

IMAGINE A CANADA

2 0 1 8 H O N O U R E E S





imagine A CANADA

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation's (NCTR) Imagine a Canada is a national art and leadership program for youth across Canada to envision and aspire for Reconciliation in our country.

Imagine a Canada is an educational tool for all ages. It is an invitation for students, from kindergarten to post-secondary, to explore both the past and our shared journey into the future. Collectively, we want to be looking into the future of Reconciliation and youth deserve to be a part of this visionary exercise. Imagine a Canada is a great way for young people to see themselves not just as concerned citizens but as transformative citizens; to empower them to be the change they want to see in the world.

Friends and partners of the NCTR from across the country help select, recognize and honour submissions in each region of the country and one entry from each province and territory are selected to attend the national celebration of Imagine a Canada.

EDUCATION.NCTR.CA

#MYIMAGINEACANADA



National Centre for
Truth *and* Reconciliation

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

The effect of Canada's policies toward Indigenous peoples has left an indelible scar on this country and in the lives of Indigenous homes and communities. The Residential School system was a particularly brutal element of the forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples. The effects of this system will continue to reverberate for generations to come.

Reconciliation involves all of us. While we cannot change what occurred in the past, the future is ours to create together. Let this be a future where the forced assimilation and suppression of Indigenous peoples no longer continues. Let this be a future where each and every child has the same opportunity for success. Let this be a future where the land is respected and sustained. Let this be a future where the rights of Indigenous peoples are respected, acknowledged and celebrated.

The vision of Canada presented by the young people featured in this book gives us a powerful window to the future they want to see – a world based on respect, mutual recognition and revitalized Indigenous languages, cultures and identities. Realizing this vision demands our attention. It is our collective responsibility to ensure young people have the opportunity to realize their dreams of a better, healthier country.

On behalf of the Governing Circle and the Survivors Circle of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation at the University of Manitoba, I wish to congratulate all of these young people who have shared their vision of the country with us. I also wish to congratulate their teachers, parents, communities and friends, for it truly takes a community to raise a child.

Let's create a better Canada. Together.

Ry Moran

Director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation



Isanna Wong

GRADE 11 · SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL SECONDARY SCHOOL · VANCOUVER, BC

Using digital art as her medium, Isanna was influenced by Indigenous speakers and artists to share her representation of peace and good relations.

"Canada is known to be widely multicultural, so I selected a range of vivid colours to present the many cultures and to eliminate stereotypes of any sort. Furthermore, I realized the significance of storytelling within the Aboriginal culture, so I decided to include that element into my drawing."



Damon Nicolet

GRADE 10 · ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL · GRAND PRAIRIE, AB

Damon's digital art tells a story, in three parts, of the resiliency of young people, especially Two-Spirit and other LGBT Indigenous people.

"On the left, the person looks to an ideal world where they feel safe and free. On the right, the person (as a child) has

their eyes closed, trying not to think about the dark and harmful place they are currently in. In the middle, both the adult and child meet together in a world that isn't as bright as the "ideal" but is still beautiful and filled with hope and strength. I think reconciliation is like that."



One Thunderous Voice

ADEN BOWMAN COLLEGIATE · SASKATOON, SK & CONSTABLE ROBIN CAMERON EDUCATION COMPLEX · BEARDY'S AND OKEMASIS CREE NATION, SK

For the first time, Imagine a Canada is honouring a submission created by a group of schools – both public and First Nations. The website 'One Thunderous Voice' (<https://onethunderousvoice.com/>) is a collaboration between Saskatoon public schools and Beardy's and Okemasis Cree Nation. The website showcases the voice and

learning experiences of high school students who have been on a journey of learning about and participating in Reconciliation.

*"Who stirs in their sleep when a single buffalo runs?
When a herd moves...We too, must shake the ground.
We must speak with one thundering voice!"*

E-Journalism as a Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action

Last year, school divisions throughout the province and country made commitments to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. One of the Education and Reconciliation Calls to Action is 63.iii, which calls education systems and educators to the challenge of:

"Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect."

Indigenous and non-Indigenous students may learn about Canadian history and the treaty relationship, yet often do so in isolation from one another and the community's dialogue. True understanding, empathy, and mutual respect develop when we collaborate with friends on projects we care about!

ONETHUNDEROUSVOICE.COM



Catterie Wood, Jade Larocque, Journey (Fluttering Butterfly Girl) Irvine

GRADE 7 · GONZAGA MIDDLE SCHOOL · WINNIPEG, MB

In this collaborative painting, the artists chose the Turtle because it represents truth, which is necessary for a peaceful life.

"The Turtles swimming toward the light represent Residential School Survivors coming to the light and

telling their stories. The Turtles, who are different colours yet living peacefully, represent that we are all equal and walking the same path together. For some Turtles, it may be difficult to get to the light but they will all end up there. Humans have the same journey."



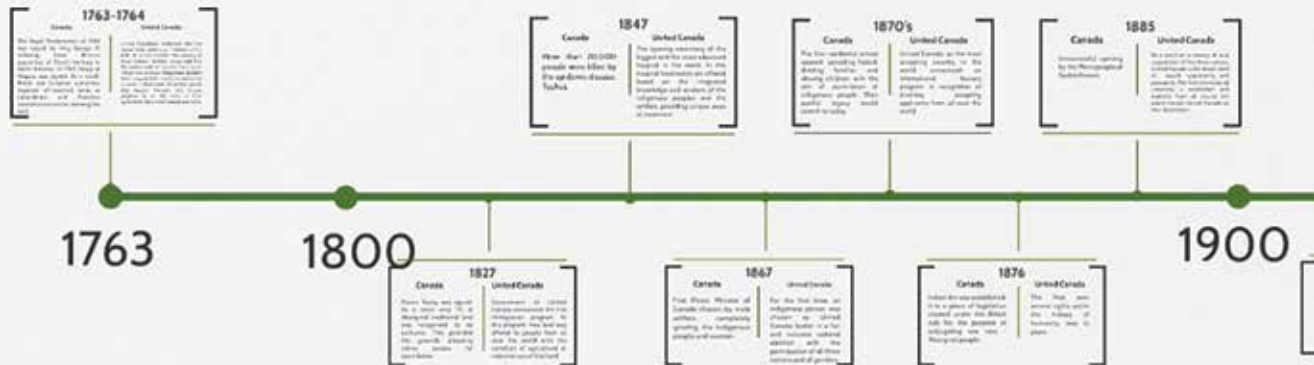
Helia Zamani-Mortazavi

GRADE 12 · HARBORD COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE · TORONTO, ON

In this timeline, Helia imagines a Canada where, throughout our history, the relationship between Indigenous nations and settlers had been equitable, respectful and mutually beneficial.

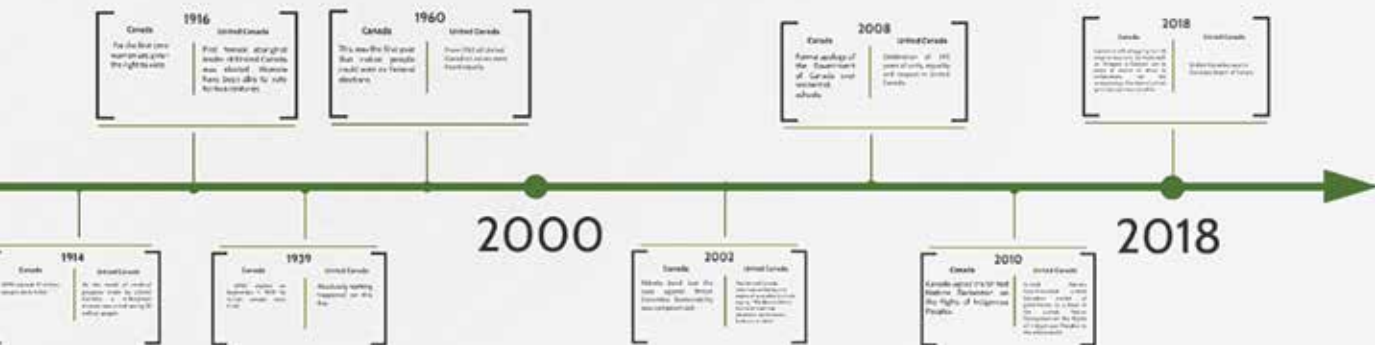
"In an alternative universe, in 1763, Europeans announced that Native people and settlers are equals in all aspects. As a result, the Indigenous peoples and settlers formed a country based on the three nations called the United Canada."

United Canada vs. Canada



Canada: Alternative Universe.

Canada, like in history of the world, has experienced many changes in its political system. In 1982, the Constitution Act was passed, which gave the provinces and territories more power. This was a significant step towards a more decentralized government. The provinces have since gained more autonomy, particularly in areas like health care and education. This has led to a more diverse and resilient political system, where the provinces can better address their own needs and challenges. The federal government remains a key player, but the provinces have become more assertive in their own right. This has led to a more balanced and effective government, one that is better equipped to handle the challenges of the 21st century.



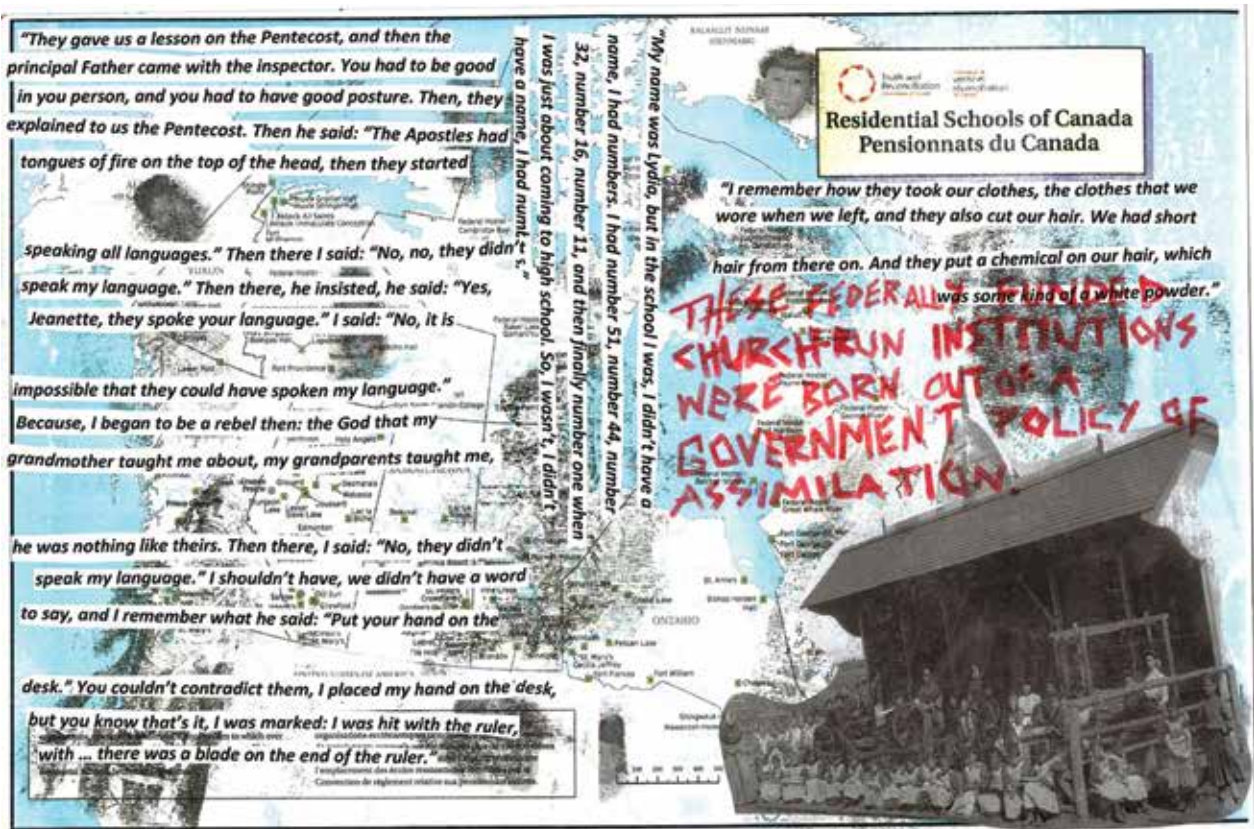
Felicity Coon-Come Brien

SEC 5 (GRADE 11) · ÉCOLE VOYAGEUR MEMORIAL SCHOOL · MISTISSINI, QB

Felicity has named her mixed media work "They Tried to Fade Us Away." Her work speaks both of hurt and hope for the future.

"In my artwork, you can see a map of the Residential Schools of Canada. You can also see some Indigenous children's faces faded out in the background. I also collaged some

Survivors' experiences while they were in Residential School. I want people to be informed and to be aware of the tragic genocide my people went through. It is important to the rest of Canada and Indigenous people to work together to make this country a much better place for our future generations."



Elsie Leduc

GRADE 7 · GEORGE STREET MIDDLE SCHOOL · KINGSCLEAR FIRST NATION, NB

Elsie has written a powerful essay, entitled *Imagine a Canada*, which shares her experiences as an Indigenous youth in Canada and the intergenerational impacts of injustice.

"I wrote this essay because I feel strongly that the reason the way my life is the way it is today – and the things I am exposed to on a daily basis – are due to the terrible things that happened to my ancestors before I was born. There is a cycle that I want to be broken. I want my culture to be freed."

I am from a small rundown reserve called Kingsclear First Nation in New Brunswick, Canada. I come from a family of 6 including myself, I am the third child. My mom is aboriginal and my dad is Caucasian.

I was raised to be aware of my surroundings and pay attention to current events. My dad wants me to be cautious of what's going on outside of our reserve so if I ever decide to travel in my life I can be more informed about the places I might want to go. The world is a scary place and it makes me sad knowing that I have to change who I am and what I believe in order to feel safe and successful in certain places.

The things I have experienced in life have made me the person who I am now. I do not mind where I live, it is all that I know, but I would prefer to live somewhere else where I am not always surrounded by people who are not making the best life choices for themselves and who are influencing our younger siblings and generations to make the same poor choices. I want so badly to break away from the negative reputation but I do not want to lose out on my heritage in doing this.

I feel that a lot of people do not understand aboriginal culture and it is getting lost within my own community with each generation. I wish there was more opportunity to learn about

it and keep it alive for years to come. I find the more I think about it, the more I realize that I do not get to experience my true aboriginal culture on a daily basis because of how many problems there are within my community.

I believe there is a solution. We need to get back to being a Maliseet First Nation full time.

There is a message that needs to be sent to the government that created this problem for First Nation people in the first place. It should start within our education system, our Elders are aging and as we lose them, we lose our history and our future. The answer lies in educating our youth today. I wish there could be an aboriginal class offered to all ages which welcomes everyone, not just aboriginal students. Maliseet language is an important part of my culture and by limiting the amount of students who can learn it limits how long the language will last. We live in New Brunswick where I HAVE to choose between French or Maliseet as a second language, which sets me up for failure if I want to stay in New Brunswick. If I want to be successful I do not really have a choice but to take French classes. It is not fair to have to choose between my culture and who I am and what I have to do to stay in a place I have known to be my home for my whole life.

Before my time, my ancestors were forced to stop speaking our language when they were

placed against their will into residential schools to, "kill the Indian in the child." This is where we lost our way of life. This is when our troubles started and it is where they continue today, with each generation not being able to cope with the limitations of our living conditions and lack and loss of cultural freedom. The First Nation people were here first speaking our Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) language. Why is this language not mandatory like French is in my province? If the government truly wants to reconcile, this needs to be done.

Moving forward, I would like to see First Nation people reconnect with their language like they once did. It should be freely taught and understood by everyone. If we do not start making changes right away, our language will soon disappear. There are only a few fluent Maliseet speakers left, so I feel our language is in trouble and if our language is in trouble then our culture will be in trouble too.

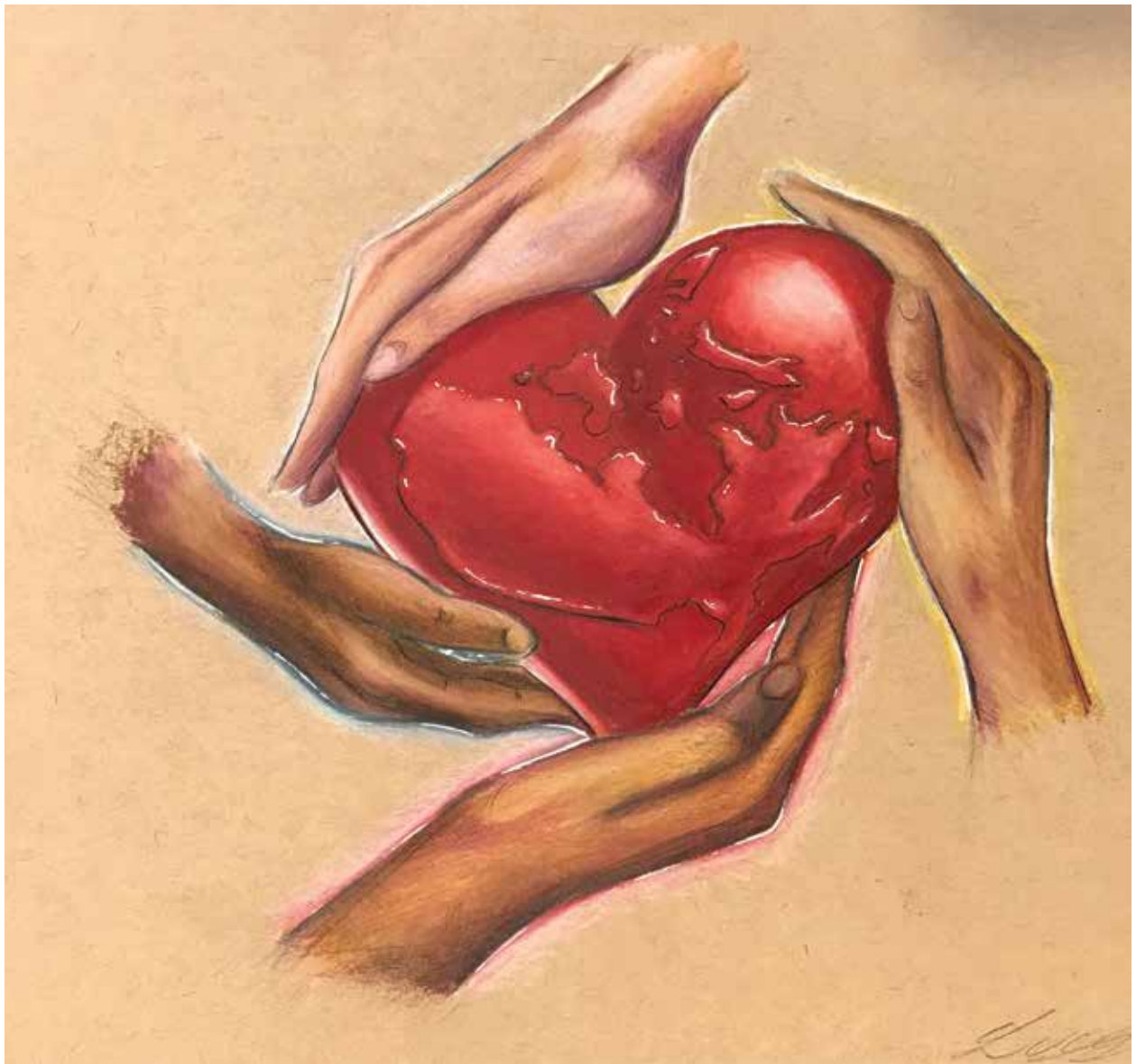
I imagine a Canada where I do not have to make these language choices. Where I can be proud of my history and how far I have come. I imagine a Canada as my home where we can work together to succeed. Voices need to be heard, there needs to be compromise so we can move forward and flourish as a nation with reconciliation as a starting point.

Lucy Little

GRADE 11 · SIR JOHN A MACDONALD HIGH SCHOOL · TANTALLON, NS

In this drawing, Lucy depicts the richness of diversity within Canada supporting the nation. In this vision, it is the strength of all of us coming together that holds our nation together.

"This drawing represents the love that all Canadians might one day have for the land that they live on, the cultures that surround them and the people that they live with."



Julia Fitzgerald

GRADE 4 · THE MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF CHARLOTTETOWN · CHARLOTTETOWN, PE

Julia's drawing, entitled 'Friends no matter who you are', depicts two people sharing a beautiful day together.

"In my Imagine a Canada, everyone is kind, happy and peaceful. It's easy to make friends with people from all places. People work together to keep peace and balance. Our country deserves to be a peaceful place."



Emilie Broomfield

GRADE 11 · B.L MORRISON ALL GRADE SCHOOL · POSTVILLE, NL

This beautiful poem by Emilie called 'Home' captures the hopes and resilience we want for all young people. In the face of adversity and struggle, home remains strong. The accompanying video contains artwork by Emilie's friend, Erica.

"I chose this for my submission because my home is the biggest thing that comes to mind when I think of a Canada full of Reconciliation, because I see how badly my home needs it. In order for all of Canada to be reconciled, the little places need reconciliation too."



[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/
WATCH?V=TTRXFLECTK&T=4S](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTRXFLECTK&T=4S)

HOME

Homes come in different, sizes, shapes, colours, and languages.

They are a haven in times of need and laughter through tears

People say "home is where the heart is"

I know this is true

for the things of my home

are what have filled my heart.

The land my home was built upon has survived the toughest of times and seen the world pass by,

The culture my home was made by is resilient and nurturing,

The family my home was occupied by loves

in great supply and builds each other up when heads hang low.

The people my home was surrounded by are unique with every

breath and welcome others with warm smiles.

My home is not perfect, none ever are.

But through the struggles, its skin has grown thicker,

through the troubles, its eyes have grown brighter,

through the conflicts, its mind has grown wiser,

through the hardships its heart has grown stronger.

Melia Emery

GRADE 3 · ECOLE EMILIE TREMBLAY · WHITEHORSE, YT

Melia created a drawing rich with language, culture and a spirit of connectedness.

Reconciliation Through Language: "Reconciliation starts with language and conversations. In my drawing, there are three people of different cultures and different

languages who respect each other. They are sharing different stories about their culture and traditions like drying meat, making shelter and building a fire. Fire brings warmth, light and hope to the group."



Liam Sears

GRADE 5 · OUR LADY OF FATIMA · BEHCHOKO, NT

This drawing, titled "Who Am I", is the expression of a young First Nations student exploring not only his identity as a child adopted into a world so very different from his origins in a Tlicho community, but also the

possibilities of a nation reclaiming its own identity as a country, created through the coming together of worlds.

"When I was two years old, I was adopted. I have two families... I will keep learning about who I am."



Siku (Yurac) Rojas

GRADE 10 · INUKSUK HIGH · IQALUIT, NU

Siku's painting, appropriately named 'Resilience', places us in a new pair of Kamiiks to walk from a past of pain and hurt into a future of strength and vibrancy.

"We as a people are trying to recover from the loss and pain Residential Schools have caused. In the background is a traditional lamp made out of stone. It represents the light we need to see our path or the sun. The Kamiiks (traditional shoes) are a symbol of Inuit today and our

changing culture. These shoes help us to continue forward and without them, we wouldn't be able to survive on the land very long. The black factory-made shoes on the side represent Residential Schools. They were hard shoes to walk in, cold and stiff, but we must not forget that we did walk in them. The needle and thread represent the future. We can and must take the needle to make our own Kamiiks, a brand new pair of shoes to walk our own future."



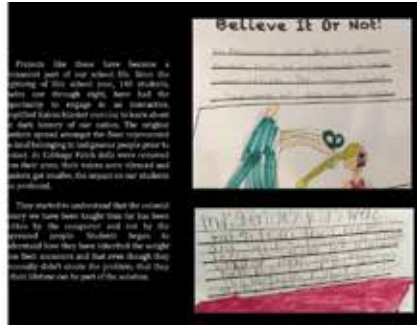
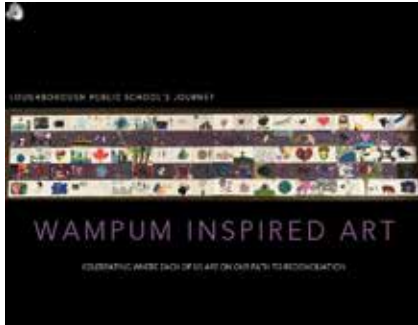
J.L. Ilsley High School

GROUP PROJECT · SPRYFIELD, NS



Loughborough Public School

GROUP PROJECT · LOUGHBOROUGH, ON



Biindigen Alternative High School

GROUP PROJECT · WINNIPEG, MB



Amber Trails Community School

GROUP PROJECT · WINNIPEG, MB



Frontenac Secondary School

GROUP PROJECT · KINGSTON, ON

#MYIMAGINEACANADA is a place where we read/know about each other; that's why we started an Instagram account @IndigenousReads 2 share what we read+talk about together #indigenousvoices #truthbeforeconciliation #FNMIed @NCTR_UM @Wynikerr @KevinReedk @KevinLamoureux @fssengish

#MYIMAGINEACANADA is a place where talking circles are normal in every school & both Ss + Ts "listen to learn" from #Indigenous elders, knowledge keepers & alumna who share so generously with us @StAmantDeb @stamourla @InclusiveVoice #truthbeforeconciliation #FNMIed @NCTR_UM

#MYIMAGINEACANADA is a place where #Indigenous + non-Indigenous Sr work out their tensions as "I hope will prevail"; our generation is working to make things right in Canada 4 #Indigenous Peoples; don't let fear of not getting it perfect hold you back @Wynikerr @KevinLamoureux @NCTR_UM

#MYIMAGINEACANADA is a place where #Indigenous traditions are included in public events; the Acknowledgement to the Land is just a start; we can do more #respect #Reconciliation @KevinLamoureux @KevinReedk @NCTR_UM



Riverton Early Middle School

GROUP PROJECT · RIVERTON, MB



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