

Yukon First Nations Clans



Grade

5



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First Nation Programs and Partnerships Unit
Yukon Department of Education
Yukon First Nation Curriculum Working Group
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HEADER Left To Right : Salmon drying , YTG photo; Teslin Sunset, Tip Evans, Photographer; Ken Nukon, Elder, and Charlie Peter Charlie Sr. , Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, YTG Photos; David, Dawn and Carol Duquette, Carcross Tagish First Nation; Otter Falls ,YTG photo



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YUKON FIRST NATION CLANS

"Our people have many deep feelings about our land."
from Together Today for our Children Tomorrow



Kathleen Jones, Elder, Ta'an Kwach'an Council



James Miller, Elder, Ta'an Kwach'an Council



Mary Jacquot , Elder, Kluane First Nation



Sam Johnson Sr., Elder, Kluane First Nation

You Will Learn About

- Yukon First Nations clans
- matrilineal lineages
- the Crow Clan and the Wolf Clan
- clan responsibilities
- the Inland Tlingit clan system
- clan crests
- clan houses



Paddy Jim, Elder, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, YTG Photo

A. WOLF and CROW CLANS

There are two main groups of people in each Yukon **First Nation**. Yukon First Nations often refer to these two kinship groups as **clans**.

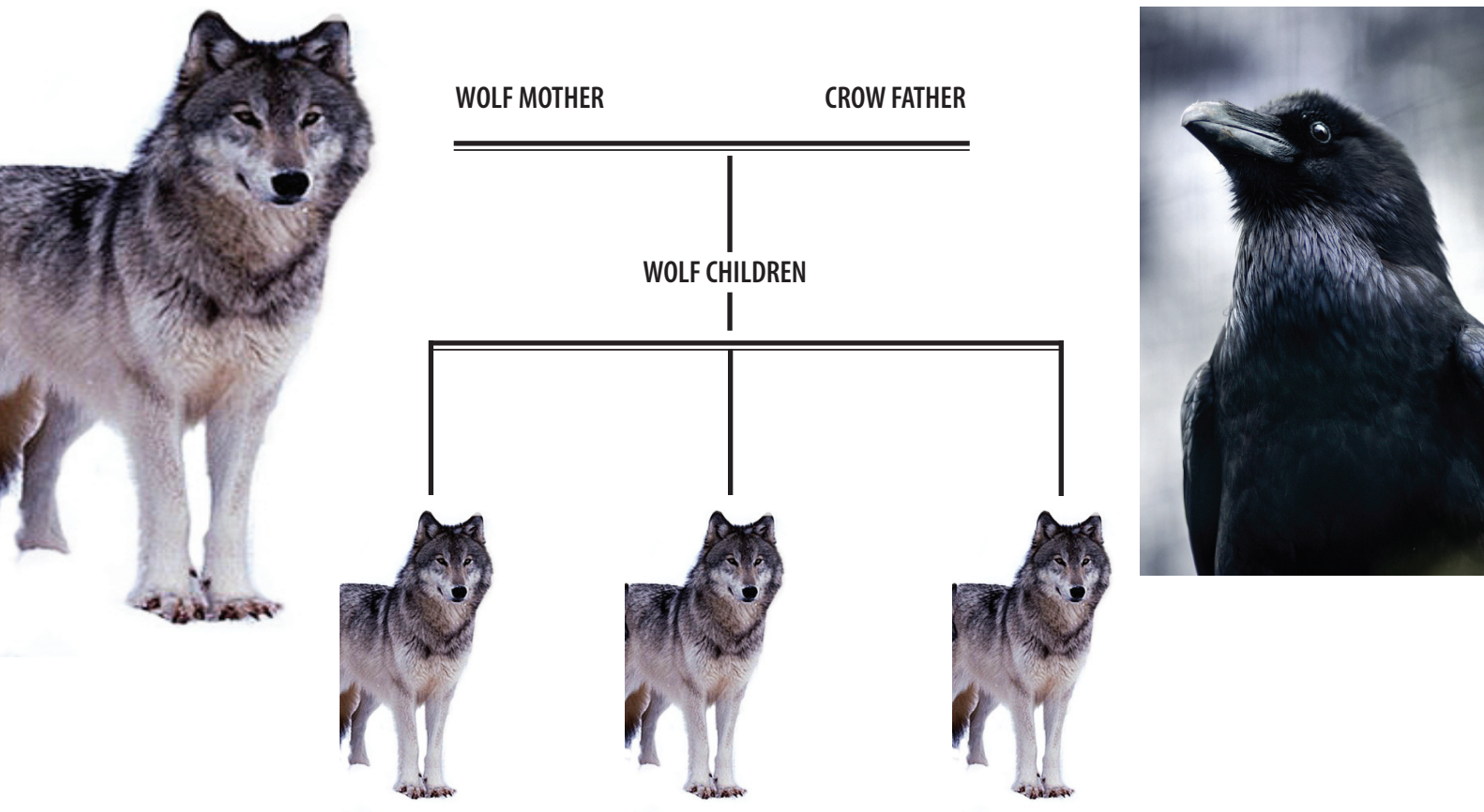
Today the clans in the Yukon are called Wolf and Crow.

A Yukon First Nations baby belongs to his or her mother’s clan. For example, children born to mothers from the **Crow Clan** belong to the Crow Clan. Those born to mothers from the **Wolf Clan** belong to the Wolf Clan. This is called a **matrilineal lineage**. All Yukon First Nations children are part of their mother’s lineage.

This diagram shows the matrilineal lineages of the Wolf Clan and the Crow Clan.

All the people in the Wolf Clan consider each other **kin**. All people in the Crow Clan do the same. Who do you call brother and sister? How many people are in your family?

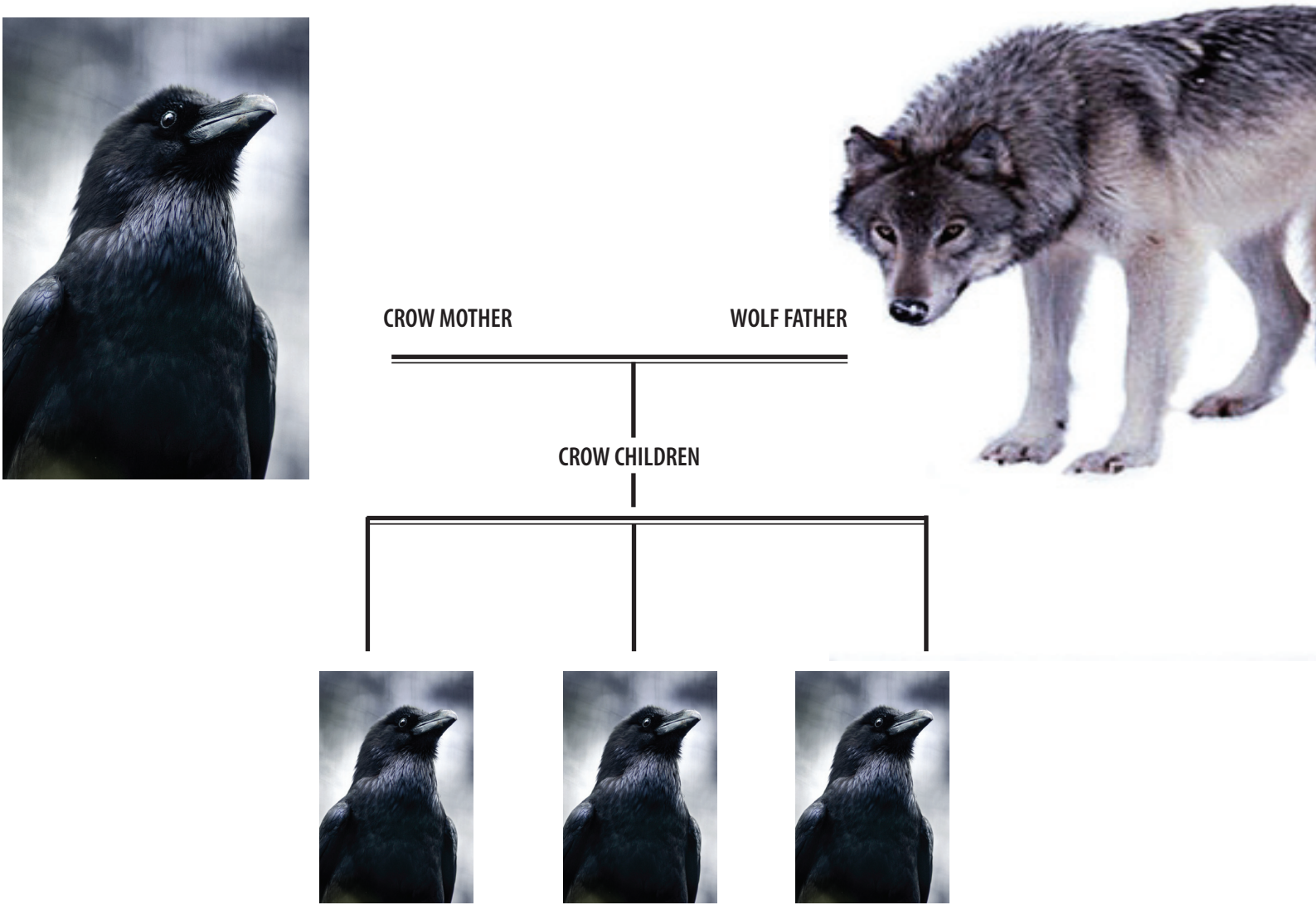
Each clan has responsibilities to the **opposite clan**. When First Nations people know which clan they belong to it helps them understand these **responsibilities**.



For example, when a Wolf Clan family hosts a **potlatch** the Wolf Clan must serve the food. The Crow Clan must receive the food with **respect**. The **host** clan tells stories, makes speeches and dances at the headstone potlatch.

DID YOU KNOW?

Crow and Wolf are included in the oral tradition stories.



B. INLAND TŁINGIT CLAN SYSTEM

The **Inland Tlingit** people in the Carcross Tagish area and the Teslin area have a more **complex** clan system. It is similar to the Wolf and Crow clan system, with some differences.

The Inland Tlingit divide the Wolf and Crow clans into smaller groups. Each of the groups has a **clan crest**. The crests are like flags that are owned by each group. The Carcross Tagish Inland Tlingit have six clan crests. Two crests are from the Wolf side and four are from the Crow side. The Teslin Inland Tlingit have five clan crests. Two crests are from Wolf side and three are from the Crow side. This table shows their clan crests.

CARCROSS TAGISH and TESLIN INLAND TŁINGIT CLAN CRESTS

	CARCROSS TAGISH INLAND TŁINGIT	TESLIN INLAND TŁINGIT
WOLF MOIETY	Yanyedì (Wolf) Dakh’awèdì (Killer Whale and/or Eagle)	Yanyedì (Wolf) Dakh’awèdì (Killer Whale and/or Eagle)
CROW MOIETY	Ganaxtedi (Raven) Ishkìtàn (Frog) Kùkhhittàn (Raven’s Children) Dèshìtàn (Split-tailed Beaver)	Ishkìtàn (Frog) Kùkhhittàn (Raven’s Children) Dèshìtàn (Split-tailed Beaver)

Clan crests are **symbols** that identify which **clan house** a person belongs to. Clan crests also indicate where someone is from. The crests are used to show ownership. Clan crests are on house fronts, grave houses, totem poles and **button blankets**. They are also seen on wooden boxes, canoes, paddles, carved masks, jewellery and **regalia**. Clan crests are **sacred**. They belong to the clans that own them. It is against Tlingit law to use another person’s crest in any way.

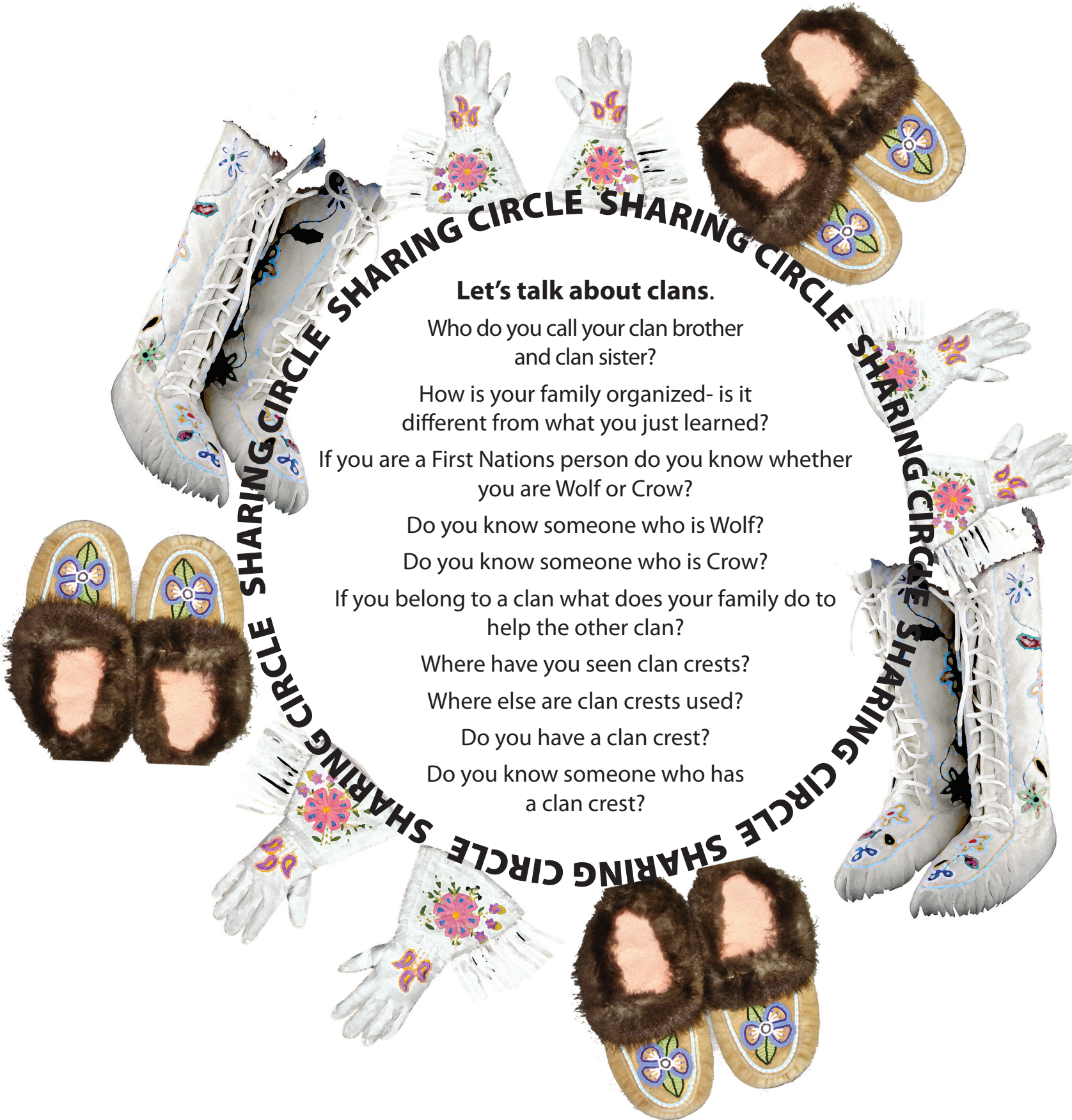
Can you tell which clan each crest belongs to?

Teslin Inland Tlingit Clan Crests



George and Angela Sidney in traditional regalia.

George Jacob Sidney (Yanyedì/Wolf) - Gweix Keshdux,
Tleixteen (There Forever)
& Angela Sidney (Dèshìtàn/Crow) - Stöow,
Ch’óonehte’ Māa (Dead Fall Mother)



Let's talk about clans.

Who do you call your clan brother
and clan sister?

How is your family organized- is it
different from what you just learned?

If you are a First Nations person do you know whether
you are Wolf or Crow?

Do you know someone who is Wolf?

Do you know someone who is Crow?

If you belong to a clan what does your family do to
help the other clan?

Where have you seen clan crests?

Where else are clan crests used?

Do you have a clan crest?

Do you know someone who has
a clan crest?

**Gauntlets 1987.10.2 and Mukluks, 1987.10.1, McBride Museum Collection, YTG Photos;
Moccasins, Irene Smith, Elder, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.**

Check What You Have Learned

- ☐ Most Yukon First Nations have clans.
- ☐ The Yukon clans are called Wolf and Crow.
- ☐ Yukon First Nations belong to their mother's lineage.
- ☐ Clan members consider each other kin.
- ☐ Clan members have responsibilities to the opposite clan.
- ☐ The Inland Tlingit people of the Carcross Tagish First Nations area and the Teslin area have a complex clan system.
- ☐ The Teslin and Carcross Tagish Inland Tlingit clans have clan crests.
- ☐ The Carcross Tagish Inland Tlingit have six clan crests.
- ☐ The Teslin Inland Tlingit have five clan crests.
- ☐ Clan crests are used to show ownership.
- ☐ Clan crests are symbols.



Roberta Joseph and Alice McCulley (baby), Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Hän Nation, George Adamson Collection



- a wool blanket with patterns made from white buttons
- a robe used for important ceremonies

My grandmother is making a button blanket for me. I will wear it at the potlatch.

- a group of people from the same moiety

I belong to the Wolf clan because my mother is from the Wolf clan.

- a male who belongs to the same clan as you
Curtis is my clan brother. Our mothers belong to the Wolf clan.

- a symbol for a group of people within a clan

The Inland Tlingit of Teslin, Tagish and Carcross have beautiful clan crests.

- a very large house that is owned by clan members

When you travel to Sitka, you will see many clan houses.

- a female who belongs to the same clan as you
Rebecca is my clan sister. Our mothers belong to the Wolf clan.

- the way Yukon First Nations are organized into clans

The Yukon clan system has two main clans. They are the Wolf clan and the Crow clan.

- difficult to understand
- many connected parts

*My math homework is very complex.
It is taking me a long time to learn th
are many steps to learn. It is very com*

- One of the two main Yukon First Nation clans
The Crow clan is holding a potlatch for an Elder who has passed on.

- Killer Whale and/or eagle clan crest under the Wolf Clan crest
I am Dakh'awedì; my clan crest is killer whale.

- Beaver clan crest

I am Dèshitàn; my clan crest is Beaver.

- the first people to occupy and live on the lands of Canada
There were First Nations in the Yukon over 30,000 years ago.
Grandma May told me an old Yukon First Nations story.

- a community of people who have First Nations ancestry in common

The Selkirk First Nation is in Pelly Crossing.

- Raven clan crest

My clan crest is Ganaxtedi

- to gather plants and berries for food
After we harvest the blueberries my mother is going to make jam.

- a clan that hosts a potlatch for the opposite clan
Our host served pizza, pop and birthday cake at his party.
The Crow clan will host a potlatch for our Grandmother who was Crow.

- Tlingit people that live in the Yukon whose ancestors come from the coast

My Grandmother lives in Tagish. She is Inland Tlingit.

- Frog clan crest

I am Ishkìtàn; my clan crest is Frog.

- relatives

Clan members consider each other kin.

- Raven's Children clan crest
I am Kùkhittàn; my clan crest is Ravens' Children

- a group of people who have the same ancestors

My lineage is Wolf. I follow the laws of the Wolf clan.

- a family system that always follows the mother

The Yukon clan system is matrilineal. All children inherit their mother's clan name, crests, stories, songs and dances.

- one of two equal parts
- a word to explain the two main groups within Yukon First Nations

*Many Yukon First Nations call their moiety a clan.
I know my moiety is Crow because my mother is Crow.*

- if you are a Yukon First Nations person, the opposite clan is your Father's clan

The Wolf clan is the opposite clan to the Crow clan.

- a clan feast or celebration to honour a person or to signify an important event

I am going to a potlatch to remember my Grandmother who passed on last year.

- a person's finest jewellery, footwear and clothing worn for important events

My button blanket is part of the regalia I wear to dance in.

- to take very good care of
- to show responsibility towards

We respect our Elders because they can teach us many important things.

- things you are expected to do

All children have responsibilities to their family. They can help in many ways.

- places or objects that are very important to Yukon First Nation people

The land where our ancestors are buried is sacred. We treat these places with much respect.

- strict
- harsh

The consequences for breaking traditional laws used to be very severe.

His punishment is going to be very severe.

- a person who speaks on behalf of one person or a group

My father is the spokesperson for his clan crest in Tagish.

- an object or picture used to stand for something
The rose is a symbol of love.

- a group of related things or parts that work together as a whole

The Yukon has a large school system.

- one of the two main Yukon First Nation clans

The Wolf Clan is holding a potlatch for an Elder who has passed on.

- Wolf clan crest
I am Yanyèdí; my clan crest is Wolf.



CHAMPAGNE and AISHIHIK First Nations

CARCROSS/TAGISH
FIRST NATION



VUNTUT GWITCHIN
GOVERNMENT



TESLIN TLINGIT COUNCIL



Yukon
Education