

More things to consider

The 5 R's of Indigenous Education (questions to think about)

RELEVANCE

Do we include indigenous authors, scholars, researchers, educators, knowledge keepers and Elders within our school/district community to support and inform the content in the curriculum and the overall educational experience as it relates to Indigenous Education?

Is the Educational experience and curriculum relevant for culturally diverse Indigenous students and are they able to identify and see themselves reflected within the school community that they belong to, and in the curriculum that they are learning?

Do I use Indigenous worldviews help identify areas, where I may require further support to improve relevance of education for Indigenous Students? Is the learning experience “hands on” (project based, inquiry based) collaborative and less individualistic?

Questions co-constructed by Robert Clifton and Dr. Shelly Niemi inspired by work of Kirkness, Barnhardt

RELATIONSHIP

Am I aware of the local protocols and how to foster relationships with the local nations and rights holders? What is expected of me in relation to reconciliation and the Land/Place/Territory I am guest on and the Indigenous Peoples I am in service to?

What do relationships with Indigenous learners/Indigenous colleagues/Indigenous communities that engage the mind, heart and spirit, sound, look and feel like, so they are not seen as performative?

Am I seen as an active participant within the Indigenous communities I serve? How do I show up?

RESPECT

How am I respectful of the cultural context for where my school is located and for the learners, I am responsible for? Could others identify cultural humility as part of my practice?

Am I inclusive and intentional in centering Indigenous community voices and perspectives within my classroom/school/district? In what ways?

Am I culturally responsive in my practice and is this reflected in programs, services and my decision making? In what ways?

RECIPROCITY

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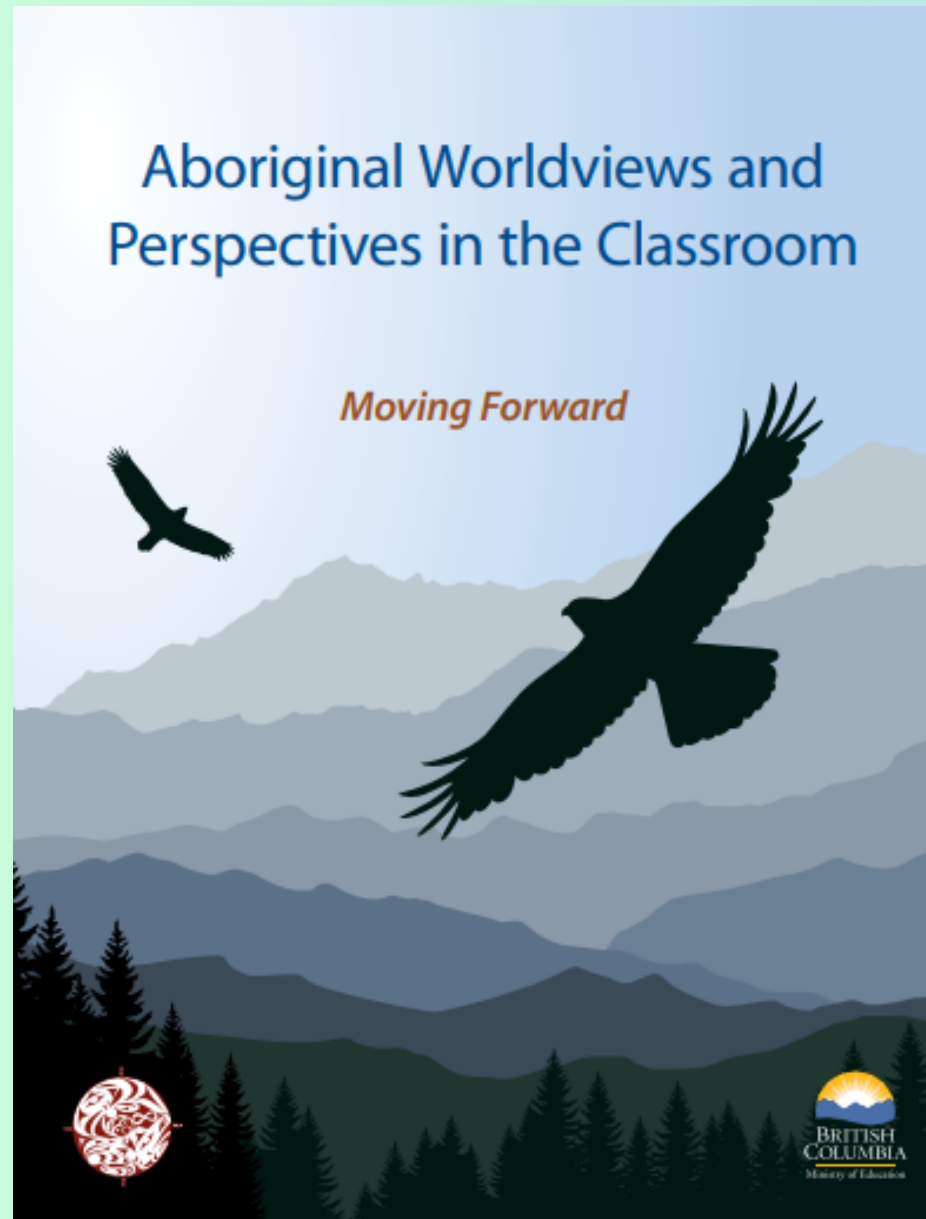
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RESPONSIBILITY

How do I embed the TRC- Calls to Action on Education in my personal and professional practice so I can impact and transform my work?

How do the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and BC's Bill 41 and how both UNDRIP and DRIPA set paths for systemic change in education? How do I embody this?

“Educators critically examine their own biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to facilitate change. Educators value and respect the languages, heritages, cultures, and ways of knowing and being of First Nations, Inuit and Metis. Educators understand the power of focusing on connectedness and relationships to oneself, family, community and the natural world. Educators integrate First Nations, Inuit and Metis world views and perspectives into learning environments.”-9th Standard-BCTF



Findings of Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives in the Classroom report

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/indigenous-education/awp_moving_forward.pdf

Connectedness & Relationship

Connectedness and Relationship



Implications for Educational Practice

- Look for ways to relate learning to students' selves, to their families and communities, and to the other aspects of Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives described in this document.

Local Focus

Local Focus



Implications for Educational Practice

- Look for opportunities to incorporate place-based learning into your practice (a focus on local Aboriginal history, experience, stories, imagery, ecology).
- When referencing Aboriginal content, give learners a chance to work with locally developed resources (including local knowledge keepers) wherever possible.
- Look to the school's Aboriginal support worker(s) and/or trusted local contacts for guidance and help accessing good local content.

Engagement with Land, Nature and the Outdoors

Engagement with the Land, Nature, the Outdoors

Implications for Educational Practice

- Look for opportunities to get students interested and engaged with the natural world immediately available (place-based education in the area near your school). Illustrations using locally observable examples and phenomena, physical education activities, homework assignments, and student projects are examples of opportunities to promote this type of engagement.
- Plan and organize to take instruction and learning outdoors where possible, organizing instructional planning to facilitate this.
- Explore team leadership and the use of resources such as skilled Aboriginal community members and third-party outdoor education specialists to facilitate and help deal with the challenges associated with leaving the confines of the school (e.g., the need for equipment, expertise in outdoor environments, risk management, transportation).

Awareness of History

Awareness of History

Implications for Educational Practice

- Ensure that any focus on the history of Canada and Canadians or on Canadian social studies include reference to the experience, situation, and actions/perspectives of Aboriginal peoples, in all periods studied (including and up to the present).
- Avoid reliance on colonial-era secondary sources (i.e., 20th century and earlier texts and resources) for accounts or explanations of topics, events, trends involving Aboriginal peoples. Where possible, use contemporary sources created by or with the involvement of Aboriginal contributors.
- When referencing Aboriginal content, give learners a chance to work with locally developed resources (including local knowledge keepers) wherever possible.
- Use accurate, specific historical facts and explanations to counter racist and stereotypical generalizations about Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
- When correcting inaccurate half-truths and generalizations, focus the correction on the ideas, not on the students who may have been misled into believing and expressing them.

Emphasis on Identity

Emphasis on Identity

Implications for Educational Practice

- Embrace learner-centred teaching practice.
- Encourage student self-awareness grounded in knowledge of family origins, cultural background, place of origin, allegiance and affiliation, citizenship, and other identity “markers.” Student self-expression via writing, speaking, and representation is an opportunity to address and revisit this theme at various stages during their K-12 schooling.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the cultural identities of all students represented in your learning cohorts.

The Power of Story

The Power of Story

Central Implications for Educational Practice (Tips for Educators)

- Learn some of the traditional stories told within the local Aboriginal community. Then use them as a touchstone for your students when applicable “teachable moments” arise.
- Give students opportunities to apply and demonstrate the skills associated with oral storytelling: memorize, internalize, and present (re-tell exactly). At higher grade levels, students benefit from opportunities to tell their own experiential stories and listen and respond to those of peers.
- Metaphor, analogy, example, allusion, humour, surprise, formulaic phrasing, etc. are storytelling devices that can be applied when explaining almost any non-fiction concept. Make an effort to use devices of this sort in all subject areas and to draw upon stories of the local Aboriginal community.

Community Involvement: Process and Protocols

Community Involvement: Process and Protocols

Implications for Educational Practice

- Make it a priority to connect with the local Aboriginal community.
- Look to the school's Aboriginal support worker(s) and/or trusted local contacts for guidance and help doing this.
- With your Aboriginal students, take deliberate steps to help the family feel involved and respected. Value the family and the family will value the education system. Home visits can yield huge dividends.
- Recognize and embrace the important role that you as educator can play in addressing the need for reconciliation and overcoming the legacy of colonialist/assimilationist schooling.
- Expect criticism from time to time. Having your own network of knowledgeable and supportive community and professional contacts will give you somewhere to turn for advice.

Traditional Teaching

Traditional Teaching

Implications for Educational Practice

- Recognize the traditional teachings of First Nations students. In particular, Aboriginal students who are disengaged may benefit from learning traditional teachings.
- The involvement of Elders, either in school or via mentorship-type arrangements will likely be needed to pursue traditional teaching. Look to the school's Aboriginal support worker(s), Aboriginal district principal, and/or trusted local contacts for guidance and help with this.

Language and Culture

Language and Culture

Implications for Educational Practice

- Expect use of the language to be part of any educational experiences with an Aboriginal aspect that involves outdoor trips or field studies in the local Aboriginal community.
- Demonstrate respectful support for efforts within the local Aboriginal community to revitalize language and culture by
 - incorporating into your practice simple words and phrases for greetings, interactions, place references, etc.
 - visibly acknowledging the local First Nation's culture through the use of images, artifacts such as a talking stick, or circle sharing sessions
- Be alert and sympathetic to ways the school can be involved in language instruction programs (i.e., for the local Aboriginal language).
- Base your actions and expectations on recognition of where the local community sits with respect to the current state of their language and culture revitalization/preservation efforts. Look to the school's Aboriginal support worker(s) and/or trusted local contacts for guidance on this.
- Embrace the need for inclusion of esteemed Aboriginal language speakers as essential and respected participants in language teaching and learning.

Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning

Implications for Educational Practice

- Look for ways to incorporate hands-on learning experiences for students into your practice.
- Embrace learner-centred practice and interact with students to ascertain their strengths and preferences when it comes to learning experiences.
- Emphasize possible practical applications (e.g., “real-world”) when introducing abstract or theoretical concepts.

Community Engagement

Community Engagement



The path to successful engagement with the local Aboriginal community begins with effective cooperation among school staff members. Teachers need to see the school's Aboriginal support workers as collaborating colleagues with invaluable knowledge of the local community and the family circumstances of individual students. Teachers can also strengthen learning by exploring ways of including knowledgeable community Elders in their classrooms and schools. Further outreach into the Aboriginal community can then allow teachers to better support their Aboriginal students and enrich the educational experience for all learners.

**A positive learner centred
approach**

A Positive, Learner-Centred Approach

In addition to knowing their students as individuals and configuring instruction to connect with their interests and build on their strengths, teachers who espouse a learner-centred approach typically adopt an outlook characterized by

- a willingness to see themselves as facilitators of students' learning rather than autonomous classroom managers
- a focus on “setting the bar ever higher” with respect to what students can do rather than on magnifying their awareness of what they cannot yet do (i.e., a deficit focus)
- an emphasis on promoting student self-regulation and student initiative with respect to their own learning (age-appropriate)
- the more extensive and frequent use of student self-assessment activities
- the ability to nurture reflective learning (including the use of student-generated criteria for assessment).

**Welcome and Caring Learning
environment**

The Learning Environment and Resources

A welcoming and caring learning environment that gives Aboriginal students the sense that they belong can make an important contribution to student engagement and participation. In this connection the value of steps to visibly acknowledge the local First Nation within the school should not be underestimated. Also important are learning resources (locally developed and other) that recognize the importance of First Peoples within Canadian society and enable Aboriginal learners to see themselves reflected in the content studied. Dedicated space that Aboriginal learners can call “their own” will likewise contribute to their sense of belonging.

Questions to think about with regards to your classroom

How am I incorporating local Indigenous knowledge/ways of knowing/being/First peoples principles of learning in my classroom? What is working well? What are the challenges?

Who might there be in the local Aboriginal community/communities that I could consult or include in my planning? What local resource people, places of cultural significance, and other local First Nations resources are available to support our school programs and student learning activities?

Are there any other teachers whose learning outcomes regarding Indigenous content that I could partner with to share resources/ideas?

What could I do to help Indigenous parents have more of a voice in the classroom?

What do I see as my role in reconciliation as a teacher?

What are we already doing well? How do we know? What concrete, new steps might we take?

What professional learning resources have we found that we consider worth sharing with colleagues, and why?

Of all the specific instructional and assessment practices we have tried, what has proven troublesome for students? What has proven engaging?

How can we as educators raise awareness about culture and community as sources of strength?

How can we, as teachers, better support teaching of authentic Canadian history?

Out of the box thinking- If there were no limitations in terms of schedule- what would your perfect classroom look like to best support your indigenous learners?

Even More questions

**How can we create more
connections
to the land and the community?**



We ensure our students are provided many opportunities to explore personal and cultural identities, written and oral histories, stories and connections to land/place.

Emphasize local connections, knowledge, and Indigenous language across all curriculum.

Indigenous worldviews and perspectives are integral to this learning. Students access authentic resources such as books, literature, texts, and film.

Whenever possible we invite community to visit our classrooms or meet with Role Models, Elders, and other knowledge keepers on the land or at their place of work.

**How do we ensure we are
meeting the needs of our
Indigenous Learners?**

Indigenous Perspectives

Rooted in Culture

Sense of Place & Community



**How do we explore Authentic
Indigenous Resources &
Knowledge?**

**How do we take action for
Reconciliation and ensure equity?**

**How do we engage our
Indigenous learners?**

**How do we design for more
active learning?**

**How do we build a sense of
community in the learning
environment?**

*Learning the truth about the past,
taking action towards reconciliation for the future.*

