Subject Area & Grade: Grade 1 & 2 Math: Spatial Sense

Curriculum Link: Describe the relative locations and the movements of objects on a map (e.g., beside, near, to the right of, to the left of, in front of) using positional language.

Learning Goal: Students will use positional language (e.g., beside, above, below, to the left of and to the right of) to describe the locations of symbols and features on the National Aboriginal Veterans Monument.

Learning Activity: Introduce positional language by practicing using terms like: beside, near, below, above, to the left, and to the right.

Explore the Monument

As a class, look at the National Indigenous Veterans Monument. Explain that the monument is in Ottawa and was built to honour and remember Indigenous veterans who served Canada during times of war. It reminds us to appreciate and recognize the sacrifices and contributions they made to our country.

As you look at the monument, notice the animals. In many Indigenous cultures, animals can be important symbols and teachers. Each animal was chosen to represent special qualities such as courage, strength, wisdom, loyalty, and protection. Ask students to look carefully at the animals and think about why the artist may have included them to honour Indigenous veterans. Explain that the animals remind us of the strengths and values shown by Indigenous veterans.

Click the link below to view the monument, and then click on the image to enlarge it and explore the monument from different angles.

https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/memorials/canada/national-aboriginal-veterans-monument

Ask:

- Which animals do you notice?
- What qualities do these animals have?
- How might these qualities connect to Indigenous veterans?
- Which animal do you think best represents bravery? Why?

Animals and Their Meanings

- **Eagle**: Represents the Creator (sometimes called Thunderbird) and the spirit of Indigenous Peoples. It is a symbol of strength, vision, and connection to the Creator
- **Wolf**: Represents family values, loyalty, and teamwork
- **Bison/Buffalo**: Represents perseverance, determination, and strength
- **Bear**: Represents healing, protection, and courage.
- **Elk/Caribou**: Represents sharp senses, awareness, and careful thinking

Ask the students:

(show picture 1)

- *"Where is the eagle in relation to the wolf?" (above)*

(show picture 1)

- *"Where is the wolf in relation to the bear?" (beside)*

(show picture 4)

- *"Where is the wolf in relation to the bison?" (beside)*

(show picture 1, 2 and 4)

- *"Which animals are below the eagle?" (bear, bison, wolf, caribou)*

(show pictures 2 and 4)

- "*Which animal is between the wolf and bison?" (bear, caribou)*

Use the link below to answer the last question.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Aboriginal_Veterans_Day#/media/File:Canadian_Aboriginal_War_Veterans_Memorial_in_Ottawa.jpg

- *“Where is the bear in relation to the wolf?” (to the left/beside)*

Worksheet: Place the Poppy: Using Positional Language

Photocopy the worksheet for students and explain that they will draw a poppy in different locations on the National Indigenous Veterans Monument by following positional clues.