**ELA/Social Studies Week 9: Lessons from Mother Earth**

**Last week, you explored your own family’s ancestry. You had fun designing and creating your very own family crest. This activity allowed you to share what makes you most proud about your family.**

**This week, take time to research a culture different than your own. This culture may be found in Canada or in a different country. Follow the steps you took last week when researching your heritage. Research the traditions, food, clothing and activities that make your chosen culture topic unique. Are there any similarities with your own activities and traditions? Discuss with a family member.**

**In First Nation and Inuit societies, beliefs and stories express the importance of respecting nature. Read the following short excerpt from *Lessons from Mother Earth* by Elaine McLeod. What lessons does Tess learn from her grandmother about respecting the environment? Discuss with a family member how the best traditions of each of our cultures can help to sustain and protect us for many generations.**

**…Grandma said, “Tess, are you busy?” “No,” I said. “Well then,” Grandma said, “let’s put on our boots and our sweaters, I am going to show you my garden…” We walked for a long while. Then she said, “Come on Tess. We will go down the trail along the creek. You are just about old enough to learn the rules of the garden.**

**“Not everything in the garden is ready for picking just yet. Each little gift comes at its own special time. If everything came at the same time, we wouldn’t be able to collect it all.**

**“I was taught by my mother, your great-grandmother, about the plants. You must learn the rules too. Tess, the number one rule is that you must always take good care of our garden.”**

**As we walked, Grandma talked. “I was taught that if you take more plants than you need, they will never grow back. But if you don’t pick any and just leave them sitting year after year, they will slowly wither away and die. To pick just enough is the secret…”**

**“Tess, you must always take care of our garden. Never throw rubbish around. If you are careful and thankful, my granddaughter, our garden will care for you. There is plenty for everyone to share if we don’t destroy the soil.”**

**“I am old now but it has always cared for me. It has always cared for your mother and if you take care, I know this garden will also care for your children…”**

**I whispered, “Thank you, Mother Earth. Thank you for sharing. And mostly, Great Spirit, thank you for such a wise grandma.”**