

Indigenous Land & People

RESEARCH INSTRUCTIONS

North American Indigenous people face invisibility and erasure which compounds into other serious problems like cultural appropriation, minimizing, tokenizing, and devaluing humanity.

The land we occupy has a human history that starts with Indigenous stewardship; Indigenous groups, each with their own unique identity. We can begin addressing Indigenous erasure by educating ourselves in the history of the land, the peoples and recognizing the current members as vibrant and alive today, not relics of the past.

Your task is to research, learn as much as you can about your own local Indigenous peoples and their past, and take an action to start combating erasure in your own community. We will share your findings to create a tapestry of things we learned about Indigenous identities.

01 Name

Find the names of the Indigenous people in your local area. What is the original name of your town/city/land? What is the correct pronunciation? What is the legal status (ceded, unceded, treaty, etc.)?

02 Find

The status of members today. Where do they live? What are their stories? What organizations are helping generate awareness? What myths or misconceptions are damaging them? What artists alive share this story?

03 Do

Take action and tell us what you did! Ideas:

- Donate to local Indigenous action organizations
- Follow or join a mailing list of a local organization
- Share your findings with kids and neighbors
- Read a [book](#) written by an Indigenous person (better yet, a history book!)
- Buy art or [products](#) made by Indigenous people
- Identify and stop using [harmful language](#)

Answering the question: Whose land am I on?

Indigenous identity is varied and distinctive and so the information available online for each peoples is different. Some history is more complex than others. Below are tips to find whose land you're on. **The purpose of this exercise is to learn as much as you can about your local Indigenous peoples, not only to find the "right" answer.**

Land acknowledgments that others have written are useful, but they only aid your research in answering the question, you are not writing your own. You will likely find conflicting information, various spellings, and maps. Be patient and open. It takes discernment to ensure this information is accurate, equitable, and clear. Put your critical thinking hat on - history is usually written by those in control of dominant power structures.

- Start by visiting native-land.ca and search your location. This site is a fantastic starting point. Continue to research and explore linked sites.
 - » *Some Nations or Tribes will have websites linked here. Read the history, culture, and land rights sections, if available.*
- Google "[your city] land acknowledgment". Often universities, museums, and theaters and unions will have them on their website
 - » *Give more weight to those that explain the process of writing it*
- Google "[the closest university] land acknowledgment".
- Try wikipedia for terms, spelling, and clarity. Explore references listed there.