

BC First Peoples 12 Unit 3 Summative

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10.2

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Introduction

In this unit, you have learned about on-going challenge that Indigenous communities face in Canada. You have also learned about Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its 94 calls to Action. Your task is to:

- Choose ONE current Indigenous issue
- Find a corresponding Call to Action
- Conduct research to further find out what the issue is and what has been done to respond to this Call to Action, and...
- Create a final product supports this Call to Action
 - Confirm your project topic with Mr. C before proceeding.

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Part 1 – Initial Reflection

Current Indigenous Issue	Water crisis.
What do you know about the issue already?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many countries “deny the very existence of their indigenous peoples, turning a blind eye on international agreements,” Arrojo-Agudo said. 2. Canada possess one of world’s largest water freshwater reserves. 618 First Nations communities are not supplied with fresh water. 3. Lack of safe water leads to a set of health problems. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Indigenous communities do not have enough health resources to cure these diseases. 4. Lack of clean water can also lead to agricultural issues (i.e., livestock, livelihood, etc.)
Why are you interested in this issue?	<p>Since grade 8 where I presented a speech on the clean water issue from the Sustainable Development Goals that the UN set to reach by 2030. I have always been fascinated by this issue, whether it’s poverty or water crisis in the indigenous communities. Knowing that I live in a country with one of the largest freshwater reserves and yet witnessing the indigenous population living in hardships and their lack of access to clean water motivates me to research more about this topic.</p>
Corresponding Call to Action	<p><i>18. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties.</i></p> <p>Explain the Call to Action in your own words: This call to action urges the federal, provincial, territorial, and aboriginal governments in Canada to acknowledge that the indigenous community exists, and that the health disparities among the aboriginal people are the result of the government’s policies, particularly the establishment of residential schools. This call to action demands that the government will recognize and uphold the healthcare rights of indigenous people (including water crisis, for it leads to severe health problems). It calls for the government to take responsibility of their actions and to address the negative impact of their past policies, ensuring that they will be given with proper attention.</p>
What questions do you have about the issue and this Call to Action?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What policies did the government set to address this issue? 2. How can modern technologies be used to address this issue for the indigenous reserves? 3. How is the UN working towards to goal?

Part 2 – Research

You are required to have 3 – 5 sources. Organize your notes using sentences.

Source 1: The Indigenous Foundation

Link: <https://www.theindigenousfoundation.org/articles/indigenous-safe-drinking-water-crisis-in-canada-overview>

The United Nations General Assembly recognized the basic human rights to water and sanitation in **2010**. Among the seventeen sustainable development goals, number **six** conveys universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water. Research shows that water scarcity affects more than **40%** of entire global population, and more than millions of people lost their lives to diseases caused by inadequate water. While Canada poses the world's 3rd largest freshwater reserves, **618** First Nations communities are **not supplied with safe drinking water**. Drinking water advisories are issued to warn people to not drink unsafe water by testing water quality first. There is currently **174 unsafe drinking water advisories in over one hundred first nations communities in 2018**. There are **three** types of water advisories: boil water advisory (meaning that people should boil tap water for at least one minute before consuming), do not consume advisory, and do not use advisory. Long-term drinking water advisories are those that have been in place for more than **one** year.

Research notes:

- UN General Assembly recognized the basic human rights to water and sanitation in 2010
 - UN's SDG #6 conveys universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water
- Water scarcity affects more than 40% of global population
- More than millions of people loses their lives to diseases caused by inadequate water
- Canada poses the world's 3rd largest freshwater reserves
- 618 first nations communities are not supplied with safe drinking water
- Drinking water advisories
 - Issued to warn people not to drink unsafe water by testing water quality
 - 174 unsafe drinking water advisories in over 100 first nations communities in 2018
 - 3 types of advisories:
 - Boil water advisory (people should boil tap water for at least 1 minute before drinking)
 - Do not consume advisory
 - Do not use advisory
- Long term drinking water advisories
 - Those that have been in place for more than one year

Source 2: The Water Crisis in Canada's First Nations Communities

Link: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/52a5610cca604175b8fb35bccf165f96>

Current status in First Nations communities

Water supplied to First Nations reserves are often contaminated, hard to access, or at risk due to faulty treatment systems. Drinking water advisories are preventative measures to protect the public from potential health threats from waterborne microbiological and/or chemical contamination. Health Canada issued **three** types of drinking water advisories: boil water advisory (issued when the water in a community's freshwater system is contaminated with faecal pollution indicator organisms or when the water quality is questionable due to operational deficiencies), do not consume (issued when the water in a community's water system contains contaminants, such as lead, that cannot be removed from the water by boiling), and do not use (issued when using the water poses a health risk, the water system contains pollutants that cannot be removed from the water by boiling, and exposure to the water could cause skin, eye, and/nose irritations). Short term advisories are those that lasts less than **12** months, while long term advisories are those that are in place for at least **12** months or more. As of **November 1, 2021**, there are **99** drinking water advisories in effect in First Nations communities.

Government's response

2001: Indian Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) conducted a national assessment and concluded that 1/6 of wastewater systems posed high-risks to water quality and human health.

2003: Health Canada and INAC developed the First Nations Water management Strategy (involved **\$1.6B**, took over **5 years**, and a seven-step process to address urgent issues regarding to water safety).

March 2006: INAC and the assembly of First Nations announced the Plan of Action for drinking water in First Nations communities (involved **\$60M** and took over **2 years**).

May 2010: Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act Bills S-11 was introduced by the federal government, but then cancelled due to the dissolution of the government on **March 26, 2011**.

February 2012: Bill S-11 was revised and replaced by Bill S-8 (**enabled the government to enforce regulations** in First Nations Communities for water quality, operator certification, source water protection and many other areas).

2015: Federal government committed to **eliminating** all long-term drinking water advisories on public water systems on First Nations Reserves by **March 31, 2021**.

2016: Government **allocated** more than \$2B to improve water and wastewater systems in First Nations communities.

November 2020: Government announced almost **\$1.5B** in additional funding starting in the 2020-2021 fiscal year to accelerate the work being done to end all long-term drinking water advisories. Another **\$114M** is spent per year for this operation.

The long-standing issue of inadequate access to safe drinking water has received significant attention from different levels of government.

Why the problem persists

This problem remains unsolved partially because the legacy of colonialism and the forced relocation of many indigenous communities to areas where resource extraction puts “stress on drinking water” (Baijius and Patrick, 2019). Most First Nations water systems are small, and they lack access to funding, finding, getting supplies and materials, and retaining qualified water system operators to perform scheduled maintenance—lack of consistent training and support for water operators (David Suzuki Foundation, 2017). This is caused by an absence of regulatory regime for safe drinking water among the First nations, and a degradation of source water.

The impacts

To the indigenous people, water is more than a necessity for physical survival, but a deep cultural and spiritual significance. It's considered to be the *lifeblood of Mother Earth*, sacred gift from the creator that connects all things. It also acts as a spiritual resource that must be respected, kept clean, and protected for the future generations of all life (Basdeo and Bharadwaj, 2013; Bradford et al., 2016). Inadequate access to safe and sustainable drinking water among First Nations populations make them more vulnerable to waterborne illness, which will lead to an *increase in their exposure to chemical contaminants*. It can lead to long-term health impacts, ranging from gastrointestinal illness, skin problems (eczema and skin cancers), and birth defects to increased risk of cancer. Living under the water advisory can be a significant burden, especially within the children, elderly, pregnant woman, people with disabilities, people with chronic diseases, and low-income families (Galway, 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2016).

Moving forward

The federal government announced an additional **\$1.5B** to accelerate ending all long-term drinking water advisories on public systems on First nations reserves, to better support the operation and maintenance of water systems. Water crisis in First Nations communities is a reflective of a host of unresolved issues related to inequity, justice, and institutional trends.

Research notes:

Current status in First Nations Communities

- Water supplied to First Nations reserves is often contaminated, hard to access, or at risk due to faulty treatment systems
- Drinking water advisories are preventative measures to protect the public from potential health threats from waterborne microbiological and/or chemical contamination
- Health Canada issues three types of drinking water advisories:
 - Boil water (issued when the water in a community's water system is contaminated with faecal pollution indicator organisms or when water quality is questionable due to operational deficiencies)

- Do not consume (issued when the water in a community's water system contains contaminants, such as lead, that cannot be removed from the water by boiling)
- Do not use (issued when using the water poses a health risk, the water system contains pollutants that cannot be removed from the water by boiling, and exposure to the water could cause skin, eye, and/or nose irritations)
- Short term advisories: ***lasting less than 12 months***
- Long term advisories: ***lasting 12 months or more***
- As of November 1, 2021, there is 99 drinking water advisories in effect in First Nations communities

Government's response

2001: Indian Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) conducted a national assessment and concluded that 1/6 of wastewater systems posed high-risks to water quality and human health.

2003: Health Canada and INAC developed the First Nations Water management Strategy (involved **\$1.6B**, took over **5 years**, and a seven-step process to address urgent issues regarding to water safety).

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November 2020: Government announced almost **\$1.5B** in additional funding starting in the 2020-2021 fiscal year to accelerate the work being done to end all long-term drinking water advisories. Another **\$114M** is spent per year for this operation.

- The long-standing issue of inadequate access to safe drinking water has received significant attention from different levels of government

Why the problem persists

- Partially because the legacy of colonialism and the forced relocation of many indigenous communities to areas where resource extraction puts "stress on drinking water" (Baijius and Patrick, 2019).
- Most First Nations water systems are small
- Lacking access to funding, finding, and retaining qualified water system operators, getting supplies and materials
- Absence of a regulatory regime for safe drinking water in First nations

Source 3: Safe water for First Nations

Link: <https://canadians.org/fn-water/>

The lack of clean and safe drinking water in First Nations is one of the greatest violations of the United Nations recognized human rights to water and sanitation. There are **28** long-term drinking water advisories on reserves (last updated **November 13, 2019**). The liberal government has been promoting public-private partnerships (**P3s**) as a solution, though, history has showed that **P3s** not only costs more, but they also lead to a privatization of water and loss of community control and jobs. P3s are **not the answer** to drinking water crisis in First Nations. There are drinking water advisories in dozens of First Nations communities across Canada. There is a deficit in funding for the maintenance and operation of drinking water systems on reserves, which the Parliamentary Budget Officer identified as amounting to **\$138M** per year. The council of Canadian fights for safe, clean water for everyone and supports indigenous peoples' right to **self-government** and **self-determination**. Greater control by and for First Nations over water is a basic step towards reconciliation, which is a requirement of the United Nations Declaration of rights of Indigenous Peoples. Across Canada, some of the reserves date as far back as **1995**. United Nations declared water and sanitation human rights in **2010**. A single drinking water advisor can mean as many as **5,000** people lack access to safe, clean drinking water. **73%** of First Nations' water systems are at high or medium risk of contamination, research shows.

Research notes:

- Lack of clean, safe drinking water in First Nations is one of the greatest violations of the UN-recognized human rights to water and sanitation
- 28 long-term drinking water advisories on reserves (last updated November 13, 2019)
- The liberal government has been promoting public-private partnerships (P3s) as a solution
 - History shows that P3s not only cost more, but they also lead to a privatization of water and loss of community control and jobs
 - P3s are **not the answer** to drinking water crisis in First Nations
- There are drinking water advisories in dozens of First Nations communities across Canada
- There is a deficit in funding for the maintenance and operation of drinking water systems on reserves, which the Parliamentary Budget Officer identified as amounting to \$138M per year
- Council of Canadian fights for safe, clean water for everyone and supports Indigenous peoples' right to self-government and self-determination
- Greater control by and for First Nations over water is a basic step toward reconciliation
 - Requirement of the UN Declaration of rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Some of the advisories date as far back as **1995**

- UN **declared** water and sanitation human rights **in 2010**
- A single drinking water advisory can mean as many as **5,000** people lack access to safe, clean drinking water
- **73%** of First Nations' water systems are at high or medium risk of contamination

Source 4: Tip of the iceberg: The true state of drinking water advisories in First Nations

Link: <https://ucalgary.ca/news/tip-iceberg-true-state-drinking-water-advisories-first-nations>

Justin Trudeau committed to ending all long-term drinking water advisories by **March 2021** (announced in **2015**). However, the Indigenous Services Canada announced that it won't happen **until 2023** at the **earliest**. Neskantage First Nations has been on a long-term boil water advisory since **1995**. The Semiahmoo First Nations recently had a **16-year boil water advisory lifted**. Though Canada's water quality is ranked among the best in the world, First Nations face disproportionately higher numbers of drinking water advisories and are subjected to these advisories for longer periods than **non-indigenous** people. The Government of Canada estimated that **13.5%** of First Nations have trucked-in water, **13%** have individual wells, and **1.5%** have no water services at all.

Research notes:

- Indigenous Services Canada announced that it won't end long-term advisories **until 2023** at the **earliest**
- Justin Trudeau committed to ending long-term drinking water advisories by **March 2021**
 - Announced in **2015**
- Neskantage First Nations has been on a long-term boil water advisory since **1995**
- Semiahmoo First Nation recently had a **16-year** boil water advisory lifted
- Canada's water quality is ranked among the best in the world
- First Nations face disproportionately higher numbers of drinking water advisories, and are subjected to these advisories for longer periods of time than **non-indigenous** people
- Government estimated that **13.5%** of First Nations have trucked-in water, **13%** have individual wells and **1.5%** have no water service at all

Citation – Follow MLA guidelines ([LCMS Citation Resource](#))

There's too many citations; can't fit in this box. See citations in [works cited](#).

Part 3 – Product

<p>Brainstorming (should be addressed in product)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are some ways you can share what you've learned? What do you want your final product to be?• Who is the target audience? Why did you choose this group?• What information about this topic (informed by research) do you wish to share through this product?• How does it advocate the needs of the Indigenous peoples?• How does it support the Call to Action of your choice?• What kind of action does it encourage?• What kind of impact do you hope to create through your product?
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Part 4 - Script

Introduction

The ongoing water crisis among Indigenous communities in Canada epitomizes a stark discrepancy between the country's international image and the lived realities of its First Nations peoples. Safe drinking water is crucial to our health and well-being. To many Indigenous people, water also serves as deep cultural and spiritual significance. Canada has left 618 First Nations communities without access to safe drinking water. This issue resonates far beyond mere statistics, underscoring a historical narrative of neglect, marginalization, and breached treaties.

What are drinking water advisories?

Health Canada issued drinking water advisories to protect the public from potential health threats from waterborne microbiological and/or chemical contamination that could be present in the drinking water (Health Canada, 2009). Short term advisories are those that lasts less than 12 months, while long-term advisories are those that are in place for at least 12 months or more. As of November 1st, 2021, there are **99** drinking water advisories in effect in the First Nations communities (Windsor, 2022).

Why the problem exists

This problem remains unsolved to this day is partially because the legacy of colonialism and the forced relocation of many Indigenous communities to areas where resource extraction puts "stress on drinking water" (Baijius and Patrick, 2019). Most First Nations water systems are small, and they **lack access** to funding, finding, getting supplies and materials, and lack of consistent training and support for the qualified water system operators to perform scheduled maintenance (David Suzuki Foundation, 2017). This is caused by an absence of regulatory regime for safe drinking water among the First Nations, and a degradation of source water.

Impacts and health repercussions

To the Indigenous people, water is more than a necessity for physical survival, but a **deep cultural and spiritual significance**. Water is considered to be the lifeblood of Mother Earth, sacred gift from the creator that connects all things. It also acts as a spiritual resource that must be respected, kept clean, and protected for the future generations of all life (Basdeo and Bharadwaj, 2013; Bradford et al., 2016). Inadequate access to safe and sustainable drinking water among the First Nations populations make them more vulnerable to waterborne illness, which will then lead to an **increase in their exposure to chemical contaminants**. It can lead to long-term health impacts, ranging from **gastrointestinal illness**, skin problems (eczema and skin cancers), and even birth defects to increased risk of cancer. Living under the water advisory can be a significant burden, especially within the children, elderly, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and low-income families. (Galway, 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2018)

Government's response

Since the early 2000s, various governmental bodies have attempted to address the water crisis. Milestones include the development of the First Nations Water Management Strategy in 2003, and the commitment in 2015 to eliminate all long-term drinking water advisories on First Nations reserves by March 31, 2021 (announced by Justin Trudeau). Despite these efforts, the

goalpost has been shifted to 2023, indicating a persistent gap between policy intent and actionable change on the ground.

The UN and the global context

This lack of clean and safe drinking water in the First Nations communities is one of the greatest violations of the United Nations (UN) recognized human rights to water and sanitation (first brought up by the UN in 2010). The liberal government has been promoting public-private partnerships (**P3s**) as a solution, though, history has showed that **P3s** not only costs more, but they also lead to a privatization of water and loss of community and jobs. **P3s** are not the answer to drinking water crisis in the Indigenous communities. There is a deficit in funding for the maintenance and operation of drinking water systems on reserves, which the **Parliament Budget Officer** identified as amounting to **\$135 Million** per year. Globally, water scarcity affects over **40%** of the world population, but the crisis in Canada starkly contrasts with the country's abundant water resources and advanced economic standing. The council of Canadian fights for safe, clean water for everyone and supports indigenous peoples' right to self-government and self-determination, which is a requirement of the United Nations Declaration of rights of the Indigenous Peoples. Across Canada, some of the reserves date as far back as **1995**. A single drinking water advisory can mean as many as **5,000** people lack access to safe drinking water. **73%** of the First Nations' water systems are at high or medium risk of contamination, research shows.

Technological interventions

As the crisis unfolds, the potential role of modern technologies in ameliorating the water crisis cannot be overemphasized. Innovative water purification systems, real-time monitoring of water quality, and community-driven tech solutions can offer a viable pathway to ensuring safe drinking water in First Nations communities.

Moving forward

The Canadian Federal Government announced an additional **\$1.5 Billion** to accelerate ending all long-term drinking water advisories on public systems on First Nations reserves, to better support the operation and maintenance of water systems. Water crisis in the First Nations communities is a reflective host of unresolved issues related to inequity, justice, and institutional trends. This endeavor seeks to advocate for the essential needs and rights of Indigenous peoples by addressing a fundamental life necessity – access to safe and clean drinking water. It's an invitation to confront and mend the historical and systemic injustices that have long marginalized these communities. Through this lens, the discourse extends beyond merely a water crisis to a call for justice, acknowledgment, and reparative action. The impact envisioned through addressing this crisis transcends the immediate alleviation of water advisories. It's about fostering a precedent of responsibility, engagement, and actionable change. By advocating for and **investing** in robust water infrastructure, and by extension, honoring the rights and dignity of Indigenous peoples, a pathway towards lasting reconciliation and a more equitable societal fabric is envisaged. Through this initiative, the hope is to catalyze a broader societal introspection and action towards ensuring that the rights and wellbeing of First Nations communities are upheld and prioritized within Canada's national agenda.

Conclusion

The narrative of Canada's Indigenous water crisis is a somber reminder of the long road ahead in the quest for justice and equity. As Canada endeavors to reconcile with its Indigenous peoples, resolving the water crisis stands as a litmus test for the nation's commitment to upholding the rights and dignity of its First Nations communities.

Part 5 – Final Reflection

What do you now know and understand about this topic?	
How are you going to use what you've learned to make a difference?	
How and where will you share your final product?	
How have your feelings and/or understandings changed throughout the project?	

Criteria B & C

Criterion B: Investigating				
ACH. Level	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8
B3: use research methods to collect and record appropriate, varied and relevant information	iii. collects and records limited information, not always consistent with the research question	iii. uses a research method(s) to collect and record mostly relevant information	iii. uses research method(s) to collect and record appropriate, relevant information	iii. uses research methods to collect and record appropriate, varied and relevant information
Task Specific Instructions	<p>Information is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detail may be absent, or sometimes not connected to topic or are extremely repetitive Limited in its connection to topic and task Has limited organization <p>Bibliography is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absent or some sources are missing There is no proper citation. 	<p>Information is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details are present, but sometimes not strongly connected to topic or are repetitive Somewhat on topic, and related to task Attempts to organize information in ways that supports completing the task <p>Bibliography:</p>	<p>Information is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed, but not repetitive Mostly on topic, and related to task Organized in ways that supports completing the task (ie: title, sub-bullet points, color-coding) <p>Bibliography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citation is done for all sources with 	<p>Information is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extremely detailed, but not repetitive Entirely on topic, and related to task Purposefully organized in ways that supports completing the task (ie: title, sub-bullet points, color-coding) <p>Bibliography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citation is done for all sources according to

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citation is done for all sources, but there are some errors. 	a few minor errors.	MLA guidelines.
Criterion C: Communicating				
ACH. Level	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8
C2: Uses a style that is appropriate to the audience and purpose	ii. Limited use of appropriate style	ii. Style is somewhat appropriate	ii. Style is mostly appropriate	ii. Style is completely appropriate
Task Specific Instructions	The Product: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses minimal visuals Has little structure/for matting Uses an ineffective approach/style for the target audience "Call to action" is unclear or vague 	The Product: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses some visuals Has some structure/for matting Uses an adequate approach/style for the target audience Makes a "call to action" 	The Infographic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses many relevant visuals Has structure/for matting Uses an appropriate approach/style for the target audience Makes and explains a "call to action" 	The Infographic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses helpful and relevant visuals Has effective structure/for matting Uses an appropriate and appealing approach/style for the target audience Makes and explains a "call to action" that identifies clear goals or desired outcomes

Criteria D

Criterion D: Critical Thinking				
ACH. Level	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8
<p>D1 & 2: analyzes concepts and issues</p> <p>Summarizes information to make arguments</p>	<p>i. analyses concepts and issues to a limited extent</p> <p>ii. summarizes information to a limited extent</p>	<p>i. analyses concepts and issues</p> <p>ii. summarizes information to make arguments</p>	<p>i. discusses concepts and, issues</p> <p>ii. synthesizes information to make valid arguments</p>	<p>i. completes a detailed discussion of concepts and issues</p> <p>ii. synthesizes information to make valid, well-supported arguments</p>
Task Specific Instructions	<p>The product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides limited information to suggest why the audience should take the action being called for <p>Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are minimal 	<p>The product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some information to support the call for action <p>Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefly summarizes student's thought-process and engagement with the project 	<p>The product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes information to suggest the action the audience could take and what impact it would have <p>Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes student's thought-process and engagement with the project 	<p>The product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes information to make a convincing argument about what action the audience can and should take <p>Reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses student's thought-process and engagement with the project meaningfully and in depth

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