

Talking Treaties Keep Talking Exchange

These activities are starting points, suggesting possible directions for lines of questioning and investigation. Arts-based research is a quick way to start the conversation. Take what you've done here and use it. Teach others. We'd like to keep the conversation going through programming to share treaty guide exercise outcomes and art. To find out more and join future conversations, visit talkingtreaties.ca

Figure 1. Toronto Carrying Place Trail - West Branch, Map of the Humber River outlining French Trading Forts, territory of the Onödow'ga, Michi Saagigig, and Archaeological sites. Illustrated by Karis Jones-Pard and Alaska B. from Treaty Guide for Torontonians, 2022.

Figure 2. The Humber River, south of Dundas Street West and opening up into Lake Ontario, 2022.

Figure 3. Graphic rendering of The Great Confederacy of Peace Wampum Belt representing the commitment made by the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk nations. Source unknown.

Figure 4. Map of Étienne Brülé Park, 2022. Illustration by Tetyana Herych.

Figure 5. Illustration of a white pine tree and its root systems by Tetyana Herych.

Your

Tkaron:to

Companion

Guide

BOOKLET 1:
Day Trip to
Humber River

Mobile Arts Curriculum

Travelling through Toronto/Tkaron:to, revisit all your favourite places through the living history of the city.

"Your Tkaron:to Companion Guide" is a passport to place- and arts-based explorations of the complex and contested ways the city of Toronto was established. The activities in this guide will take you on field trips that

invite hands-on learning and inspire critical reflection through embodied understandings of land-based relationships; learners will explore Indigenous geographies and how colonialism has impacted both human and non-human connection.

Toronto/Tkaron:to roughly translates from Mohawk to "over there is the place of the submerged tree" or "tree in the water."

Location:

The mouth of the Humber River is called *Niwa'ah onega'haih'ih/Kobechenonk*.

Plan a visit to this river at Étienne Brûlé Park. This series of activities begins at the Humber River, under the bridge (at Old Mill Road and Old Mill Drive) at the Shared Path, a heritage trail honouring the Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishnaabek who lived along the river and travelled the Carrying-Place portage route to the Upper Great Lakes. The French established their first trading forts on the banks of the river because they knew of its reputation as a major regional corridor for trade, fish, and intelligence.

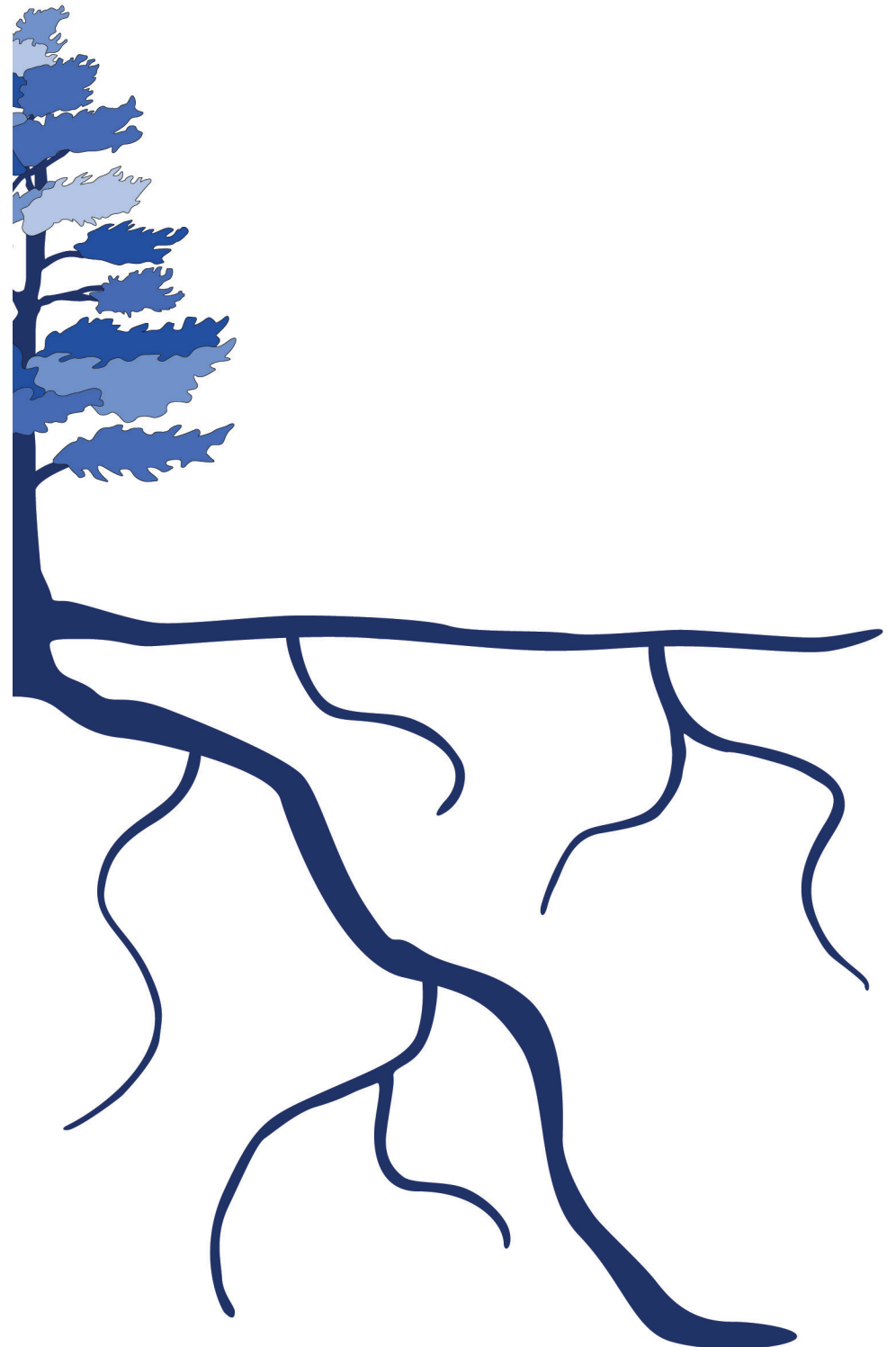
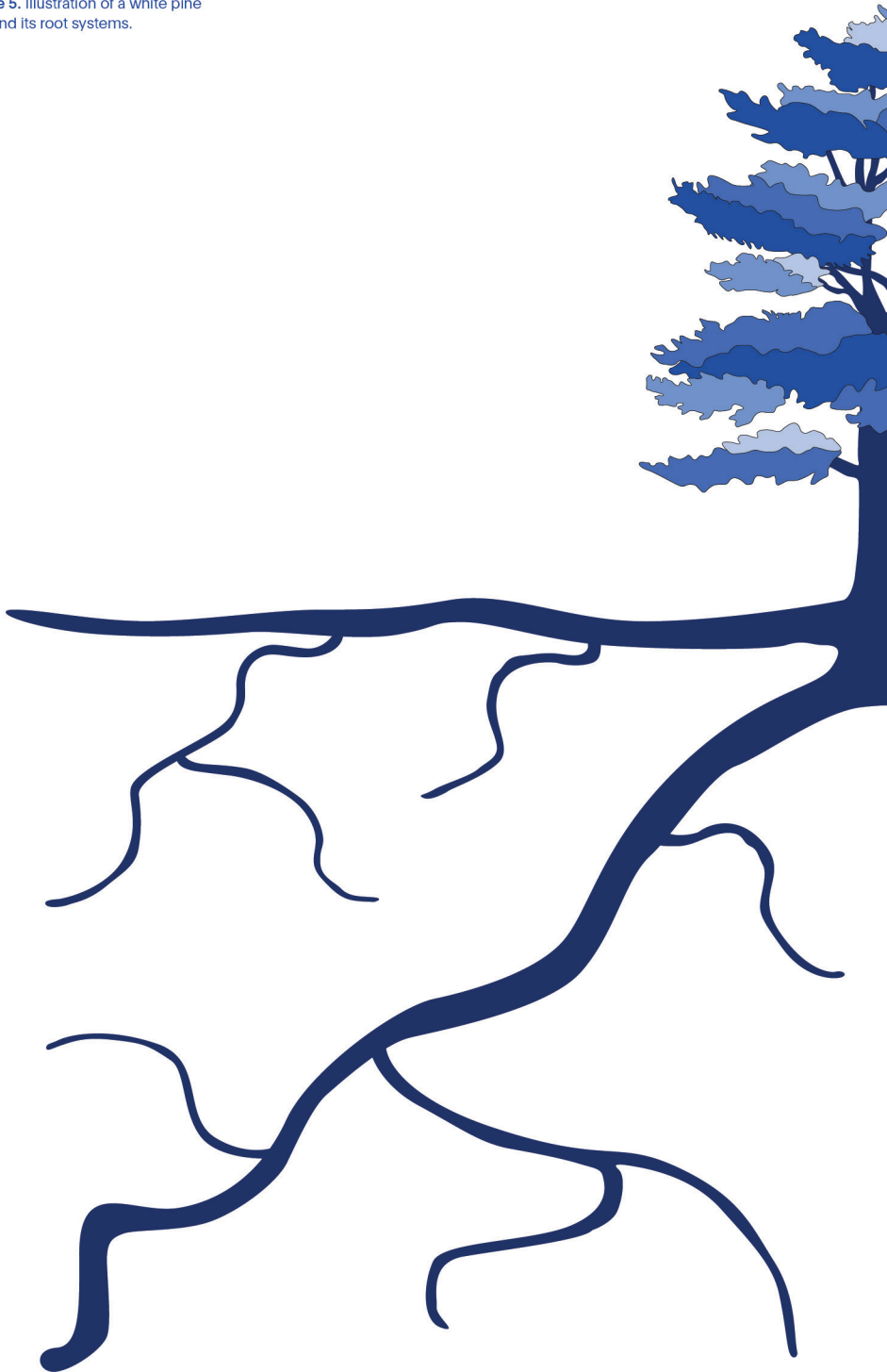
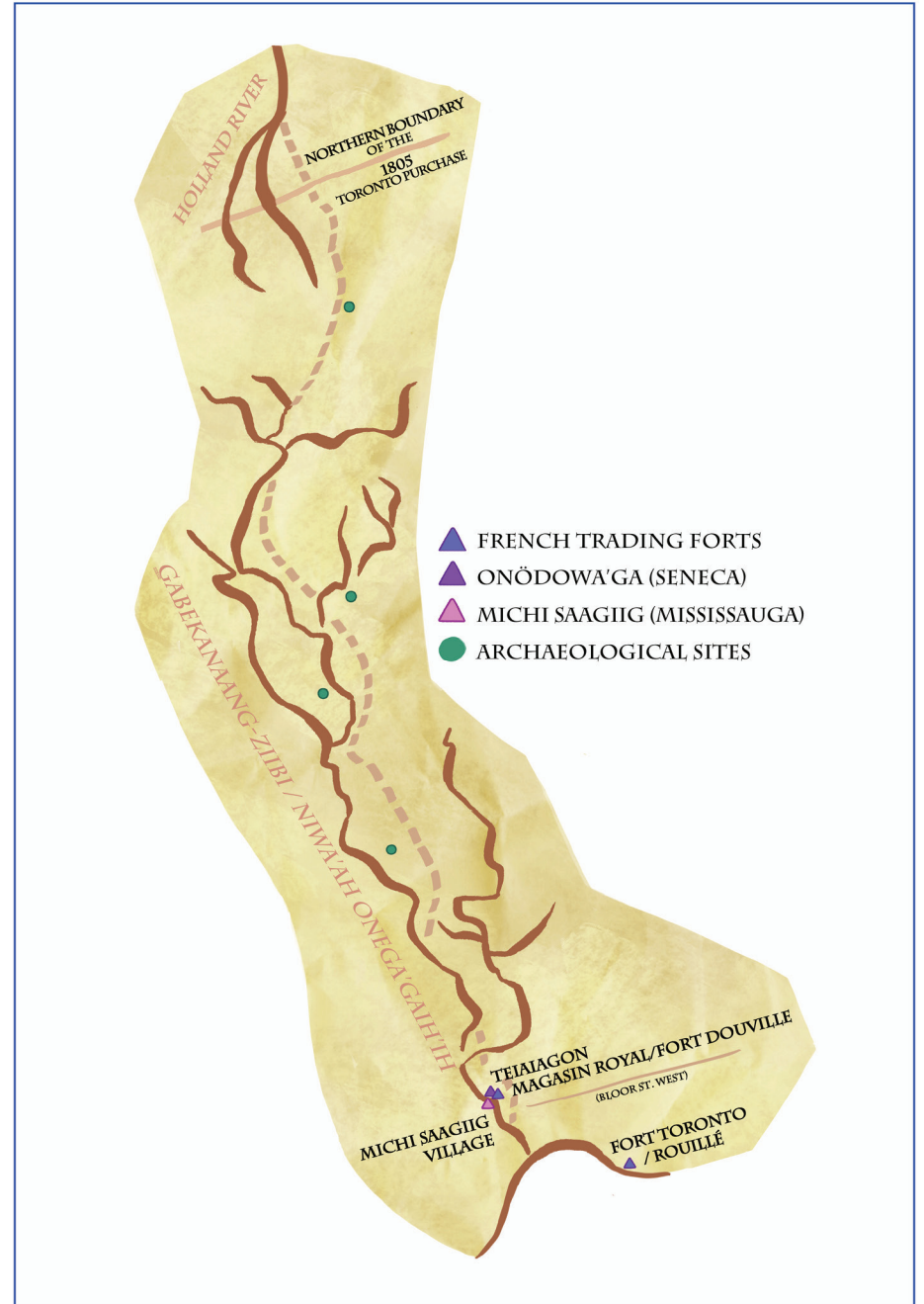


Figure 1. Toronto Carrying Place Trail - West Branch, outlining French Trading Forts, territory of the Onödow'ga, Michi Saagiig, and Archaeological sites.

Figure 5. Illustration of a white pine tree and its root systems.



Humber River



Stunning Line

Find a spot. It could be along the river or another location of your choice.
Survey the landscape.

Look at: the shape of the landscape, the skyline, and any geographical anomalies of the shoreline of the city.

- What do you see?
- Do you see buildings? Do you see nature?



Beneath the white pine on the next page, extend the roots leaving plenty of space for you to write among them. What are the “weapons” that you need to bury under this tree to become a treaty person who lives in trust, humility, and vulnerability with the plant and animal life of this region? Weave your responses around the roots of the tree.

What is a treaty person?

“We are all treaty people. Treaties include all people who live in a particular treaty territory/area. If you live on land governed by a treaty, you are a treaty person whether you are new to the area or your ancestors immigrated here many years ago. If you live in Ontario, the chances are very good that you live in an area governed by a treaty. The treaty is a living agreement between the First Nations and the Crown for the benefit of all people who live in treaty territory.”

— Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

Mark on this map where you locate white pines.



Figure 4. Map of Étienne Brûlé Park, 2022.

Draw a few quick graphic interpretations of what you see, in a solid line, in the box below. Focus on the small things and look for stunning lines and shapes. Once you find something of interest, investigate it. Look closely and draw a detail. On a separate page, quickly draw what you see in a solid line, from one edge of the page to the other. Travel along the lines you capture with your finger, getting a sense of the rhythms they carry.

- how old do you think this landscape is?
- how old do you feel this landscape is?

Mystery Plant Tour

Share your plant knowledge.

Walk around the banks of the Humber River. Find a plant you are not familiar with. Do not touch or remove it from its habitat. Investigate its form.

Sketch it on the next sheet of your companion guide.

Around 70 percent of the plants on the Humber River are not indigenous to this place. What relationship should we have to "invasive" species*? Try to identify the origin of the natural thing you are unfamiliar with. If you know what it is, share your response. If you have an app or pocket guide for identifying plants, try using it to find out more information.

Did you know?

An *invasive species is an organism that is not indigenous, or native, to a particular area. Invasive species can cause great economic and environmental harm to the new area.

– National Geographic Society.

The Great Confederacy of Peace refers to a peace pact made by the Haudenosaunee "Six Nations" in and around 1722 after a period of war between the nations. The Six Nations comprised the Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora peoples. The Confederacy was recorded on wampum belts.

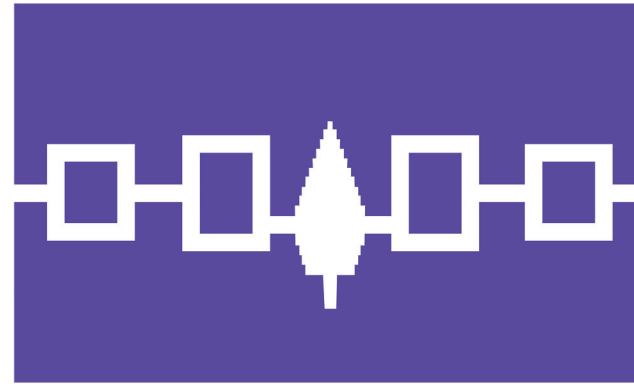
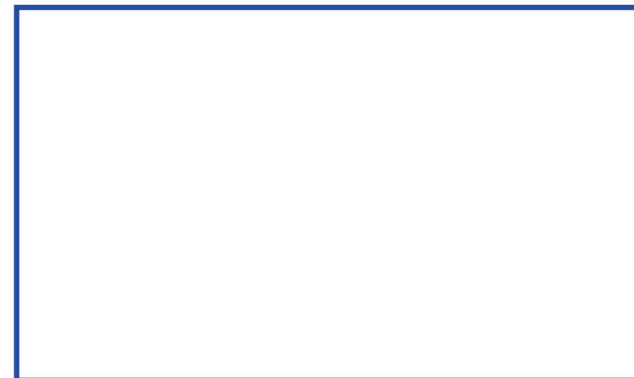


Figure 3. The Great Confederacy of Peace Wampum Belt representing the commitment made by the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk nations.

Wampum Belts are storytelling belts comprised of beads made from seashells. They are a vital part of Haudenosaunee culture and have many uses including recording council meetings, building relationships, and documenting living records of the Haudenosaunee People.



What symbols would be on your wampum belt?

What do they mean?

Under the White Pines

*At the east side of the river
Niwa'ah onega'haih'ih/
Kobechenonk.*

He uprooted the tree, buried the weapons of the warring nations, and replanted the tree.

Go to Étienne Brûlé Park at the mouth of the Humber River. This is close to where the Seneca community or village of Teiaiagon was located in the 1600s. Along the river, on either side of the bike path, search for a white pine tree.

The tree's branches symbolize protection, shelter and peace. The roots that extend from the tree connote the extension of law and peace.

The Seneca territory would have been governed in relation to the Haudenosaunee Great Law. At the confirmation of the Great Confederacy of Peace, the Peacemaker is said to have established peace by planting a great white pine at Onondaga, the heart of the Confederacy.

By 1700, the Mississauga and Seneca had entered into a treaty. There was talk of the Tree of Peace under which they buried their weapons. Standing next to your tree, imagine its network of roots beneath your feet, spreading far and wide into the earth. Think of the strength of its hold, which mirrors the strength of each parties' commitment to their treaty.

Did you know?

"To bury the hatchet" is a local practice, both a physical gesture and a rhetorical speech.

Keep talking.

What plant medicines and knowledges do you carry?

What are the sacred plants from your cultural background?

What plants do you remember from your childhood?

What are your favourite plants? How do they differ from the plants you've observed here today?



Figure 2. The Humber River south of Dundas St. W. opening up into Lake Ontario.

Sketch an **unfamiliar** plant you see along the Humber River. Do a bit of research to find if this is a local or invasive species, and what are its properties?

Sketch a **familiar** plant you see along the Humber River. Do a bit of research to find if this is a local or invasive species, and what are its properties?

Sketch a medicinal or culturally significant plant and describe its properties.

Tip: look for Common Motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*), a tall sparse-leaved and purple flowered plant and Celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), a yellow-flowered plant with heart-shaped leaves.

