



Pond Project
Community School
Mehley Whittle & Sasha Lapchuk



The Pre-K & Kindergarten Students participated in a Pond Project inspired by Aski the turtle.

Ages: 3-6

Project length:
2.5 months

Programs:
Pre-K & Kindergarten
(half day programs)

Teachers:
Mehley Whittle &
Sasha Lapchuk

Phase 1: Beginning the Project



Aski was the inspiration for our Pond Project. Aski is a puppet whose purpose is to build understanding about First Nations and Metis worldview and treaties. The children became interested in the turtle pond, where Aski lives, so we decided to create a pond project. The focusing event was reading stories about Aski and his friends who live at turtle pond. We built upon the children's prior knowledge by asking them what they know about pond life and turtles.

Phase 2: Developing the Project



We began investigating pond life through literature based on Aski's life, family, and animal friends, as well as both fiction and non-fiction literature about pond life and turtles.

The children represented their learning through sculpture, drawings, retelling stories, and through play invitations.

Families were involved through a joint Pre-K and Kindergarten family day, which included art and baking experiences. They also participated in a holistic assessment which measures oral language development for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children. In order to provide a holistic view of each child's learning, the assessment includes surveys that collect data from the children, their caregivers, their teachers, and Elders in the community.

Phase 3: Concluding the Project



We will be hosting a second family day to close the project. It will be a celebration of our learning and a farewell to Aski the turtle.

The children learned about the turtle life cycle, habitat, the food chain, and about caring for mother earth. The children also learned about First Nations and Metis worldview, including the importance of the sacred number four.

Teacher Reflection



We learned that puppets, when used on a daily basis and coupled with learning invitations relevant to the children's lives, can engage all learners. The families were also very engaged because of the excitement of the children throughout this project.

The topic is relevant to the learners in our school because it incorporated First Nations and Metis content, as well as the natural environment in the surrounding area of the city. The project especially benefitted the children with behavioural and attention challenges because they were able to attend during whole group and small group times as they were engaged throughout the project.