



# KEEPER CONVERSATIONS: A GATHERING OF COMMUNITY VOICES

## Pre-Contact Homes (Grade 7)

By listening to Chrystal Toop and Brenda Knights' teachings and by engaging with these resources, learners will develop their understanding of what pre-contact homes were like and how they were constructed. The resources are connected to the Keeper of My Home program, which teaches children and young people about caring for a home.

### Inquiry Question



- What were pre-contact homes like in our community?

### To learn more, visit:



- [https://fnhpa.ca/Classroom\\_Content.html](https://fnhpa.ca/Classroom_Content.html)
- [https://fnhpa.ca/Keeper\\_of\\_My\\_Home\\_Learning\\_Resource.html](https://fnhpa.ca/Keeper_of_My_Home_Learning_Resource.html)

## Resource #1: Pre-Contact Homes Video (Grade 7)

In this video, Chrystal Toop discusses how Anishinaabe people built wigwams before European contact, and Brenda Knights shares the unique features of longhouses built by the Kwantlen First Nation.

### Materials Needed



- paper (individual setting) or chart paper (classroom/group setting)

### Instructional Strategies

- **Before the lesson:** Have learners consider the inquiry question, “What were pre-contact homes like in our community?” Consider writing the question and circling “pre-contact” on the board or chart paper. Facilitate a discussion about what pre-contact means, the time period, and learners’ ideas about homes at that time.
- **During the lesson:** Pause the video after each question to check for understanding and record learners’ ideas on the board/chart paper.
- **After the lesson:** Ask learners to discuss the questions at the end of the video with a partner or small group. Circulate and help learners connect their ideas to Chrystal and Brenda’s teachings. A group discussion can follow or you may opt for individual written reflections to ensure their understanding.





## Resource #2: Researching Pre-Contact Homes Handout (Grade 7)

In this handout, learners will research examples of pre-contact homes, examine the design and construction of these structures, and describe their purpose through online research and through interviews with family members, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other community members.

### ► Facilitator Tip

The search and find keyboard shortcut will vary by device (e.g., Chromebooks: Ctrl+F).

### Instructional Strategies

- **Before the lesson:** Have learners begin by responding independently to the “What do I know?” question on page 1.
- **During the lesson:** Have learners look at the graphic organizer on page 2 and note each section header (e.g., Area(s) Where People Cooked, Building Materials Used, etc.). As they search for information online, suggest they use the Search and Find feature on their device to look for keywords to streamline their search. For example, they might type “cook,” “gather,” “rooms,” or “materials” to find relevant content.
- **After the lesson:** Encourage learners to reference their graphic organizers to help label their diagrams.
- **Optional:** Invite Elders and family members to share their thoughts and stories about pre-contact homes. Encourage learners to share their diagrams.



### ► Materials Needed



- Internet-enabled devices
- chart paper (optional)



### ► Sample Answers

Learners should include design/construction elements and building materials from their research. Materials will vary based on geographic location.



## Resource #3: Learning From Pre-Contact Homes Handout (Grade 7)

In this handout, learners will review values and lessons learned from pre-contact home design and construction in their community. They will compare this knowledge with new information about its influence on modern architecture.

### ► Facilitator Tip

Consider looking at pictures of different building types as a class.

You can use Google Maps (Street View or still photos) to look at homes and buildings in different Nations. Try the following site for pictures of a wigwam and longhouse:

<https://lbrd.ca/can-enc-architectural-history-fn>

### ► Materials Needed



- Internet-enabled devices (individual setting) or interactive whiteboard (group setting)
- images of pre-contact and modern homes (optional)
- extra paper or online design program such as Canva.com (optional)

## Instructional Strategies

- **Before the lesson:** Have learners begin the handout by responding independently to the “What do I know?” question on page 1. As a group, discuss features of local homes and anything learners notice about how they are designed or constructed today.
- **During the lesson:** For the Venn diagram activity, guide learners to think about how modern design is influenced by pre-contact construction and how they are similar and different from one another. Have them also consider where the homes are geographically located and how that influences the types of building materials available and how they are constructed.
- **After the lesson:** If learners prefer to use an online design program for their modern home designs, consider those with a whiteboard option. Learners can draw freehand using a touchpad or their fingers and add online images to their diagrams.
- **Optional:** If available, consider inviting housing professionals to share their experiences with housing development in their community. Encourage learners to share their diagrams and give each other feedback.





## Resource #3: Learning From Pre-Contact Homes Handout (Grade 7)

### ► Sample Answers

| Construction Feature                    | Anishinaabe Value                            | Connection   |
|---|--|--|
| Circular shape                          | Interconnectedness (we are all connected)    | The circular shape represents the cyclical nature of life and how all living things are connected. It encourages people to gather. |
| Shared construction                     | Community and cooperation                    | Building a wigwam is a group effort, reflecting a strong sense of community.   |
| Sustainable material gathering          | Respect for nature                           | Materials are gathered with respect for trees and land, often with offerings given.  |
| Use of birch bark and cedar             | Sustainability                               | Chosen materials are light-weight, durable, and can be harvested without harming trees.  |
| Central fire and circular seating       | Togetherness                                 | The layout encourages gatherings and a sense of community.   |
| Adaptable design and flexible structure | Harmony with nature and resource stewardship | The home can be taken down and reassembled for seasonal movement with wildlife migration or available resources.                   |

