



# **Métis Beading Workshop**

## **RLI Indigenous Language Experiences**

### **Métis Nation of Alberta Region 5**



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*All RCTL resources have been carefully developed by RLI's team of Métis educators. If you have questions or concerns, please contact [education@rupertsland.org](mailto:education@rupertsland.org)*

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### Experiential Background Information

In the summer of 2021, Rupertsland Institute partnered with two Métis educators and a classroom of learners to introduce the Michif language and host a Métis culture and language learning experience in connection to Métis Nation of Alberta Region 5. Melanie Lapp, supported by Kelly Johnston, facilitated a Métis language and beadwork experience for an educator and a class of grade 5 students while exploring Métis identity.

The Métis Nation has deep roots across Alberta, with stories rooting their families in this place as early as the 1700s. Within the unified Nation, Métis families draw on a variety of distinct elements of their culture. Learning about the Métis Nation includes celebrating the diversity of unique cultural expressions and relationships. It is encouraged that as educators and others begin to interweave Métis education into their learning communities, that they continuously affirm and build their foundational knowledge about the Métis Nation.

### Activity: Métis Beading Workshop

This project was designed within the limitations of the Covid-19 pandemic. As with many projects, there were a variety of barriers and limitations that required some flexibility in order to continue the learning goals. Despite these challenges, Melanie, Kelly, RLI and the partnering class were still able to take up the opportunity to engage with Michif and Métis culture.

In working with the partnering teacher and class of students, the course instructors were able to bring in Michif learning materials from Rupertsland Institute alongside the materials needed for Métis beadwork. They began the session with open discussion about Métis identity, asking students with what they think it means to be Métis. Following that was an exploration the Michif language, just an introduction to the language and a selection of keywords, to begin the learning journey. The session finalized with an opportunity to try Métis beadwork, beading a traditional Métis five-petal flower.

### Reflection/Overview

Introducing Michif inspires youth to embrace and engage with their language in the school and beyond the school. Michif is an expression of the Métis Nation, and interweaving it in the classroom awakens a sense of belonging and pride in learners. Learning the language in tandem with experiencing Métis traditions is an important, powerful experience. The Métis Nation is finding their voice in ways that were once silenced, and the results profound. There is an exponential sense of belonging and meaning fostered for both Métis and non-Métis students, because diversity and heritage are given place within the learning in their classroom.

As one student reflected, it is important to include this as it allows for all students to celebrate their identity in their school spaces. Students spoke too about the desire to learn Michif and learn their culture more often, so they can stay connected to their community and culture.

**Related Video:** [RLI ILE Region 5 - Métis Beading Workshop](#)