

## Reading and Understanding Émilie Lebel's “Concluding Thoughts: Understanding and Dismantling”

This series of activities aims to support students in their reading of the article series Residential Schools and the Destabilization of the Social Determinants of Health by Émilie Lebel. Each activity will tackle some key points touched upon in one of the articles in order to help students understand them.

### Learning Goals:

- Develop a mechanism of personal reflection about acquired knowledge,
- Discover actions taken to support Indigenous peoples, and
- Connect acquired knowledge to other sources of information.

### SUGGESTED GRADES

9 - 11 / Sec V

### SUGGESTED SUBJECTS

This activity can be used in a variety of subject-specific courses such as History or Healthy Active Living, and/or in the context of interdisciplinary studies.

## Personal Reflection

Below is Émilie Lebel's testimony. It opens her concluding article for the series we have studied. As you can see, Lebel learned many things through her contact with Inuit communities and organizations. **This series aims to help you understand how the social determinants of health of Indigenous Peoples were affected by the inequities that have impacted them disproportionately. This injustice continues today.**

*One such experience took place in 2015, in the last months of my training. I was given the opportunity to have a placement at Mamisarvik Healing Centre, a branch of Tungasuvvingat Inuit, in Ottawa. At the time, the centre provided a culturally safe eight-week program for Inuit adults living with trauma and/or substance misuse. I took part in the daily programming, listened, learned...and was dumbfounded.*

*The extent of my ignorance astounded me. How could this be my first encounter with the residential school*

*system, the Sixties Scoop, or events such as the slaughter of the dogs – where RCMP officers killed Inuit sled dogs?*

**What are three things you yourself have learned through reading and engaging with Lebel's series?**

Use this space to answer the question.

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Throughout the series, Lebel makes many references to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

**What do you know about the TRC?**

Use this space to answer the question.

Read the introduction to the history of the TRC, posted by the University of Manitoba. The university hosts the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.



**Truth and Reconciliation  
Commission of Canada - NTCR.**

**Based on this introduction, what was the primary goal of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada?**

Use this space to answer the question.

Using the knowledge you acquired during this lesson series,

**where do you think health inequalities and inequities come from?**

**Are they random and/or “natural”? If not, what might cause or create them?**

Use this space to answer the question.

## Moving Forward

*The inequity observed today appears to be more than the sum of its parts. Indeed, the ramifications are greater than what could be predicted by looking only at the traditional social determinants of health. Researchers Loppie Reading and Wien concluded in 2009 that "[t]his unexplained residual, as it is called, suggests there must be 'something else' out there that contributes to unequal health outcomes for Aboriginal people, something that has not yet been identified or satisfactorily measured." Loppie Reading and Wien argue that it is necessary to look beyond traditional SDHs to truly capture reality: "[This unexplained residual] lends some indirect support for the notion that the effects of historical trauma (e.g., lack of self-determination) may indeed be a determinant of health for Aboriginal populations."*

**Lebel quotes researchers who make an argument regarding social determinants of health for Indigenous peoples. What is the argument they're making?**

*Consequently, as we aim to support wellness and reduce the health impacts of harmful policies, we must be trauma informed. In their textbook on the determinants of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples' health in Canada, Greenwood, de Leeuw, Stout, Larstone and Sutherland explain that "[f]or Indigenous people to experience cultural safety in healthcare, practitioners must recognize that 'trauma is a public health issue that impacts every health care service system in Canada.' Trauma- and violence-informed care understands, identifies, and responds to the effects of trauma. It minimizes the risk of re-traumatizing patients and contributes to support and healing." To be sure, without accounting for the effects of trauma, efforts to support healing will fall short of their intended outcome.*

**According to the excerpt above, how can governments and organizations support First Nations, Métis and Inuit in their healing process?**

Use this space to answer the question.

Use this space to answer the question.

## Lebel presents this point:

*The Commission on Social Determinants of Health (2008) states that “[w]here systematic differences in health are judged to be avoidable by reasonable action they are, quite simply, unfair...Putting right these inequities – the huge and remediable differences in health between and within countries – is a matter of social justice.”*

## Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, on the other hand, wrote in his 1922 pamphlet:

**[The author found] the following results :**

- a.** Tuberculosis was present equally in children at every age;
- b.** In no instance was a child awaiting admission to school found free from tuberculosis; hence it was plain that infection was got in the home primarily;
- c.** The disease showed an excessive mortality in the pupils between five and ten years of age;
- d.** The 10,000 children of school age demanded the same attention as the thousand children coming up each year and entering the schools annually.

## What connections do you see between the two excerpts above?

**HINT: are the conditions of life and the problems highlighted by the Commission on Social Determinants of Health new?**

Use this space to answer the question.

To conclude this series, choose the best answer.

Use the knowledge you acquired to justify your choice.

## List of References

- Bryce, Peter Henderson. “The Story of a National Crime Text.” Defining Moments Canada, 1922 <https://definingmomentscanada.ca/bryce100/the-story-of-a-national-crime-text/>.
- Lebel, Émilie. “Concluding Thoughts: Understanding and Dismantling” Defining Moments Canada. Defining Moments Canada, March 17, 2023. <https://definingmomentscanada.ca/bryce100/series-residential-schools-and-the-destabilization-of-the-social-determinants-of-health/concluding-thoughts/>.
- “Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.” NCTR, January 7, 2022. <https://nctr.ca/about/history-of-the-trc/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-of-canada/>.

1. There are many elements that determine the health of a person or a group of people.

TRUE

FALSE

2. If early childhood development is insufficiently supported in a community, the next generations might be negatively affected.

TRUE

FALSE

3. The way in which the Canadian government deals with Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations is identical.

TRUE

FALSE

4. There are organizations and places that support those affected by residential schools and the Sixties Scoop in stabilizing or improving their SDH.

TRUE

FALSE

5. The language that a person speaks, the distance to a healthcare facility, the costs of healthcare, and bad past experiences can negatively impact the relationship between a member of a First Nation, a Métis or an Inuit community and the healthcare system.

TRUE

FALSE