Social 4 Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PA 4.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the First Nations system of governance.

b. Compare the traditional processes for selection of leaders in First nations communities to current practices for selection of leaders in First Nations.

I can compare how First Nation leaders were selected then and now.

Thank you to Susan Beaudin, Office of the Treaty Commissioner, for reviewing this lesson for appropriate language and content.

Background information

The chief and council of a First Nation were not always elected as they are today. Traditionally, Saskatchewan’s First Nations had hereditary chiefs. Usually the firstborn son of a chief was trained from childhood in the duties and responsibilities of chief. A new chief took office when his father died and was usually middle-aged or even elderly when he assumed the responsibility. Thus, he brought a lot of training and experience to the job.

The *Indian Act* replaced the traditional hereditary system with a system of elections.

First Nations have two options for election processes. They can:

* follow the requirements outlined in the *Indian Act* (2-yr term)
* follow band custom which means developing their own election act. (can be a 3 or 4-yr term)

Some members of a First Nation live on First Nation land (also called a reserve); others live in cities and towns throughout Saskatchewan. All members are eligible to vote at election time. The First Nation sends out letters to all its members telling them about the day and place of the election. Band members need to be 19 years or older to vote or run in an election.

There are between four and twelve councillors (sometimes called headmen and headwomen). The number of councillors is based on the number of band members. The chief and councillors usually serve two- to four-year terms. Candidates for the position of chief and council do not usually connect themselves with a particular political party. They usually run as individuals and respond to the needs and concerns of people on the First Nation.

Suggested activities:

1. Fill out a comparison chart.

2. Write and perform a skit to show how a person became chief then and now.

Social 4 Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

BECOMING CHIEF: THEN AND NOW

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  THEN | NOW |
| How one became chief |  |  |
| Age |  |  |
| How long one remained chief |  |  |
| Training, background |  |  |

Social 4 Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

BECOMING CHIEF: THEN AND NOW SKIT

1. Write and perform a skit to show how a person became chief then and now.

2. Your characters’ scripts must explain how the selection of a chief happened then and now.

3. There should be 3 or 4 characters in your skit: a father, a child, 2 other members of the band

Your skit must explain:

* how to become chief
* how old they usually are when they become chief (old or young?)
* how long they can be chief
* training and education to become a chief

Rubric

5 Thorough, insightful portrayal of the selection process

4 Accurate, complete portrayal of the selection process

3 Basic portrayal of the selection process

2 Some support required to accurately portray selection process

1 Some inaccuracies in the portrayal of the selection process