



**WIKWEMOT**  
**AN EDUCATIONAL**  
**BASKET ABOUT MOOSE**

**ACTIVITY BOOK**



## A word from our president

We all have obligations and duties to our nation and to future generations. Each of us is led to discover this role. And recognizing this role is no accident. It helps to re-establish a balance, a sense of order.

We must never forget that we are emerging from a social chaos caused by a profound break in the transmission of our culture.

Grace Ratt has rediscovered the gesture of transmission. Starting again, reconnecting with the creativity of our ancestors and sharing it with the next generation, is an extraordinary act of resilience.

I cried when Grace received her Master of Living Traditions award in 2021. It's rare to meet people with such a sense of duty, despite all the obstacles they face.



When Grace approached Minwashin with the project of exploring technology from a transmission angle, she knew she was making the right choice. Even though she was venturing into a field that was new to her, she knew it was the best way to reach out to young people.

Driven by her sense of responsibility, Grace combines transmission, creativity and innovation. And she does it to the best of her ability, for future generations.

## **WIKWEMOT** **AN EDUCATIONAL BASKET ABOUT** **MOOSE**

The word Wikwemot was chosen by Grace to designate this cultural transmission project. Wikwemot is the tightly sealed birch bark basket we used to use to gather herbs, fruit and even water.



The image of the basket in which we place tools for the transmission of culture is a good illustration of this project. We must continue to fill this basket with knowledge for our children, and then for their children too.

The moose (the mos, the kacabagonégabwec) can serve the Anicinabek in many ways to make their lives better: in addition to feeding them, it provides them with what they need to make blankets, wigwams and babiche for snowshoes.

Moose legs can also be put to many uses. Unfortunately, these are often thrown away, as not all hunters possess this knowledge.

This is why Grace came up with the idea of a video game that would be a fun way to learn everything you can do with moose legs, and then reproduce it in real life.

By passing on our tools to young people, we're telling them our story. By using the words of the anicinabemowin, we teach them about our values and culture. By drawing on the creativity of our ancestors, we make sure we do things the right way.

Who would have thought that the bark basket our mothers used to gather herbs, berries and water would one day become a symbol of cultural transmission?

**- EJINAGOSI RICHARD KISTABISH**



All photos were taken by Marie-Raphaëlle LeBlond.



## Grace Ratt

### **LAC-RAPIDE/LAC-BARRIÈRE**

Grace Ratt is an Anicinabe artisan and cultural educator from the community of Kitiganik (Lac-Rapide/Lac-Barrière). In addition to creating crafts that connect her people's daily lives to their heritage, Grace is a living source of traditional knowledge.

# WIKWEMOT

## AN EDUCATIONAL BASKET ABOUT MOOSE

### Themes

- ① TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MOOSE LEGS
- ② ALL PARTS OF THE LEG MUST BE USED (RESPECT FOR THE ANIMAL).

### Informations

#### TARGETED GRADES

Primary and high school.

#### LENGTH

1 period

#### IDEAL PERIOD

Can be done all year round

#### LOCATION

In Class.

### RESOURCES REQUIRED

- ✔ Video game
- ✔ Educational video vignettes
- ✔ Virtual Museum

VISIT THE  
VIRTUAL  
MUSEUM →



[www.minwashin.org/en/wikwemot/#museevirtuel](http://www.minwashin.org/en/wikwemot/#museevirtuel)

# Activity Outline

## INTRODUCTION

Complete the activity on the moose moratorium. *(See pages 9-10)*

## MAIN ACTIVITY

- ① Play the video game on a phone or tablet. Play all 6 chapters. Each student can play the game individually or in teams of 2-3. *(See appendix)*
- ② Visit the virtual museum on a computer. Listen to the names in Anicinabe. Each student can visit individually or in teams of 2-3.
- ③ Listen to educational videos on how to skin moose legs.

## CONCLUSION

- Ask questions about the student's understanding of the hunter's respect for the animal. **Did this exercise change their understanding?** How did it help?
- Which handicrafts did the student find most interesting? **Why or why not?** Will they try to make one? **If so, invite him/her to share it with the class.**
- Do students know of other things that can be made with either the legs or other parts of the moose? **If so, what and how?** Possibility of inviting the student's family to come and present it to the class.



# Objectives

## ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

Respect for the animal. You have to learn what to do with every part of the animal. And if you don't know, go and ask people who do. There's no excuse for not using all the resources the animal has to offer. With technology, too, we can go and find the information and questions we have. There are plenty of online tutorials.

## SKILLS TO DEVELOP

- Craftsmanship
- Understanding moose sport hunting issues in Anicinabe territory
- Survival/traditional knowledge

## CONTEXT

Our ancestors used every part of the moose they killed. They didn't throw anything away. We need to relearn everything we can do with this animal, starting with the legs, which are too often thrown away. Bones, sinews, skin, nails: everything can be used to make something or to be eaten. Grace Ratt, from the community of Kitiganik, shows us how her ancestors worked with moose legs.

# Anishinabe Moose Study

The Anishinabe Moose Study is a group of Anicinapek First Nations members and volunteer researchers who are committed to protecting MOS, or moose, throughout their ancestral territory.

This group is acting to protect the moose because many First Nations people who visit the territory, including the Elders, have noticed that there are fewer and fewer moose. They've also noticed that the moose are often sicker and weaker than before. The community research group has talked to several communities to identify the causes of this decline, which include intensive sport hunting (**too many permits are sold by the Quebec government**) and deforestation (**which destroys MOS habitat**). According to the Anicinapek, it's time to act before it's too late. If the moose do well, so will the forests, the Anicinapek and other animals, for their lives are interconnected.

The Anicinapek have an important relationship with animals, including MOS. The Anicinapek respect the teachings and all that MOS has given to the Anicinapek. The Anicinapek have a responsibility to MOS, as MOS fulfills its part of the responsibility by guarding the forest and feeding many and providing the tools necessary for survival.

*"The moose has given us so much for centuries, now it's our turn to give back by protecting it"* - **David Kistabish**

Because of this long-term relationship and responsibility, the Anicinapek are demanding that their knowledge and wishes be taken into account in the development of a moose management plan.

The members state: ***“We demand that the Quebec government respect our rights as Anishnabe people and those of the moose for all they have offered us since time immemorial”*** (AMC, p. 5).

The Anishnabe Moose Study's solution, based on the knowledge shared by all communities, is an Anishnabe moose management plan that will be organized by traditional governance (the laws that existed before the arrival of Quebec and Canadian laws). ***“One thing is clear: a moose management plan must be guided by our own communities, based on our own knowledge and relationships with moose”*** (AMC, p. 40). The AMC is working to re-establish the laws that will ensure the continuity and well-being of MOS, but it remains to be seen whether the rest of Quebec will support these initiatives.

**TO LEARN MORE :**

<https://anishnabeanikiwin.org>



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ① What does it mean to protect the territory and the moose? **What might that look like?**
- ② Imagine being a moose or MOS for a day. What dangers do you face?
- ③ What's the difference between sport hunting and harvesting as practiced by the Anicinapek?
- ④ What parts of the original do Anicinapek eat? **In what ways are these parts prepared?**



**MINWASHIN**

[www.minwashin.org/en/wikwemot](http://www.minwashin.org/en/wikwemot)

Culture  
et Communications  
**Québec** 

**SODEC**  
**Québec** 

 Conseil des arts  
du Canada **Canada Council**  
for the Arts