

Culturally Responsive Classrooms

January 30, 2017

Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

I would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded territory of the Lheidli T'enneh: (Klatelee Ten-eh).

The word Lheidli means “where the two rivers flow together” and T'enneh means “the people”

First, we have used the term Aboriginal with the knowledge that there is not a consensus about whether or not it is an appropriate term. Some of our partners like the term because it is inclusive (of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit groups). Others do not like the term because it was imposed by others and suggests a homogeneity that does not exist. We acknowledge that there is a movement across the country for Indigenous Peoples to reclaim their original names in their own languages and recognize that this is an important step toward empowerment and a step closer to decolonization. At the same time, we have chosen to use the term Aboriginal in this document because we feel that the general principles and strategies are useful regardless of which communities are involved. We use this term with respect for individual preference in language and with recognition that there is no one Aboriginal culture or set of traditions. We also offer some guidelines and suggestions with respect to language and terminology because we know this is a daunting area for many service providers.

Part 1: Understanding Culture

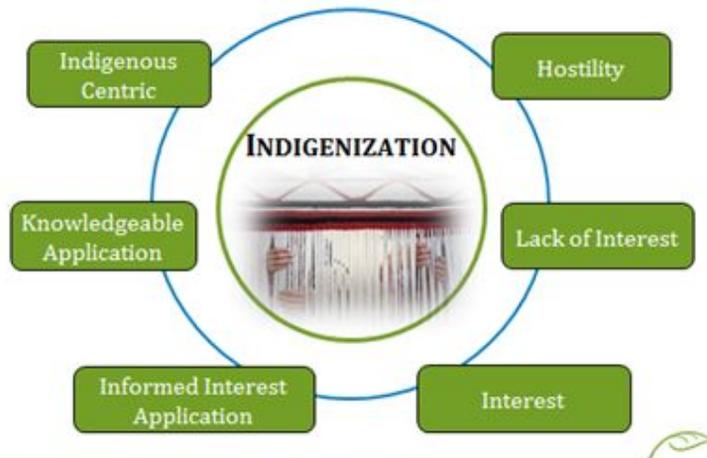
8:45- 10:15

Why Cultural Knowledge counts

... the lack of Aboriginal cultural knowledge in school curricula and among teachers, and the conflict between teachers' and students' culturally determined interactional styles have been identified as crucial factors in failure in school, prompting calls for the inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives across the school curricula and teacher education programs.

- Kanu, Y (2012) Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the School Curriculum

North Vancouver



Respect

Respect encompasses the understanding that children are complete human beings given as gifts from the Great Spirit on loan to adults who share with them the responsibility for preparing them for life's journey

- Haig-Brown, C (1997) *Coyote learns to make a storybasket: The place of First Nations Stories in Education.*
- Kanu, Y (2012) Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the School Curriculum

UNDERSTAND → VALIDATE → VALUE

	Awareness	Developing	Acquiring	Action/Advocacy
	Implies a sense of need to know	Implies a willingness to address one's own understandings and beliefs	Implies a demonstration of knowledge and respect	Implies a demonstration of knowledge, respect and a commitment to advocacy
Beliefs and attitudes towards Aboriginal Peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes that knowledge may need to be enhanced Aware that issues exist around Aboriginal peoples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a willingness to enhance one's knowledge and understanding May bring an informed perspective to current issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a responsibility to enhance one's knowledge and understanding Possesses an intention to bring an informed and critical perspective to current issues and acts upon those intentions Demonstrates respect for Aboriginal people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides leadership to enhance others' knowledge and understanding Seeks out opportunities to act on the injustices toward Aboriginal people Builds bridges of understanding and respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people
Knowledge of Aboriginal Peoples and history on local, regional and national levels	Demonstrates awareness of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Aboriginal peoples and territories Aboriginal languages and cultures Canadian history as it pertains to Aboriginal people 	Beginning to explore the topics of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Aboriginal peoples in North Vancouver Traditional Territory and Unceded Territory The Indian Act and the impact it has on present day Aboriginal people 	Demonstrates knowledge of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Aboriginal peoples and territories including language/culture History and the impact of colonization History and impact of the Residential School system The contribution of Aboriginal people in contemporary society 	Demonstrates knowledge of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the practices and respect for Aboriginal Pedagogy the ongoing role Aboriginal people have in shaping Canadian history and identity Aboriginal World views and the First Peoples Principles of Learning

Self-Reflection check in: where are you?
 How does this relate to the last slide?
 Where are there opportunities for growth?

Fear Factors/Stumbling blocks

- Authenticity of Self
- Appropriation/Misappropriation
- Tokenism
- Permissions
- Other-ness
- etc...

Others? Brainstorm problems
Brainstorm solutions

Your Definition of Culture

Do you have a specific culture you identify with?

What does it mean to you?

How does it shape your life/worldview?

Stepping stones to Cultural Competence

- **"Cultural knowledge"**
- **"Cultural awareness"**
- **"Cultural sensitivity"**
- **"Cultural competence"**.

Borrowed from: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tableofcontents/culture/culturalcompetence/culturallycompetentorganizations/main>

"Cultural knowledge" means that you know about some cultural characteristics, history, values, beliefs, and behaviors of another ethnic or cultural group.

"Cultural awareness" is the next stage of understanding other groups -- being open to the idea of changing cultural attitudes.

"Cultural sensitivity" is knowing that differences exist between cultures, but not assigning values to the differences (better or worse, right or wrong). Clashes on this point can easily occur, especially if a custom or belief in question goes against the idea of multiculturalism. Internal conflict (intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational) is likely to occur at times over this issue. Conflict won't always be easy to manage, but it can be made easier if everyone is mindful of the organizational goals.

"Cultural competence" brings together the previous stages -- and adds operational effectiveness. A culturally competent organization has the capacity to bring into its system many different behaviors, attitudes, and policies and work effectively in cross-cultural settings to produce better outcomes.

Enculturation vs. Acculturation

- **Enculturation:** the extent to which individuals are embedded in their traditional cultural identity and practices (practicing traditional culture and self-reported cultural identity)
- **Acculturation:** the extent to which individuals are influenced, assimilated or adopted into "mainstream culture"

Cultural Heritage

- Cultural Heritage
- Tangible Heritage

Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage Project, 2015. Think Before You appropriate. Things to know and questions to ask in order to avoid misappropriating Indigenous cultural heritage. Simon Fraser University: Vancouver

Broadly speaking, “cultural heritage” refers to elements that are common to a given group because they are culturally meaningful, connected to shared memory, or linked to collective identity.

“Tangible heritage” refers to the material products of culture, such as objects and architecture. “Intangible heritage” refers to cultural expressions, practices, and knowledge including language, dances, stories, designs, and techniques.

Appropriation and Misappropriation

- What do these terms really mean?

> Appropriation

> Misappropriation

> Appreciation

Intellectual Property Issues in Cultural Heritage Project, 2015. Think Before You appropriate. Things to know and questions to ask in order to avoid misappropriating Indigenous cultural heritage. Simon Fraser University: Vancouver

At its most basic, “**appropriation**” means to take something that belongs to someone else for one’s own use. In the case of heritage, appropriation happens when a cultural element is taken from its cultural context and used in another.

In this sense, appropriation occurs very frequently, as people and cultures exchange things and borrow ideas from each other all the time to create new forms of art, technology, and symbolic expression. However, this common human behaviour also has a dark side.

“**Misappropriation**” describes a one-sided process where one entity benefits from another group’s culture without permission and without giving something in return. This becomes even worse when it involves intentionally or unintentionally harming a group through misrepresentation or disrespect of their culture and beliefs. Misappropriation can also entail considerable economic harm when it leads to profiting from the use of a cultural expression that is vital to the wellbeing and livelihood of the people who created it.

Avoiding Tokenism → Political Consciousness

- What does “tokenism” mean to you?
- Aboriginal Education should not be seen as a single activity, or a token preservation of folkways.
 - Aboriginal Education is more than Beads to Bannock
- How does political consciousness exist in your classroom?
- A critical investigative attitude deploys skills such as inference, direct observation, or identifying bias and angles of vision.
 - Critical challenges help non-Aboriginal learners develop a new appreciation for sources of knowledge and to discern how the truth is portrayed to the media.
 - The ability to relocate: this involves being able to question one’s own cultural b

Adapted from: Best Practices in Teaching Aboriginal Children: From an Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Perspective. By Theresa Wilson (Master’s Thesis: Conversations with First Nations Educators) 2001 UVic
<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/deepeningknowledge/UserFiles/File/UploadedAmina_/Best_Practices_for_Teaching_Aboriginal_Students.pdf>

- **Aboriginal Education should not be seen as a single activity, or a token preservation of folkways.**
- **Aboriginal Education is more than Beads to Bannock,**
- Aboriginal education must be woven throughout the curriculum.
- Teachers must be sensitive and aware to the loss and grieving that is historically and politically a significant part of the Aboriginal student’s lives.
- Teaching resides in the distance travelled between the head and the heart.
- Develop political consciousness in the very young students.
- Combine critical challenge with issue of importance to Aboriginal students and their communities.
- A critical investigative attitude deploys skills such as inference, direct observation, or identifying bias and angles of vision.
- Critical challenges help non-Aboriginal learners develop a new appreciation for indigenous sources of knowledge and to discern how the truth is portrayed to the media.
- The ability to relocate: this involves being able to question one’s own cultural background.
- Seeing the act of teaching as a journey toward learning in itself.
- Becoming aware of the privilege that participation in a dominant literacy confers.

- The journey involves creating a new home for the self to dwell in.

Part 2: Epistemology and Spirituality

10:45-12:15

Epistemology

Definintion:

noun epɪs·te·mol·o·gy \i-,pɪs-tə-'mä-lə-jē\ Definition of epistemology. : the study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity.

-merriam webster

Epistemology and Worldviews

In summary, your worldview is the set of beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality that ground and influence all your perceiving, thinking, knowing, and doing.

Your worldview consists of your epistemology, your metaphysics, your cosmology, your teleology, your theology, your anthropology, and your axiology.

[What is a Worldview?](http://web.engr.oregonstate.edu/~funkk/Personal/worldview.html)

web.engr.oregonstate.edu/~funkk/Personal/worldview.html

tel·e·ol·o·gy

ˌtelēˈäləjē, ˌtēlē-/

noun

PHILOSOPHY

1. the explanation of phenomena by the purpose they serve rather than by postulated causes.
 - THEOLOGY
 - the doctrine of design and purpose in the material world.

Axiology (from Greek ἀξία, *axiā*, "value, worth"; and -λόγος, *-logos*) is the philosophical study of value. It is either the collective term for ethics and aesthetics—philosophical fields that depend crucially on notions of worth—or the foundation for these fields, and thus similar to value theory and meta-ethics.

Axiology - Wikipedia

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axiology>

Epistemology within our practice

What fuels your epistemology?

How does it manifest in the classroom?

Spirit:

/ˈspɪrɪt/ Noun

1. the nonphysical part of a person that is the seat of emotions and character; the soul.

"we seek a harmony between body and spirit"

2. those qualities regarded as forming the definitive or typical elements in the character of a person, nation, or group or in the thought and attitudes of a particular period.

"the university is a symbol of the nation's egalitarian spirit"

<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/spirit>

Spirit

Where and how do we use this term already?

How do you define it?

Does spirit have different meanings in different contexts?

How do we address our own internal conflicts with regards to “spirit”?

What does it mean for education and/or our teaching practice?

Spirit as Epistemology



Let's address the "elephant in the room" of spirit. There is a lot of charged discussion and viewpoints and stands on spirit in schools and especially as it relates to aboriginal education. Let's not ignore the case in Port Alberni and how it affects each of us -- individually and as a school collective.

So, let's break down "spirit"...

Spirit as Epistemology

For Aboriginal scholars concerned with culturally appropriate education there is an intricate connection between spirituality and learning that teachers need to understand in order to provide empowering education for all students through appropriate attitudes toward students. ... To understand the necessity of spirituality in learning and education for Aboriginal students we need to explore, briefly, Aboriginal epistemology...

One's spirituality, as Curwen-Doige (2003) elaborates, is the inner resource that enables one to know oneself and find meaning for oneself in connection to one's surroundings. ... According to Couture (1991) living in the relationship between these connections is "the manifest spiritual ground of Native being"

- Kanu, Y (2012) Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the School Curriculum, p 104

Further: knowledge without the spiritual core is a very dangerous thing

Learning remains superficial level where ideas can be formed without the influence of morals and values

Connection between learning and moral values is fundamental to Aboriginal Identity

Breaking Classroom Silence

The problem (of classroom silence) lies not with the child but rather is an educational problem of designing a learning setting which is right for children -- in which children feel comfortable and secure enough to participate

- Whyte, K (1986). Strategies for Teaching Indian and Metis students.
- Kanu, Y (2012) Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the School Curriculum

Read passage pg 70, Mary: ...

Spirit-informed practice

Bolstering and honouring the whole being of our students

Knowing and understanding what is missing in euro-centric classrooms

Trauma can be addressed through an exploration of connection and “spirit”

Connections can be made with any aspect of curriculum because Aboriginal peoples have spirit indelibly linked to all aspects of life:

- Story, myth, legend, animal care, drum and drum making, songs, ceremony, material culture, maintenance and sustainability of place

Candice George

Personal ideations of spirit and worldviews

Part 3: Principles of Successful Programming

1:00-2:30

Principles of Successful Programming



UNDERSTANDING AND INTEGRATING CULTURAL IDENTITY

The loss of cultural identity and values is a major risk faced by Aboriginal youth. It is critical to address this loss in programming for youth.

INCREASING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Youth engagement is both a process and a desired outcome. Youth engagement means providing a range of roles for youth who become involved and providing them with opportunities to become leaders in addition to participants.

FOSTERING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is an extension of youth engagement. Empowerment includes supporting youth in the development of skills, competence, and identity and also supporting them in using these skills for social change.

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Effective and appropriate partnerships are an important foundation to any prevention programming, but the importance of these relationships is amplified when working with Aboriginal youth and their communities.

OVERVIEW OF PRINCIPLES

Subsequent sections of this toolkit address the guiding principles in detail and provide specific strategies for applying them. A brief overview of the principles is offered below.

Principle 1: Understanding and Integrating Cultural Identity

- Substance use and suicide prevention research has shown that a strong cultural identity can be a powerful protective factor for youth.

•The concept of enculturation, or the extent to which individuals are embedded in their traditional cultural identity and practices, has emerged in recent research as an important protective factor for Aboriginal youth and adults.
Principle 2: Increasing Youth Engagement

•Youth who are engaged in prosocial activities, their schools, and their communities exhibit fewer risk behaviours than peers who are not connected.

•Youth who are engaged culturally and participate in cultural activities exhibit fewer risk behaviours. Cultural engagement is an important protective factor against a range of negative outcomes.
Principle 3: Fostering Youth Empowerment

•There are two types of empowerment that are important for youth, particularly those who belong to a culture that has been marginalized: personal empowerment and social empowerment.

•Personal empowerment stems from individual youth having the necessary skills and opportunities to meet personal goals and develop into well-adjusted adults. Social empowerment refers to having power to positively change the environment through work with the community, school, or larger social arenas.

•To target youth empowerment, programs must provide opportunities and support for youth to become agents of social change.
Principle 4: Establishing and Maintaining Effective Partnerships

•Partnerships are important because of the emphasis on extended family and social networks in traditional cultures.

•Partnerships are the source of cultural teachings and priorities, particularly when program developers and evaluators are not from the same communities.

•Partnerships increase buy-in from youth and communities.

Self-Assessment and Check in

Please indicate your response by placing a ✓ beside the descriptor that characterizes your level of agreement for each item. In order to identify strategies that address your unique programming needs, it is important that the questions are answered accurately and honestly. If an item is inapplicable, then leave it blank.	Disagree	Agree
Principle 1: Understanding and Integrating Cultural Identity		
Our programming includes elements of Aboriginal culture and traditions that may have been lost to the new generation.		
Our programming enhances the personal resources of youth such as a sense of well-being, belonging, security, identity, and self-esteem.		
Opportunities are presented that facilitate the development of meaningful relationships between youth and the older generations.		
Our programming encourages youth to bridge the gap between Aboriginal culture and its non-Aboriginal counterpart.		
Our programming includes teachings on cultural identity from various cultural backgrounds.		
When culture is addressed in our programs, it is clear where the traditions, symbols, and teachings are coming from.		
Awareness of cultural identity is woven into every step of our activities and programs.		
In our materials, historical and contemporary cultural images are balanced.		
Generations of families are involved in our programming or initiatives.		
Culturally appropriate teaching tools are used in our programs.		
PRINCIPLE 1: Total number of checks for each column		

PURPOSE OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

The self-assessment is a tool to gather information about your current youth programming with respect to the four main principles outlined in this toolkit: cultural identity, youth engagement, youth empowerment, and partnerships. It has been designed to facilitate discussion and thinking about how to enhance the quality and nature of the programming you currently offer. Using this self-assessment enables people to identify needs and next steps. The results of this assessment can help organizations continue to grow from their strengths and also identify areas where specific action may be required. Because it provides a profile of strengths and weaknesses with respect to the toolkit's organizing principles, it can direct you to specific sections of the toolkit for possible strategies.

**** We are looking only at Principle 1 today ****

Mark down with a check mark how much you agree or disagree with each statement

Give 10 minutes to mark

Calculating your Score

Principle 1: Understanding and Integrating Cultural Identity

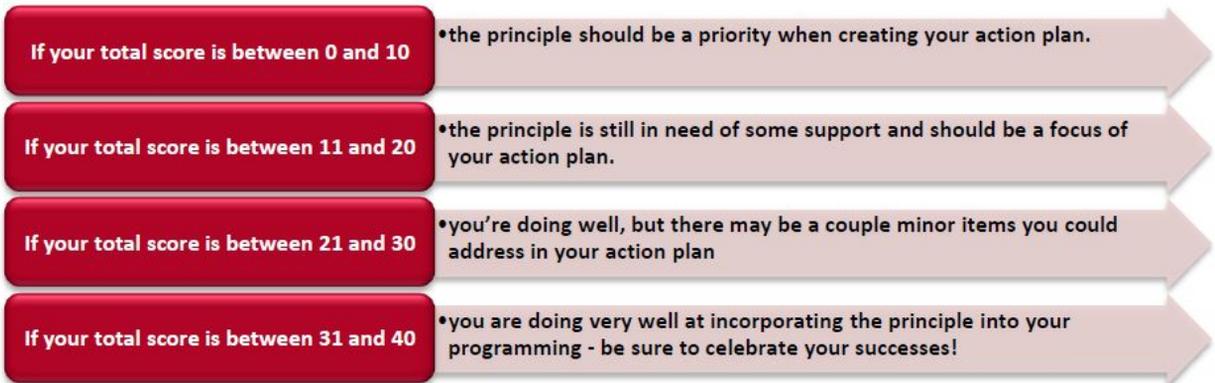
Number of checks in column 1 (disagree) = ____ x 1 = ____
Number of checks in column 2 = ____ x 2 = ____
Number of checks in column 3 = ____ x 3 = ____
Number of checks in column 4 (agree) = ____ x 4 = ____

TOTAL SCORE

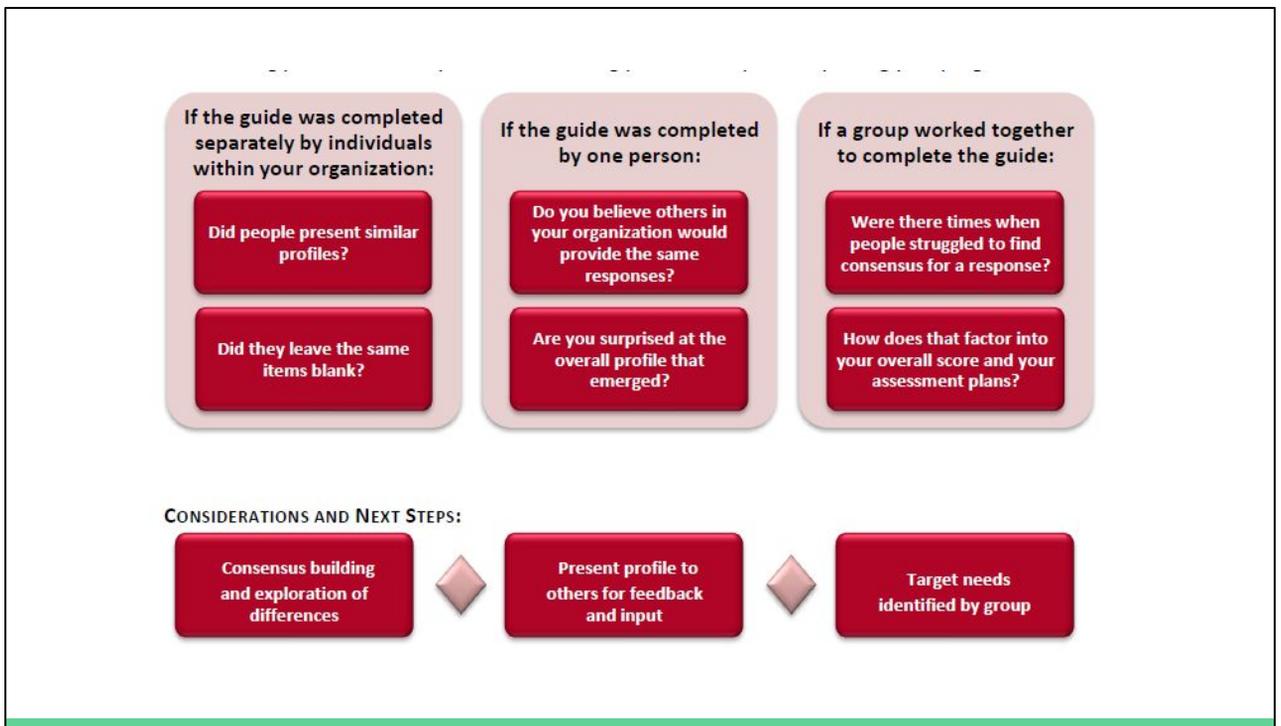


Count the number of checkmarks in each column and enter them in the summary rows in the table and on the first line in the scoring guide
Multiply the total by the number given
Add the four totals together

Using the Self Assessment Scores



Compare your total score for each principle with the chart below to determine your level of assessed need in that area. You can use the information to draft a profile of your organization's current ability to provide effective practices.



Although the scores for your self-assessment are very important, it is also essential to consider some implications of how the guide was completed. Taking time to reflect on both the process and the resulting profile will serve you well in choosing the next steps for your practice.

GOALS OF CULTURE-ENHANCING ACTIVITIES

Culture-enhancing activities can serve a number of purposes. The following five goals of cultural enhancement activities are identified by the Centre for Suicide Prevention in their document *Aboriginal Youth: A Manual of Promising Suicide Prevention Strategies*:⁴ Share elements of Aboriginal culture and traditions that may have been lost to the new generation. Enhance personal resources of youth such as a sense of well-being, belonging, security, identity, and self-esteem. Provide youth with alternative options they can rely on when in need. Facilitate the development of meaningful relationships between youth and the older generation. Help children and youth bridge the gap between Aboriginal culture and its non-Aboriginal counterpart.

Discussion Break



10-15 minutes to discuss planning and scores

Best Practice: Handout for Educators

Identity

Political Consciousness

Teacher-Student Interactions

Observing the Importance of Relationships

Adapted from: Best Practices in Teaching Aboriginal Children: From an Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Perspective. By Theresa Wilson (Master's Thesis: Conversations with First Nations Educators) 2001 UVic

<https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/deepeningknowledge/UserFiles/File/UploadedAmina_/Best_Practices_for_Teaching_Aboriginal_Students.pdf>

**Refer to Handout with teachers,
Have them check off all of the points they have already implemented in their
classrooms**

Best Practice of Non-Aboriginal Teachers

Dealing with Conflict

Showing Respect

Personal Characteristics

Evaluating as Part of Instruction

Understanding Teaching as Living

Knowledge

Attributes of Successful Instruction

Adapted from: Best Practices in Teaching Aboriginal Children: From an Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Perspective. By Theresa Wilson (Master's Thesis: Conversations with First Nations Educators) 2001 UVic

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Notes from “Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the School Curriculum

- “Silence” of our FN students may stem from a deeper problem of comfortability in a foreign setting. Designing a setting which is right for our kids
 - Comfortable and secure enough to contribute
- Difference in cultural understandings
 - Community minded vs individualistic
- Lack of identity in the curriculum
 - Where do they “see themselves” reflected
- Use of words and stories
 - Know the time and the place to have long discourse vs short concise and discrete examples
 - Speed of delivery is important
 - Chunk information and scaffold learning intentions

If you want to learn about Chinese culture where do you travel? -- China

If you want to learn about French culture where do you travel? -- France

If you want to learn about Egyptian culture where do you travel? -- Egypt

(Add other examples as needed...)

If you want to learn about Carrier culture? Metis culture? Inuit Culture?

Do I need to bring up language learning?

The fact of the matter is that simply, Canada and therefore BC are the only places on earth where you could even hope to authentically learn about FN culture, heritage and identity. Through the Indian Act and Indian Residential Schools this culture has been systematically and institutionally stripped from the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Our job, now, as educators is to foster our Aboriginal youth -- who have far lower graduation rates compared to their non-aboriginal counterparts -- to find space in our schools. To feel like their culture, which the dominant society has tried to quell for so long, is worthwhile and appreciated.

The sins of our fathers may not be ours but we owe it to the children whose lives we touch to make reconciliation and restitution in any way possible. And incorporating First Nations perspectives and worldviews, authors, stories, role models, representation is one way we make this possible.

Thank you.

(mic drop)

Go Forward with Courage

Let's change the world

