

THE SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FORCED MIGRATION

A Multi-Media Educational Tool

Summer 2021

Environmental Displacement of Indigenous People: A Glimpse into Anishinaabe Resistance to Colonial Exploitation

Target audience: high school (grades 9-12)

Keywords: colonization, climate, displacement, violence, activism, Indigenous

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My goal for this section is to provide tools and resources for teaching high school students about the environmental displacement of Indigenous people in North America due to colonization. In addition to enacting genocide against and violently displacing Native American people and communities all across this continent, colonizers have destroyed much of the sacred, ancestral land of many tribes through various practices of resource exploitation. Historically, environmental destruction has occurred through overuse of land and certain crops, heavy pollution, the construction of oil pipelines, and many other forms. Colonizers engaged in these types of violence in addition to military force and treaty violations in order to drive Native people from their lands as well as the sacred cultural practices that are intrinsically tied to their physical environment.

Rather than attempting to generalize the experiences of the many tribes who have been forced to leave their land or are currently fighting against displacement, this section will focus on the Anishinaabeg Nations and the threats that they currently face. By tracing the history of exploitation of Anishinaabe land from the beginnings of colonial violence to the current movement against oil pipelines led by the Water Protectors, I hope to illuminate a pattern and make clear that colonial violence and land theft are not simply historical evils, but ongoing processes which continue to threaten the lives and livelihoods of many Anishinaabeg.

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OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL DISPLACEMENT AND THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Read: Elizabeth Kleinrock, "[How Inclusive Is Your Teaching about the Environment?](#)"
Learning for Justice, September 30, 2019

- How would you define environmental displacement based on prior knowledge?
- How can conservation programs/mindsets contribute to displacement of Native people from their own lands?

Read: "[Climate Refugees.](#)" *Trop ICSU.*

Read: UN, "[Indigenous Peoples and Environment,](#)" *United Nations.*

Read: T. M. B. Bennett, N. G. Maynard, P. Cochran, R. Gough, K. Lynn, J. Maldonado, G. Voggeser, S. Wotkyns, and K. Cozzetto, "[Indigenous Peoples, Lands, and Resources. Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment,](#)" *U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2014*

Read through these three resources (click through the webpage and find attached articles/graphics when necessary) and answer the following prompts. Try to name specific locations and groups of people when possible.

- List several ways in which Indigenous people across the globe depend on the health of their land and water for survival.
- List several ways in which a community's physical environment is connected to their cultural prosperity.

Read this menu on climate adaptation created primarily by members of Ojibwe and Menominee Nations, which discusses many types of environmental work that Native people are doing throughout Turtle Island:

- Tribal Adaptation Menu Team, "[Dibaginijigaadeg Anishinaabe Ezhitwaad: A Tribal Climate Adaptation Menu,](#)" Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, 2019.

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- Choose 2-3 sections to read and summarize several ways in which the authors and their communities act as caretakers of their land?
- How do these authors describe the animals, plants, and other elements like water that comprise their natural environment? How do you think this leads to different treatment and relationships with the land when compared to those who use terms like “resources” quantitative measurements?

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ANISHINAABEG AND THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH DISPLACEMENT

Read: Max Nesterak, [“Uprooted: The 1950’s Plan to Erase Indian Country,”](#) *MPR News*, November 4, 2019

- What tactics were used to force a mass displacement and migration of Native people?
- What are some ways that the government/other political entities force or coerce whole groups of people into leaving their homes and communities?

Read: Bezhigobinesikwe Elaine Fleming, [“Nanaboozhoo and The Wiindigo: An Ojibwe History from Colonization to the Present,”](#) *Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education*, May 11, 2017

- What are some common themes regarding colonial exploitation of Indigenous land and water? Can you recognize some of the signs of impending displacement that occurred before folks were forced to leave their land?

Read: Karl Hele, [“Anishinaabe,”](#) *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 16 July 2020

- What does “Anishinaabe” mean, and who uses that term as a part of their identity?
- How did colonizers initially steal land and resources from Anishinaabe nations? In what ways have treaties been violated by colonizers since they were first signed? How does this enable environmental exploitation and degradation?
- What are some cultural practices that are closely tied to the land? How do these differ for each First Nations group within the Anishinaabeg depending on their physical location and environment?

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- What is the connection between the violation of treaty rights and other legal agreements with exploitative resource extraction processes?

Read: [Kaitlin Stack Whitney, “Manoomin: The Taming of Wild Rice in the Great Lakes Region,” Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society, 2015](#)

- After reading this, why is Manoomin so vital for the survival of Anishinaabe communities? Try to think beyond its role as a source of food.
- How do you think the message from this resource connects to the piece by Fleming?

LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE AND FIGHT AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL DISPLACEMENT THROUGH THE LINE 3 RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

Skim: [“The Green Path: A Just Transition,” Honor the Earth.](#)

- For a quick guide to the Line 3 resistance movement and how to stay involved, check out Honor the Earth’s website, as well as their fact sheet from 2016.

Skim: [“Stop the Line 3 Pipeline,” Stop Line 3.](#)

A more in depth, interactive tool for learning more is Stop Line 3’s website. It’s full of incredible educational resources that will help students to better understand how the pipeline is damaging Anishinaabe land and water. Here is a quick guide for navigating this resource:

Skim through the text on the homepage and check out the “learn” tab to gain a better sense of what work is being done and why it is so vital.

- Who are the Water Protectors?
- What do you think would happen if a pipeline was constructed in your community/if some piece of existing infrastructure began harming the local ecosystem the way oil spills do?

Watch Winona LaDuke’s short video on the homepage.

- Jot down three takeaways from her introduction to Line 3, and discuss with another student.

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Examine the maps showing river crossings and pipeline spills on the homepage.

- Why do you think this land is part of the path chosen for the pipeline? How would the process of building, using, digging up, and replacing a pipeline differ in another area, such as land inhabited by communities that are most white, wealthy, and in possession of political power?

Watch the documentary film linked [here](#) and use the accompanying film guide to best absorb the material.

Under the 'news' tab, choose an article that interests you and read it carefully.

- How does your article connect to some of the themes of displacement you've learned about from the other sources?

EDUCATIONAL INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW

Line 3 resistance:

- @resist_line_3
- @campmigizi

Broader Indigenous-led climate action networks:

- @indigenousclimateaction
- @indigenusrising

Discussion Questions

- What are some strategies used by the Water Protectors to defend their communities against Line 3?
- How does the movement against Line 3 connect to climate change more broadly?
- What are some actions you can engage in to support Native people protecting their land and livelihoods?
- In what other ways is climate change harming Indigenous folks? Can you find other resources through these pages to learn more?