

INDIGENOUS INNOVATIONS, INVENTIONS, AND CONTRIBUTIONS

EXAMPLES OF INDIGENOUS INGENUITY



by Peggy Janicki: BC Teacher,
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13 ITEMS CONTRIBUTE TO OUR LIVES TODAY !

These contributions, innovations, +/- or inventions come from Indigenous People!

- Each item, except for 2, will have a question-and-share format
- 2 key contributions shall be in a “20 Questions” format

Ready? Here we go!



Who has seen a bunkbed?

What are key features of bunkbeds?



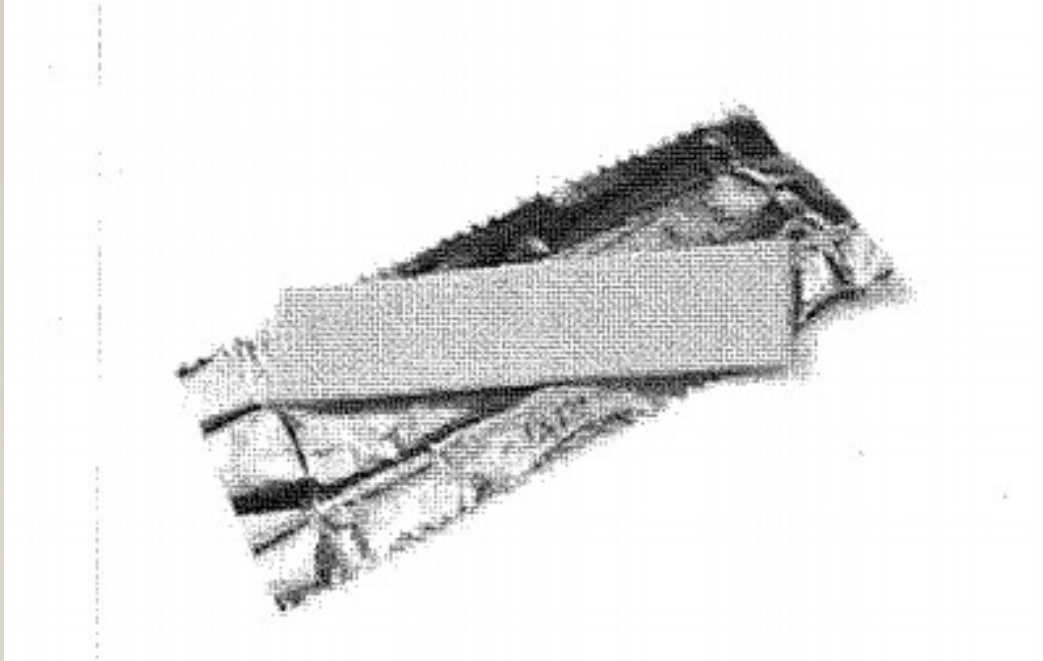


“In the Northeast of the United States, the Iroquois have long lived in longhouses— long, extended buildings made of branches formed into a large half circle and covered with bark. Inside these longhouses were bunk-beds. A creation of two beds built one on top of the other. No thanks necessary, Ikea” (Schilling, p. 7, 2017).

Who has chewed gum?

What are key features of gum?





“Bubbulicious – remember that gum? Well it may never have gotten its start if not for the sapodilla tree. The Mesoamerican Indians chewed the milky chicle, which became today’s chewing gum.” (Schilling, p. 7, 2017).

Who has been on a kayak?

What are key features of kayak?





Inuits in kayaks in Noatak, Alaska, 1929.

Buyenlarge/Getty Images

“The Inuit in the Arctic developed the concept of a small, narrow boat with a sealed cockpit to protect the paddler from sinking in the event that the craft capsized, according to Canadian technology historians David Johnston and Tom Jenkins. The classic vessels were fashioned entirely from natural materials, with wood or whalebone frames covered by stitched sealskin or other animal hides. ... De Gennaro notes, ‘the design is still essentially the same [as today’s model]’ ” (Kiger, p. 1, 2019).

Who has played lacrosse?

What are key features of lacrosse?





Smithsonian Lacrosse is merely the best-known indigenous invention. We bring you several examples of indigenous ingenuity.

“This even the Europeans acknowledged at the time, but it never hurts to be reminded that Turtle Island’s Indigenous Peoples created an entire sports genre. The Iroquoian Creator’s game of lacrosse has been played for centuries. Yes, it was first played by the Iroquoian tribes who hono[u]red the game as one that was played for the Creator’s enjoyment.” (Schilling, p. 7, 2017).

Who has had to have medicine?

What are key features of medicine?



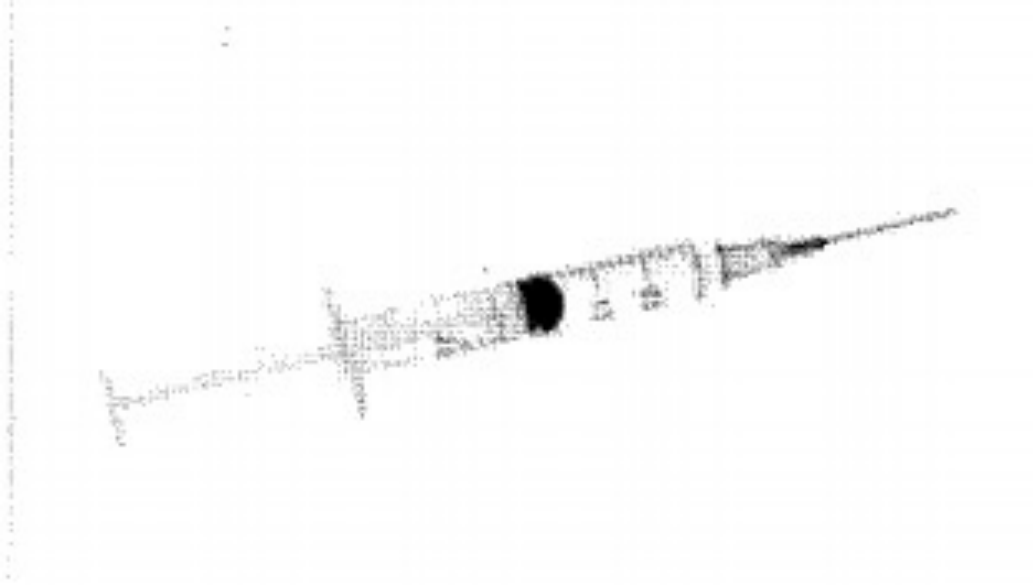


“.... According to Daniel Moerman, the foremost expert on North American Indian ethnobotany in the United States, North American [Indigenous people] have medicinal uses for 2 564 plant species. But many [Indigenous] people say the actual number may likely dwarf Dr. Moerman’s statistics. Since the times of the Spanish explorers [Indigenous] medicines have been used to cure colds with guiacum, heart ailments with dogbane, and employ foxglove and lady’s slipper as a sedative. ...”(Schilling, p. 8, 2017).

Who has had a flu shot/needle?

What are key features of the needle?





“Though Scotsman Alexander Wood is credited with inventing the syringe in 1853, in pre-Columbian times South American [Indigenous people] used a type of syringe made of sharpened hollow bird bones attached to small bladders to inject medicine, irrigate wounds or even clean ears. Additionally, Indigenous healers also used larger and similar instruments ...”Schilling, p. 3, 2017).

Who has sunglasses or snow goggles?

What are key features of the glasses or goggles?





A wooden case and pairs of snow goggles made by the Inuit people.

SSPL/Getty Images & DeAgostini/Getty Images

“The Inuit also invented goggles fashioned from wood, bone, antler or leather to protect their eyes from over-exposure to sunlight reflected from expanses of snow. ‘They’d put a slit in there, to simulate the way that you can squint,’ De Gennaro says. ‘It cut down on the ultraviolet rays that got into the eyes’. The snow goggles were the predecessors to today’s sunglasses” (Kiger, pg. 1, 2019).

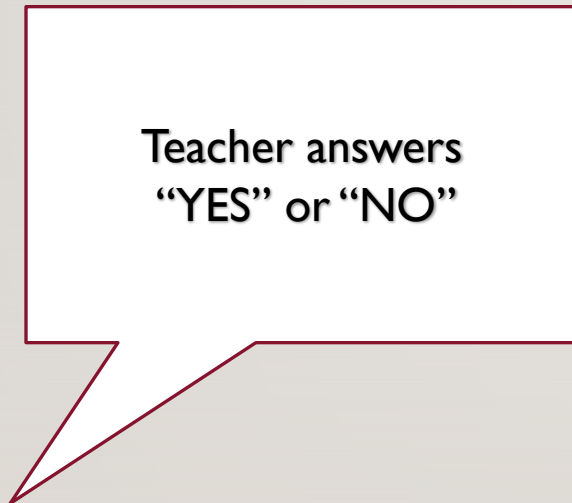
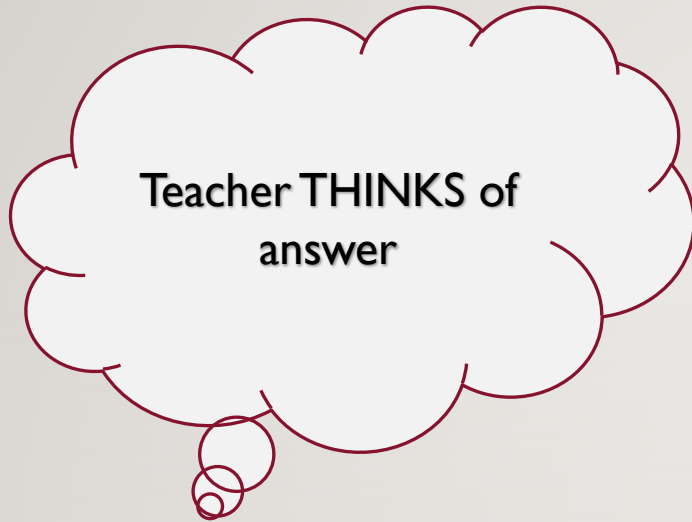


The next 2 items shall be in “20 Questions” format

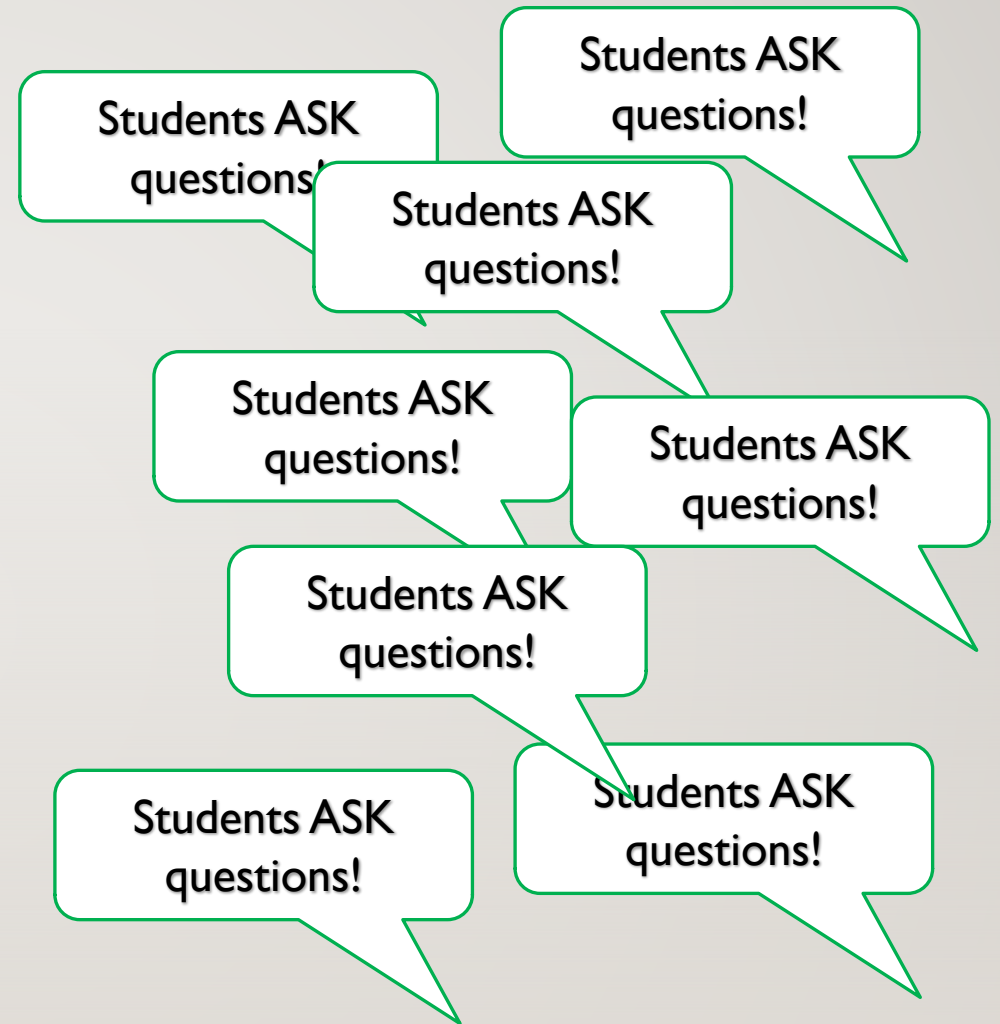
Rules are you have to ask questions that Teacher answers only “YES” or “NO”

Ready?

Here we go!



#1



Ready for the answer?

The answer is: The LAND

Most of British Columbia is on unceded lands of Indigenous people. Specifically, Mission, BC resides on the unceded territories of the Matsqui, Leq'a:mel, Sq'ewlets, and Kwantlen nations



Ready for the 2nd
Indigenous contribution?

#2

Teacher THINKS of
answer

Teacher answers
“YES” or “NO”

Students ASK
questions!

Students ASK
questions!

Students ASK
questions!

Students ASK
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Students ASK
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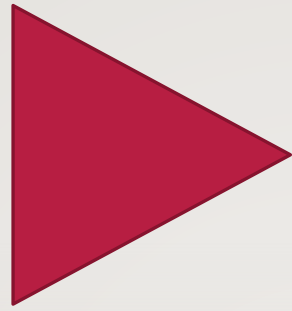
Students ASK
questions!

Ready for the answer?

The answer is: The wealth of Canada

“According to Jack Weatherford, Cerro Rico, which is located in the Andes near the Bolivian city of Potosi, was once a very prosperous silver mining mountain. The Europeans extracted enough silver from the mountain that a silver bridge could have been built stretching from the mountains of Bolivia back to Spain. However, the Europeans were also looking for gold and they found it. Within 150 year span, the Europeans extracted 180-200 tons of gold from the Americas. Much of Europe’s wealth was derived from the wrongful taking of Indigenous property from the peoples of North and South America. Prior to the colonization of North and South America, Europe had only \$2 million dollars’ worth of gold and silver and after colonization it accumulated over two billion dollars’ worth of silver and gold. This means that the wealth that we have in Canada today likely originated from the wealth of South America” (Indigenous Contributions to North America and the World, p. 1, January 2016).





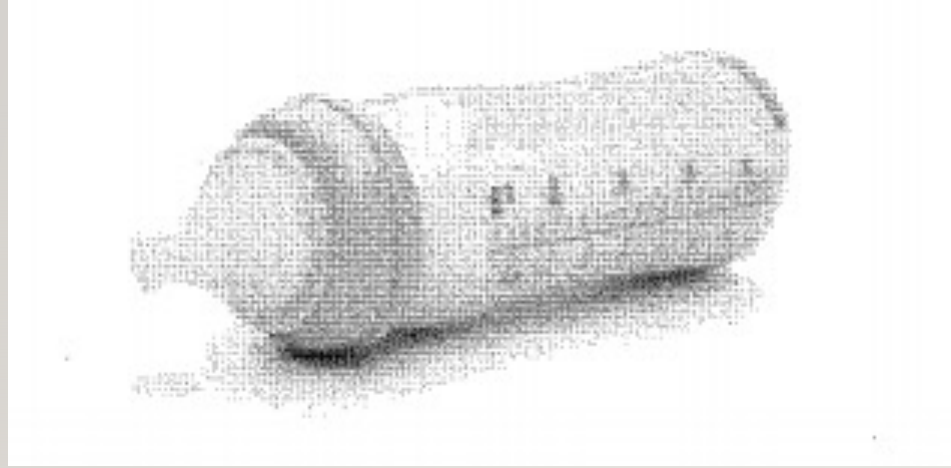
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Now back to other inventions/contributions

Who has seen a baby bottle +/-or formula?

What are key features of the baby bottle +/-or formula?





“ Using similar technology as the syringe, the Seneca used washed, dried and oiled bear intestines with a bird quill attached [at the one end]. Mothers filled them with a mixture of pounded nuts, meat and water” (Schilling, p. 4, 2017).

Who has used pest control?

What are key features of pest control?





“To combat insects such as lice infestation, the Paiute and Shoshone of the Great Basin, for example washed their hair in a hot infusion made from sweetroot. To fight other pests, pre-Columbian people built structures with cashew wood, while the Pima sprinkled ashes on their crops to thwart squash bugs. The Pueblo have used ground buffalo gourd to fend off garden pests, and Inca cotton farmers planted lemon verbena and burned it as a pesticide (Schilling, p. 5, 2017).

Who has seen a suspension bridge?

What are key features of a suspension bridge?





The Inca bridge at Q'eswachaka, Peru.

Geraint Rowland Photography/Getty Images

“The Inca of South America figured out how to weave mountain grasses and other vegetation into cables, sometimes as thick as a person’s body, and then used them to build super-strong suspension bridges that spanned across gorges. Some of the structures spanned longer distances than anything European engineers of the time could construct with stone, though modern steel suspension bridges eventually achieved far greater scale. The last of the ancient Inca-style grass cable suspension bridges still spans a gorge in Peru’s Canas Province” (Kiger, p. 1, 2019)

Who knows what is petroleum collection and extraction?

What are key features of petroleum collection and extraction?

This is the last contribution!



“Although the discovery of oil in the United States is usually credited to Edwin L. Drake, who drilled an oil well in Pennsylvania in 1859, [Indigenous people] were known to have sunk pits into the ground more than 400 years earlier in the Oil Creek Flats of Pennsylvania. These pits, which are 15 to 20 feet deep, were walled with vertical timbers that had been cut with stone axes” (Schilling, p. 6, 2017).

These slides have been based on 3 articles:

“10 Native Inventions and Innovations That Changed the World” by Vincent Schilling. July 13, 2017

Retrieved from <https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/archive/10-native-inventions-and-innovations-that-changed-the-world-M0ZwDxIKu0mQvn4Jn0KP4Q/>

“Indigenous Contributions to North America and the World” by First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada. January 2016

Retrieved from

<https://fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Indigenous%20Contributions%20to%20North%20America%20and%20the%20World.pdf>

“10 Native American Inventions Commonly Used Today” by Patrick J. Kiger. Nov 18, 2019.

Retrieved from

https://www.history.com/news/native-american-inventions#section_5

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