Aboriginal Education Department, Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018



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Big Ideas:

Grade	English	Socials	Art
8	Texts are socially, culturally, and historically constructed.	Contacts and conflicts between peoples stimulated significant cultural, social, political change.	Individual and collective expression can be achieved through the arts.
9		Disparities in power alter the balance of relationships between individuals and between societies.	Creative arts experiences can build community and nurture relationships with others.
10	<p>The exploration of text and story deepens our understanding of diverse, complex ideas about identity, others, and the world.</p> <p>First Peoples texts and stories provide insight into key aspects of Canada’s past, present, and future.</p> <p>Self-representation through authentic First Peoples text is a means to foster justice.</p>	<p>The development of political institutions is influenced by economic, social, ideological, and geographic factors</p> <p>Historical and contemporary injustices challenge the narrative and identity of Canada as an inclusive, multicultural society.</p>	<p>Traditions, perspectives, worldviews, and stories can be shared through media arts</p> <p>Visual arts offer unique ways of exploring our identity and sense of belonging.</p>
11	<p>First Peoples texts play a role within the process of Reconciliation</p>	Indigenous peoples are reclaiming mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being despite the continuing effects of colonialism (from Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12).	Media arts reflect the interconnectedness of the individual, community, history, and society.
12	The examination of First Peoples cultures and lived experiences through text builds understanding of Canadians’ responsibilities in relation to Reconciliation.		

This lesson will hit on all the core competencies, emphasis on Positive and Cultural Identity, Personal Awareness and Responsibility and Critical Thinking

Extensions:

[Sisters and Brothers](#): 3 minute video available from NFB shows the story of residential schools and has the end message of hope and resiliency and moving towards reconciliation. What is the importance of the buffalo? Why is it being shown to parallel residential schools?

Show the short video of Shi-Shi Etko, with live actors: <https://youtu.be/tKErhCGjSDE>

[KAIROS Blanket Exercise](#):

[Indian Horse](#)

[These Are My Words: The Residential School Diary of Violet Pesheens: Northern Ontario, 1966](#) (Novel Set, 32 copies)

[Secret Path](#)

[They call me Number One: Secrets and Survival at an Indian Residential School](#)

[Red Wolf](#) Novel set and teachers guide

[In This Together: Fifteen Stories of Truth & Reconciliation \(Book\)](#) edited by Danielle Metcalfe-Chenail

Learn about Treaties in Canada DVD

[Project Eagle Feather: When they took the Children](#)

[Sugar Falls: A Residential School Story](#)

Residential Schools Kits 9-12

[Reconciliation Kit Gr. 8-12](#)

[100 years of loss kit](#)