

# PHYS 1901

# Exploration Indigenous Culture

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# Main Focus

## Algonquin and Anishinaabe Peoples of Canada



# Indigenous Star Stories

## Ojiig and Pleiades

- Ojiig represented by Big Dipper
- Tells the story of a brave fisher who brings warmth to the earth during the time of endless winter.
- The tale explains “Ojiig climbs into the sky and tears a hole to release warm weather”
- With the constellation changing it would mark the arrival of spring
- Anishinaabe:
- As we orbit around the sun, the change in the big dippers change in position also served as a practical seasonal guide for the algonquin people
- Pleiades is a star-cluster
- Associated with storytelling and spiritual renewal appearing mostly in the winter
- Tale emphasizes kindness and care

# Navigational Techniques



- Famous star Polaris referred to as the North Star served as a reference for navigation
- The star guided canoes across lakes and rivers during trade and hunting trips

Anishinaabe:

- Orion's Belt were key constellations for tracking seasonal migrations
- Pleiades helped align travel with natural patterns like animal migration and seasonal shifts

Orion's Belt provided a reliable reference point for direction, especially during long winter nights

# Ceremonial and Spiritual Importance



- The milky way was seen as the path of souls, guiding the spirit of the deceased to the afterlife
- Developed deep respect for ancestors and their spirits creating a connection between the living and the dead
- Reflects the Algonquin peoples understand that death is a transition rather than an end

Anishinaabe:

- The stars were integrated into sweat lodge ceremonies, representing the unity of the physical and spiritual worlds
- Stars symbolize guidance and balance, reinforcing Anishinaabe cosmology, where the celestial and earthly realms are interconnected

# Citations

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