



DUNDAS
MUSEUM &
ARCHIVES

DISCO

“I learn!”

GRADE 4 SOCIAL STUDIES

The First People of the Valley

*This education module complements Strand A –
Heritage And Identity: Early Societies, 3000 Bce–1500 Ce*

Engaging your students in the inquiry paradigm, this unit begins with questions prompted by the very title of the presentation: “First People.” Why do we refer to our aboriginal people as *First Nations*?



Pangea

This unit explores questions pertaining to where the First Nations came from? Why did they leave? Why did they come to Coote’s Paradise? How did they live? Students will become acquainted with *Pangea*, the single continent that once characterized the planet, and watch a time-lapse animation showing Pangea separating into the continents as we know them today. Your students will also discover the extent of the ice age, its impact on animal migration and, hence, the migration of people from Asia to North America through the land bridge of Beringia.

It is very possible that the first people to come to what is now Dundas arrived more than 10,000 years ago! Over time, these cultures evolved into two civilizations that we know today: non-migratory farmers known as Iroquoian and hunters-gatherers known as Algonquian, each with a distinct social structure.



As animals fled the approaching ice, people followed the animals, their main source of food.



First Nations people would travel more than 1,000 miles across the Beringia land bridge.

Now, which of these two groups would find the lush valley nestled between the Niagara Escarpment appealing to their way of life? That's right – the Iroquoian nation. Among the various groups that comprised this civilization was a tribe known as *The Neutrals*. The Neutrals were called *Attawandaron* by the Huron, meaning "people whose speech is awry or a little different". Both people spoke Iroquoian languages but were culturally distinct and competed for resources.

It was this First Nations tribe that settled in the valley town of what is now Dundas.

But why did the early French explorers give them the name of "Neutral"? How did these first people in the valley relate to the natural environment around them? Were their way of life and their values so radically different than ours today? What became of the *Attawandaron*? Is any of this First Nation alive today?

This grade 4 Social Studies unit explores life in the longhouse of a Neutral First Nations family.

Most young people today have their own room. Your visit to the DMA will challenge them to imagine life with their whole family in one big room. Indeed, it was life with *several* families all quite literally under the same roof. The DMA invites your students into a model longhouse, and the opportunity to examine an enviable collection of First Nation archaeological artifacts.



Some of the intriguing First Nations artifacts on display at the museum.

Your students will engage in several activities - including an archaeology word search that will acquaint them with the museum's enviable collection of First Nations artifacts on display. They will also have the opportunity to make a First Nations craft to take home with them.

This exploration of The First People of the Valley is sure to be an informative, enriching and fun experience for you and your students!

From *The Ontario Curriculum, Grade 1-8, Social Studies, 2013*, this Education Module offered by the DMA addresses the following expectations: A 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5.