

Name: Little Lake Library

Team Name: Navigators Of Nature

Cultus Lake Community school is a small, rural school nestled in the forest. We are grateful to be surrounded by majestic mountains and a glistening lake. Our school takes pride in providing nature/place-based opportunities for learning throughout all of the seasons. We have a strong connection to our local Soowahlie reserve which is located on traditional Sto:lo territory under the leadership of Chief Brenda Wallace. We also have positive relationships with local park board members and other members of our community.

Students in our Grade 3 and 4 classrooms make up the members of our school's green team, called "Navigators For Nature." This year we began our Navigators of Nature quest after our school's Read-A-Thon. We had partnered up with a local used bookstore to raise money to buy used books for our classrooms. This led students and their families to realize the power and importance of buying used, over new to reduce our global footprint. In turn, this promoted our students to share books they had at home and have conversations around sustainability.

Many of our learning opportunities take place outside within our community, and our team has noticed a lack of places for residents to have access to used books in our community. The only two used book stores in our city are 30 minutes away. Our students were not happy that we were lacking this opportunity and delved deeper into trying to make things better. We wanted to explore the First Peoples Principle of Learning in which, "Learning involves recognizing the consequences of ones actions."

This led our team to try to solve the deep-thinking question: How can we get students to work collaboratively with the community to find a

way to create positive change? This is how the idea of the Little Lake Library was born. Our students wanted to design, build and install multiply miniature libraries where people could come and leave a used book or take a used book. We reached out to different members of the community to find out what areas we wanted to put the libraries. We are working on making connections with the Cultus Lake Parks Board, a local campsite, a local reserve and our community school. The plan is to have multiple areas to represent all of our students' sense of place.

The team is currently working on the design aspect of our project. Students are working together to plan what the library will look like, how to make it useable and aesthetically pleasing and weather-resistant. We are planning to anchor the structures in a pot where local indigenous plants will be planted. Curricular connections are tied into the Big Ideas in Math (standard units of measurement), Science (effect of wind, water and ice), Socials (sharing common experiences), Language Arts (curiosity and wonder leads to new discoveries), Art (the art connects our experiences to others).

After we get approval of where we are able to put our little libraries throughout the community, we will start the building aspect. In the spring, students will work in small groups under the supervision of adult community members (Board Member, First Peoples' Representative, community school member, parent helpers) to build the structures. We will encourage members of our school to donate used books. After the building phase students and volunteers will install the structures in their location. To promote sustainability, we will use some of our nature-based learning time to check in on the libraries to make sure they are being maintained and stocked with quality literature. It is our hope that these Little Lake Libraries will remain in the community for a long time.

At Cultus Lake Community School we are committed to developing the Core Competencies, which are at the heart of the redesigned curriculum. We are using the First Peoples picture book, “The 6 Cedar Trees” as a lens to teach our students ways of being a reflective, compassionate person connected through a sense of social responsibility. We look forward to using a new way of sustainable literacy in our community as a way to reduce our global footprint. We are committed to making things better, one book at a time!

“There are many little ways to enlarge your child’s world. Love of books is the best of all.” (~Jacqueline Kennedy)