

Walking



Activity Purpose

Use this activity to focus your attention on your relationship with the waters around you. Indigenous peoples have always used observations, reflections, and stories to understand our water relatives and build relationships toward a positive future. During this walk, you will consider where water lives, where it comes from, where it travels to, and what other relatives it comes in contact with.



Activity Overview

Walk to a place (or a few places) near your home where water lives. If you aren't sure where a water source is look on a map (e.g. GoogleMaps) and also consider rain water, water in clouds, water droplets on plant relatives, water living in a puddle, etc.

Take time to visit with the water and consider: Where does the water come from? Where is it going? Who does it encounter along its journey?

Roles, Relations, Responsibilities & Gifts

- ◇ How does knowing about the water's life and the journey it takes help us be good relatives? Who else is a good relative to the water?
- ◇ What are some roles water has in these places or what purpose is it serving for other relatives? What relatives is water in relationship with in these places? What are the gifts water offers and what gifts are offered in return? For example, water offers itself as a drink to plant relatives like horsetail and horsetail offers the gift of filtration back.
- ◇ What risks are impacting water's well-being? Consider dams, pollution, corporate privatization, pipelines, etc. How can we work to minimize these risks?

Photo "Mint Water Droplets" by Konyvesotto on Pixabay is licensed under a CC-O 1.0 (public domain).



Learning Across Generations & with Other Families

- ◇ Take time to hear the ideas from everyone in your family. What do you learn from each other? What are the different perspectives the youngest children bring? And the oldest?
- ◇ Take time to talk with relatives, friends, and elders about your visit with the water. What do they know, remember, or imagine about that place? What stories do they have about visiting with water?

Supporting Learning & Wellbeing

- ◇ Consider the water as a relative to support children's sense of security. How do they feel when they are near the water and what relationships have they made?
- ◇ Ask your family what memories they have made with the water and surrounding area. How do you interact positively with water and other relatives in the area?
- ◇ Be sure to look for signs of where water might be hiding nearby. Use your plant and animal knowledge to help you look for clues. Do you see any of our plant relatives that have wet feet? What do you learn about water when you see birds and other animal relatives finding their food there?
- ◇ Look for water that has been hidden, such as culverts and pipes. Discuss the decision making that might have happened. How did these choices impact our plant and animal relatives? How might the water feel about this? Also look for examples of daylighted streams in your neighborhood. Who is doing this work?

Making Connections with Stories

- ◇ Share stories of other places and waters you have visited as a family.
- ◇ Imagine stories about water in different places.
- ◇ Tell or listen to stories and songs from your community about water.
- ◇ [Nibi Song \(Anishinaabe\)](#)

Making Relations with Lands & Waters

- ◇ Take time to observe the water and surrounding place. What do you notice? What do you wonder?
- ◇ What does this place look like during other seasons? What about in the past or future?

Decolonization, Resurgence & Good Relations

Consider social movements around water sovereignty (#NoDAPL, #WaterIsLife, #ShutDownLine5). Discuss ways that relationships with water work to secure positive Indigenous futures.

Discuss who has access to water and who doesn't. How has climate change and corporate influence changed relationships with water? What efforts of activism can we take to secure healthy waters?

Talk as a family about ways to take care of the water everyday. Consider visiting the water to offer gifts and build strong relationships.