First Nations, Métis and Inuit School-Community Learning Environment Project

Facilitator Professional Development Resource

created by the Alberta Regional PD Consortia for Aboriginal Services Branch, Alberta Learning Fall 2004
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Vision Statement of the Resource Development Group

To develop an inviting, engaging and respectful learning community with FNMI parents where FNMI learners experience on-going success while enhancing identity is valued and appreciated by all.

To enhance and honour cultural and educational accomplishment of harmony and balance through empowering aboriginal students in their journey of life-long learning in the circle of success.

Significance of the Logo

The logo shows four people standing in a circle, holding hands.

The braids represent the interconnection of our communities.

The four colours represent the colours of humanity.

The four quadrants represent the four levels of life (birth, child, adult and elder), the four directions (east, south, west and north) and the four elements of a human (mental, spiritual, emotional and physical).

The Artist

Dia Thurston is a Dene Tha commercial artist with many years of experience in school and community services. She is greatly concerned with creating a supportive and caring community that works to help children achieve their dreams.
Acknowledgements

FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource Development support by:
Alberta Regional PD Consortia (ARPDC)

Alberta Learning, Alberta Regional PD Consortia and facilitators representing school jurisdictions from across the province provided funding, support and leadership for the development of the FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource.

The Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia exists in seven regions of the Province of Alberta www.arpdc.ab.ca

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<th>Consortium</th>
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<tr>
<td>Northwest Regional Learning Consortium</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nrlc.net">www.nrlc.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium</td>
<td><a href="http://www.erlc.ca">www.erlc.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Network Educational Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.learning-network.org">www.learning-network.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Alberta Regional Consortium</td>
<td><a href="http://www.carcpd.ab.ca">www.carcpd.ab.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Calgary Regional Consortium</td>
<td><a href="http://www.crcpd.ab.ca">www.crcpd.ab.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Alberta Professional Development Consortium</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sapdc.ca">www.sapdc.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortium provincial francophone pour le perfectionnement professionnel</td>
<td>wwwcpfpp.ab.ca</td>
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The Northwest Regional Learning Consortium (NRLC) is the lead consortium facilitating the development of the comprehensive FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource.

In the identification of needs and preparation of the facilitator’s resource input will be sought from the jurisdictions/ pilot schools of the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project.
Acknowledgements (continued)

The resource was developed through the creation of a Development Committee including the Project Manager, Project Coordinator, 13 facilitators and Alberta Learning Aboriginal Services. These names are below:

- **Glenda Bristow**, FNMI Education Program Coordinator, St. Paul Education Regional Division No. 1
- **Shane Cunningham**, Liaison Counsellor, Calgary Board of Education
- **Ken Ealey**, Aboriginal Ed Consultant (Science/Math), Edmonton Catholic Schools
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- **Shirley Van Eaton**, Executive Director, Central Alberta Regional Consortium
- **Jean Hoeft**, Executive Director, Calgary Regional Consortium
- **Gary Heck**, Executive Director, Southern Alberta Professional Development Consortium

Thanks

Thank you to all FNMI Facilitators for the leadership role you will take to facilitate learning of the professional development component of the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment project as you support pilot project schools and in the future all schools throughout the Province of Alberta in the implementation of the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project.
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Section 1: Overview

Section Summary:

- Purpose
- The Four Goals
- Rationale
- Background
- Types of PD Sessions
- Summary of the Resource’s Development
- How to Use the FNMI Facilitator’s Manual

Purpose

The purpose of the FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource (PDR) is to provide facilitators with a guide that will support them as they create FNMI professional development sessions for communities. The resource is organized around the Four FNMI Goals which guide communities as they strive to improve FNMI attendance, retention, high school completion rates, performance on provincial achievement tests and performance on diploma examinations.

The Four Goals

The FNMI Facilitator PDR was created to support the implementation of the four goals of the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project:

**Goal #1**  First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement is increased as measured by Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams.

**Goal #2**  The school has an environment that is respectful of and appreciates First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, history and world-view.

**Goal #3**  Barriers preventing First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success are identified and removed by the school community.

**Goal #4**  Parents of FNMI students are involved in the school community and perceive the school as inviting and engaging to parents.
Rationale

The *FNMI Facilitator’s Professional Development Resource (PDR)* has been designed to support the “FNMI School-Community Learning Environment” project developed by the Aboriginal Services Branch of Alberta Learning. This project was developed through the sponsorship of the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortium (ARPDC). The Development Committee was composed of two people from each region, selected by the Executive Director of the region, the Executive Director from the NRLC, the Director of Aboriginal Services for Alberta Learning, and a Project Manager.

The Development Committee felt strongly that the resource should be inviting and user friendly, not overwhelming. Further, the resource had to be flexible enough to meet the needs of a large, diverse population – the entire province of Alberta. The resource had to contain enough information and guidance to allow individual facilitators to meet the needs of their school communities, while at the same time be adaptable to each facilitator’s individual style.

The Committee’s primary task was to “unpack” the Four Goals by identifying the themes under each goal and specific insights that workshop participants would take away. It is key that participants demonstrate a shift in thinking and insight during the workshop. In doing so, the Committee has provided consistency across the province in terms of the standards for workshop participants’ learning for all programs and events that deal with FNMI school-community learning environment topics and themes. The facilitators’ resource, based on the Four Goals, will focus the work in every region, district, community and school.

The Resource Development Committee has worked with each Goal, identifying the themes and specific insights or enduring understandings in each Goal. The *PDR* also provides a summary of the elements of facilitation, strategies to use during all phases of learning and relevant black line masters.

The *PDR* is not designed as a prescription or cookie-cutter process, recognizing that “one size does not fit all”. It is a guide for supporting the planning of FNMI professional development sessions, recognizing that each request will be different. Research in professional development (National Staff Development Council, 2002) clearly demonstrates that each professional development session must be tailored to the content of the work and the unique context of participant learners. The activities must match the intent of the session and the principles of learning. With this focus in mind, the *FNMI Facilitator PDR* was designed using the following criteria:

**The resource must contain:**

- Strategies/processes that are research-based and compatible with the culture of the participants
- Clear outcomes, based on the Four Goals, for the workshops or activities
- Assessment pieces that help measure change in participants during the PD activities

FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource
Background

The FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource is designed to be a flexible guide to aid the design of any professional development event that relates to the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project. What ties the professional development activities together are their links to the Four Goals. The goals are the focus of the learning.

The professional development activity suggestions are meant as guides, not how-to prescriptions. Facilitators are encouraged to become familiar with varying strategies in the PDR and to use them to create other professional development activities. The PDR is not a definitive resource for strategies, and facilitators should use strategies already in their repertoire when facilitating FNMI sessions for a diverse community.

The resource references and uses the materials in the FNMI Project Toolkit and the recommended resources (in the annotated bibliography from Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30) as appropriate.

The FNMI Facilitator’s Resource is designed to provide facilitators with:

SECTION 2 — Strategies and facilitation ideas to use during workshops
SECTION 3 — Tips, suggestions and organizers for planning a workshop
SECTION 4 — Activity suggestions and resources to use in a workshop
SECTION 5 — Tools for assessing the effectiveness of a workshop
SECTION 6 — Appendices, including graphic organizers

Types of PD Sessions

The following is a list of different types of professional development sessions. Also consider other types of gatherings as opportunities for learning, such as inviting administrators and teachers to local FMNI ceremonies and events (round dances, feasts). Participating in community gatherings contributes to cultural professional development.

Workshop: A small or large group gathering, usually lead by a facilitator and is highly interactive. Can be a partial day, full day or several days and may or may not be a series over time. The purpose of a workshop is to facilitate learning of new concepts and/or skills to be implemented in professional practice. Workshops often include interactive programs.
Institute/Academy: A small or medium sized groups, often attend in teams; usually a combination of presenting and facilitating takes place over 3-5 days. The purpose of an institute or academy is to provide an opportunity for concentrated study on a concept, skill(s) or topic for the purpose of implementation in the classroom, school or district.

Study (Learning) Group: A small group, usually led by various members of the group, that meets on a regular basis over time. Focus is usually on student learning, specifically an aspect of teacher practice that impacts student learning. The purpose of a study group is to share practice, collaborate and gain a deeper understanding of the link between learning and teaching and implement this learning into practice.

Book Club: A small group, usually led by various members of the group, that meets on a regular basis. Focus is an agreed upon book. The purpose of a book club is to come to a deep understanding of the concept, skill or topic covered in the book.

Information session/inservice: A small or large group, usually led by a presenter sharing information, in which participant interaction is limited. The purpose of an information session is to increase awareness of a topic, concept, skill, or program.

Action Research: An individual or small group that has the main components of formal research:

- a hypothesis or question,
- a data collection method and time frame,
- a population,
- analysis of data,
- a conclusion;
- maintain the ethical standards of formal research

Can be done in a classroom, a school or a community. The purpose of action research is to examine practice(s) in a classroom, school, or a community as a way of determining the roots of issues, thus providing a focus for change.

Training: A small or large groups, usually led by an expert in the concept or skill. For best results, it takes place over time with coaching and feedback provided. The purpose of training is to develop a specific skills and concepts in a program to be implemented in a classroom or school district.

Conference: Usually a large group with multiple presenters, speakers and facilitators. Usually has a unifying theme and takes place over 1-3 days in a row. The purpose of a conference is to provide information, present new ideas in the field, and interact with a variety of colleagues.
# How to Use the FNMI Facilitator’s PDR

The *FNMI Facilitator’s PDR* is provided as a support for facilitators of FNMI professional development activities related to the FNMI School-Community Learning Environment Project. The *FNMI Facilitator’s PDR* contains suggestions, not recipes, for designing workshops and other professional development activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step One</th>
<th>Review the Strategies section of the resource and note strategies that you would like to use.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step Two</td>
<td>Review the Planning section for an overview of the development of a PD session.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step Three</td>
<td>Review the Workshops section and note any themes your client may wish to address.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step Four</td>
<td>Follow the tasks in the phases of planning:</td>
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<td>• Initial contact</td>
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<td>• Learning and gathering</td>
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<td>• Final preparation</td>
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<td>Complete the graphic organizers as you plan your session.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step Five</td>
<td>Review the Assessment section and decide on the assessment tools you will need to evaluate your session.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step Six</td>
<td>Use the summary sheets while delivering your session.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step Seven</td>
<td>Use the assessment sheets to evaluate your session.</td>
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</table>

**The following icons are used in this resource:**

- **Rationale**
  This box will contain an explanation for why a term, concept, strategy is important.

- **Helpful Hint**
  This box will contain a hint which may help facilitators.

- **Facilitator Questions**
  This box will contain questions which facilitators should be asking themselves when working with individuals or when organizing ....

- **Reflection**
  This box will contain items, questions or suggestions for facilitators to reflect upon.
Section 2: Strategies

Section Summary:
- Introduction
- Elements of Facilitation
- Connecting to the Audience
- Processing the Information
- Transforming the Information

Introduction

Section Two is designed to provide facilitators with research-based cognitive strategies to use in their sessions. Every school and community is unique and therefore has unique challenges and needs. As a result, the professional development needs will differ and sessions should reflect the needs of each different context. Section Two provides the facilitator with a variety of strategies necessary for a diverse population; however, this resource is not an exhaustive list of strategies, and the facilitator is encouraged to use research-based strategies from other sources.

This section begins with a summary of the elements of facilitation and is followed by three groups of strategies based on three stages of learning.

Stage One: Connecting (or Engaging)
These strategies facilitate the opening of the workshop. Research on adult learning theory emphasizes the importance of connecting the adult learner to what they already know in the early stages of the learning experience. Cognitive neuroscience also supports this theory.

Stage Two: Processing (or Activating)
These strategies are designed to facilitate the brain's constructivist nature. Research clearly demonstrates the need for the human brain to have time to work with new information and to build new knowledge through the integration of existing knowledge and new knowledge.

Stage Three: Transforming (or Applying)
These strategies ask the learner to apply what they have learned, to apply their new knowledge. Application of new knowledge is critical to laying down the information in long-term memory.
Elements of Facilitation

Transitions

**Rationale**

**Why are Transitions important?**

Workshops are ‘chunked’ in a variety of ways: time, different topics, working with a concept in a variety of ways. It is important for the facilitator to make the transitions from one section to the next clear and smooth.

There are a variety of ways that a facilitator can accomplish a clear, smooth transition:

- At the end of a section, have the participants reflect on their learning to this point. They may do this alone; write or not write; share with a partner or not; report out to the large group or not.

- The facilitator may use a more structured approach to the reflection such as “3-2-1” or “Circle, Triangle, Square”.

- Whether or not the facilitator asks participants to reflect at the end of a section, the facilitator needs to signal to participants that the section is done and they will be moving to the next idea or skill.

- The facilitator summarizes the work to this point, e.g. records on the flip chart group conclusions or lessons learned. He or she then ‘bridges’ to the next section, e.g., “Now that we have determined that having a sense of safety in the classroom supports the learning process, we will go deeper into the exploration of the idea of belonging – what it looks and sounds like in a classroom.”

Reporting Out

**Rationale**

**Why use Reporting Out?**

Reporting out the essence of the ideas and thoughts of small groups provides that facilitator with an opportunity to determine if the participants’ thinking is moving in the desired direction.

Reporting out is a form of accountability for the work done in small groups and brings many ideas into the room. Reporting out also allows for a measure of safety for individuals, a way to have his or her voice heard without ‘standing out’.
Public Recording

**Rationale Why is Public Recording important?**

Recording allows the facilitator and participants to monitor the journey toward the goal of the workshop and to acknowledge the contributions of the individuals.

In public recording, individual voices are heard. Public recording of the thinking in the room tracks thinking and may provide a record of how thinking shifts during the workshop. It also acts as a tool for:

- transitioning to next part of the workshop
- preparing for reflection
- providing closure to the day
- drawing inferences from the group’s thoughts
- looking for patterns in the group’s thoughts

**Helpful Hint**

Use colored markers: basic blue, green, brown or purple. Use red for titles, black for outlining/boxing titles and underlining/boxing key points. Practice your printing.

Focused, structured conversations

**Rationale Why are Focused, Structured Conversations important?**

Listening and speaking are the primary functions of communication. Talking is a powerful, natural processing tool, helps the brain to sort through its thoughts and ideas. Conversation also provides an opportunity for all to have a voice in the workshop and builds community in the workshop.

Remember that oral tradition is central to First Nations cultures. The power of the story for learning is well documented.

The conversations that go on during workshop activities are key to the success of many strategies. Conversation has a way of ‘straying’ off topic and so it is important to focus and structure the conversations to support participants’ learning.
Crafting the Container for Conversation

**Rationale**

**Why Craft a Container for Conversation?**

The issue of “school and community environment for FNMI student success” can be a potentially emotional issue for FNMI students, their parents and teaching staff. A successful workshop requires a carefully crafted container for conversations, providing the emotional safety necessary to support possible discomfort. The following suggestions for creating a conversation’s container have been adapted from Wellman and Lipton (2003).

1. **Planning for conversation**

People’s lives are busy. They come to meetings and workshops with other pieces of their lives still on their minds as they settle into their seats. Before the conversation begins, the room needs to be inviting and have a sense of calm energy. This may be accomplished in the following ways:

- **Create a good configuration.** Make sure there’s enough room for people to push their chairs away from the table and get up and move around, and enough room to form a circle of chairs.
- **Decorate your space.** Keep a visible agenda near the front of the room, play music (if appropriate), create displays using books and artifacts, place pictures on the wall, list the workshop goal(s) on the wall, etc.
- **Bring supplies.** Make sure there are pens, paper, handouts, wrapped candies, name tags, etc.
- **Give them time to get comfortable.** The participants will need some time to ‘feel’ the room. They will also need time to either reconnect or connect for the first time with one another.

Planning for conversation produces increased readiness and curiosity about alternative perspectives and focuses participants’ attention and energy on each other and the topic at hand.

2. **Structuring the conversation**

Successful group work requires planning and careful attention its structural elements. Structuring involves making decisions regarding:

- the size of the working groups
- the length of time allotted to the activity and
- the tightness of the task parameters.

For newly formed or inexperienced groups, it is especially important to reduce group size – start with A/B Partners, try A/B/C and then move on to table groups. Keep the activity time short for new groups, e.g., at the beginning of the workshop A/B talk time might be one minute for each person. The time may be increased later in the day as participants get to know one another. Be very explicit in providing directions for the activities – present them on an overhead or on chart paper to support understanding.
3. Sustaining the thinking

Thinking aloud together helps to:
- surface assumptions,
- illuminate possibilities, and
- develop shared understandings

This process is mediated through the facilitator’s intentional use of questions and paraphrasing and other linguistic tools.

### Questions that Facilitate Participant Thinking

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Why Create Questions that Facilitate Participant Thinking?</th>
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<td>Powerful questions are engaging and thought provoking. They help expand participants’ reasoning and help them examine their own thinking process.</td>
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### Tips for creating questions that facilitate thinking:

- Use the plural form, signalling that there is more than one possible right answer. E.g. Instead of asking “What is a reason for...?”, ask “What are some reasons for...?”

- Use exploratory language: words such as *might, some* and *could* signal there are multiple possible answers, not one right answer. Use open-ended question forms. Avoid the use of *have you, can you, do you*, as they invite a ‘yes/no’ response.

- Use positive presuppositions as this language presupposes capacity and willingness to engage. For example:

  - *What is an example of...?*
  - *What is another way you can say that?*
  - *What do you mean by...?*
  - *How can you help me with...?*
  - *What made you think of that?*
  - *As you reflect on the work we have done so far, what are you noticing about...?*
  - *What are you aware of...?*
Paraphrasing

**Rationale**
**Why Paraphrase?**

You acknowledge the value of the individual when you actively listen to them. Paraphrasing is a key skill in active listening.

Before paraphrasing, listen to determine the speaker’s content and emotions. Then signal you are about to paraphrase by using an approachable voice and opening with a reflective stem. The stem puts the emphasis and focus on the speaker’s words, not on the facilitator’s interpretation of those words. Generally, the reflective paraphrases do not contain the pronoun “I”. Stay away from phrases such as, “What I think I hear you saying…”

**Helpful Hint**

**Paraphrasing signals:**
- You are noticing…
- You are suggesting…
- You are thinking…
- You are wondering…
- You are excited…
- So, you are speculating that…
- Your hunch is…
- As you consider…

There are three levels of paraphrased response:

**Level One:** Used to **acknowledge and clarify** what the speaker is saying.

- “The fact that FNMI students are struggling in school makes you feel sad because you know these students will struggle outside of school.”

**Level Two:** Used to **summarize and organize** the conversations in the room into themes that help clarify.

- “You are noticing two issues. First, there is the issue of FNMI student achievement in government tests; and second, there is the issue of FNMI students feeling alienated from the classroom. The topic of this workshop is on FNMI students feeling they do not belong in the classroom.”

**Level Three:** Used to **shift the focus to a higher or lower level.** We move to a higher level by naming concepts, themes, goals and values in the paraphrase.

- “You have provided another example of the negative impact of feelings of alienation on FNMI students wanting to come to school. You are suggesting
that schools need to see the bigger picture of learning. What you value the most is FNMI children being in an environment that supports their learning.”

We move to lower logical levels when abstractions and concepts need grounding in details.

- “An example of belonging behaviour in a classroom is where every child’s voice is heard and honoured.”

**Silence**

Silence in group situations is often considered by many to be uncomfortable. Finding time for quiet thinking is often difficult. However, it is widely recognized that people need quiet time to think and process. Once you establish a pattern of periods of silence, participants often realize how important this thinking time is.

Teach your participants to respect the “alone time” you schedule in the workshop. You may have to remind people – with a smile – that quiet time means no talking in the room.

Silence is also important after you have asked a question, after a participant provides a response, and after a participant asks a question. This gives you time to think and process before responding – the brain can only concentrate on one thing at a time!

**Managing more than one conversation in the room**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Why do you need to manage more than one conversation in a room?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants may want to talk about the topic, however, often people ‘jump around’ the topic or get sidetracked if:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the conversation structure is not clear</td>
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<tr>
<td>- there is no clear focus for the conversation and</td>
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<tr>
<td>- the facilitator does not facilitate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is the job of the facilitator to structure and focus class conversations and manage group conversations.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Be very clear that you will provide instructions first before participants begin to talk. Use an overhead that shows the structure of the groupings, the time allotment, and the task. Design a pattern for using the strategy so the participants learn the process.

Be very clear that when you invite people to think ‘alone’, the room needs to be quiet for those who need quiet in order to think.

Explain the signal for bringing their attention back to the front, you – this can be a verbal signal (although the noise in the room might be too much for your voice), the raising of your hand and others ‘following suit’, a set of chimes that you ring, a soft bell. Do not use a harsh sound.
Conversation Structures

The “A/B Partner” is the basic conversation structure. It is used in new groups to facilitate the building of a learning community and to provide a sense of safety in a large group. It is used in on-going groups to provide an opportunity for people to have a quick conversation between sections, e.g., after reading a text, watching a video, or listening to a lecture.

Tips for Facilitating Conversations

- Have an A/B Partner activity in the first 30 minutes of every workshop. It sets the tone and the expectation that participants will have opportunities to talk.
- Once people are used to A/B, introduce A/B/C or A/B/C/D.
- You may wish to begin conversations using a small group format before opening the discussion up to all participants.

Conversation Formats

1. I Summarize, You Summarize

This conversation format may be used when dividing up a text, a video, a lecture. It may also be used to close the morning, open the afternoon or end the day.

- Use the A/B structure
- Participants prepare their summaries alone
- Designate who will begin (remind listeners to listen)
- Give a time frame and monitor the time
- When each partner has spoken, give the first person 30 seconds to note a new connection made because of partner’s summary and then do the same for the second person

Variation: Before the second person begins their summary, he or she must list the highlights of his or her partner’s summary. When the second person has provided a summary, the first person must verbalize the highlights. This requires more skill on the part of the participants, so before you use this version, assess the abilities of your audience.

2. Reciprocal Teach

This strategy may be used to process sections of text, videos, lectures. It is important to tell the participants upfront what they will be doing between the sections – this will focus their listening/viewing.

Once the chunk is delivered, provide time for participants to organize their notes for teaching their partner. Then designate who begins – A or B – and allow 2-3 minutes for each to teach.

Variation: After each partner has taught, have him or her discuss the information and generate a question about the material covered. Take a few questions to answer, but do not get bogged down in the questions. Encourage people from the audience to answer the question before you address it.
3. Alone/Together

Use after covering a section of information when you are using text, video, or presenting material.

- Participants organize their thinking **alone**
- Participants share their thinking **together**
- Listen for new connections and insights
- Participants consider the question following **alone**: “How did my partner’s thinking impact my thinking?”
- Participants share their thinking **together**
- Facilitator records the thinking (report out)
- Facilitator networks the thinking to show connections

4. Walk to Talk

This strategy serves several purposes: to shift the energy in the room, to allow movement, to mix people up and to provide the opportunity to hear new ideas.

- Participants organize their thinking **alone**. Participants may keep notes.
- Participants move away from the tables and find someone across the room. Once they have found a partner, decide who speaks first – or the facilitator may predetermine who speaks first.
- Participants report back to table about the thinking ‘out there’
- Facilitator records the thinking at each table shares some of the ideas collected orally (report out)
- Facilitators invite participants to examine the report out and make generalizations regarding the thinking in the room

5. Paired Verbal Fluency

This is a fast-paced strategy. It can be stressful for some participants, so make sure you frame it in fun. Use it later in the workshop once there is a level of comfort in the room. This strategy gets people verbally active prior to discussing a new topic. The act of constructing language and listening to the ideas of others stimulates thinking and helps people to surface knowledge about the topic at hand.

- Participants organize into A/B partner groups and are not allowed to use their notes (ask them to turn them over, put pens down).
- Participants are not allowed to repeat what his or her partner says.
- Facilitator starts the activity on ‘go’, asking them to share their thoughts on a topic.

**Round 1**: 45 seconds for each person

**Round 2**: 30 seconds for each person

**Round 3**: 15 seconds for each person
Connecting to the Audience:
Opening the Workshop

1. Building relationships in the group

Sharing Circle

The circle has always been an important symbol in Aboriginal culture, and Western society has become more comfortable talking in a circle formation. The circle is used to open and close events. A prayer is usually done in the circle and sharing stories is done in the circle.

When facilitating the circle, begin the conversation when possible with the eldest person in the circle and have the conversation go from the left of the first speaker. Encourage participants to leave their pen and paper somewhere else as this is an oral activity.

Respecting the Sharing Circle

1. Only one person may speak at a time.
2. The Natural Laws shall govern the circle: Honesty, Kindness, Sharing and Respect.
3. People will take turns speaking in a clockwise direction, ending with the teacher or Elder.
4. A person may only speak when it is his or her turn.
5. A person may choose not to speak and pass his or her turn.
6. All participants should pay attention and listen to the person who is speaking.

How can you use a Sharing Circle in the classroom?

A Sharing Circle can be used to encourage discussion and sharing when:

- Introducing a topic, engaging students in a discussion where there are no right or wrong answers
- Reflecting on a recent class experience
- Sharing individual experiences or knowledge (finding out what the students know).
- Getting to know one another


Like Me

This is an energizing, engaging strategy for gathering information about the group in which participants have an opportunity to find out something about others in the room. Tell participants you are going to make an “I” statement, and if it is true they should stand or raise their hand. You may invite those standing and/or with hands up to look around the room and see who else has that same thing in common.

FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource
Helpful Hint
Vary the statements you use.

School staff:
- I am a grade 3 teacher.
- I am a math teacher.
- I am a principal.
- I am a coach in the school.
- I am an elementary/intermediate/secondary teacher.

Mixed group:
- I have a birthday in the summer/over Christmas/during the school year.
- I have traveled out of the province in the past year.
- I have a pet at home.
- I have more than two children.
- I enjoy playing sports.
- I enjoy listening to music/gardening...

If you know your group, design personalized “I” statements.

Introducing Your Neighbour

This strategy encourages participants to begin the workshop with good listening and remembering skills. It is important to tell the participants ahead of time that they will not be using their notes to introduce their partners to the entire group.

Caution: Not all audiences will feel comfortable doing this activity.

1. Invite participants to pair up with the person to their left.
2. If there is an odd number, create one trio.
3. Explain that they will take turns telling each other their names, places of residence, places of birth and one thing they do in their spare time. They must listen carefully because they will introduce their partner to the group with the information they provide.
4. Encourage people not to take notes and to use their listening and memory skills. Many people will feel more comfortable taking notes.

Four Questions

This strategy may be used in the first 5-10 minutes of the workshop to provide opportunities for people to connect with each other and to provide the focus for the workshop. The questions need to be a balance of making a connection with others and the content.

Questions ideas:
- “What brought you to this workshop?”
- “What do you hope to learn in this workshop?”
- “What do you do for fun?”
- “What is your favorite pastime?”
Craft the questions that fit your workshop content and audience.

2. Bringing the topic into the room

These strategies help connect participants to their existing knowledge, perceptions and misperceptions.

Learning Partners

This is a cooperative activity that can be used to energize the room and process information. It is particularly effective when the information is complex and needs to be divided into manageable segments.

- Use one of the formats for mixing and matching. Use only one format during the workshop.
- Participants must match the shape/time/puzzle number as their contact.
- When you call out the shape/time/puzzle piece, participants find their partner and engage in the task you assign using a conversation format.

Participants will find a different person to talk to for the first three questions – questions need to be on an overhead or on chart paper – and will come back to their table for question four. Question four needs to focus clearly on the theme/content of the workshop. This conversation sets the stage for the rest of the workshop.

Visual Synectics

Synectics promotes fluid and creative thinking by making what is familiar strange or by comparing two things that ordinarily would not be compared. There are two ways to do this strategy.

Cards at every table:

- Prepare a set of picture cards – photos of everyday objects cut from magazines and glued to 4x6 index cards. A mix of organic and human-made objects produces the best results.
- Participants work at their table groups.
- Place 3-4 cards face down on each table and have someone at each table choose one card.
- Table groups have three minutes to list parts, materials, functions, properties, and processes associated with the object in the picture.
- Table groups then respond to the question “How is __________ like your picture card?” taking 3-4 minutes.
- Invite one person from each table to name their object and describe one of the responses from the table.
- Provide a brief summary of the responses, linking back to the theme of the workshop.
**Overhead picture:**
- Show a picture of an everyday object, then reveal the sentence stem.

__________ is like ____________ because ...

- Give the participants three minutes to brainstorm around their tables.
- Have one person from each table describe one of their ideas.
- Reveal the next sentence stem

__________ is not like ____________ because ...

- Give the participants three minutes to brainstorm around their tables.
- Have one person from each table describe one of their ideas.
- Provide a brief summary of the responses, linking back to the theme of the workshop.

(adapted from Wellman, 2002)

**Round the Room and Back Again**

This is an engaging and energizing strategy for activating participants’ prior knowledge of the workshop topic. It may be used at transition points in the workshop.

- Have each participant take out pen and paper and write one thing they know about the topic, e.g., “I know that FNMI parents support their children in ways not measured by the school.”
- Individuals then take their paper and move around the room sharing their examples and listening to the examples of others. The challenge is to rely on auditory memory - experiencing the oral culture of Aboriginal peoples.
- Time is called when participants have moved 5-7 times, or when their memory banks are full. People return to their tables.
- Table groups share their lists and look for patterns of similarities and differences in the room.
- This is not about remembering who said what, but rather what was said.

(adapted from Wellman, 2002)

**Think of a Time …**

This strategy invites participants to reflect on their experiences and connect to their feelings and thoughts. It is a powerful strategy for setting the stage for conversations on empathy and for preparing for role plays.

- Establish a ‘no talking’ period. You may display the topic using the overhead.
- Invite participants to “Think of a time when they...” Give them two minutes to think.
- Participants share their thinking with their A/B Partner – 1-2 minutes for each person.
- Facilitate a group discussion on the “thinking and feeling”.
- Summarize the key points, setting the stage for the next part of the workshop.

**Scales/continuums**

Measuring growth is a motivating activity and provides a visual for shifts in thinking over the
course of the workshop. This also sets the stage for goal setting. The strategy encourages people to think about where they are in their understanding and why. You may want to have copies of the scale for people to take home.

Scales need to be kept simple and concrete for participants.

- Display the scale to all in the room. Scales need to be large enough to hold the responses.
- Use 4x4 sticky notes for people’s responses.
- Invite people to put their responses up when they are ready.
- Allow 3-5 minutes for people to respond.

### Processing the Information: The body of the workshop

The human brain needs time to ponder and mull over new information. If the brain is not provided time, focus, and a structure for processing, new information will not be retained. These strategies are used during the main part of the workshop, inviting people to work with the information you are presenting. It is important to allow the full amount of time for the strategy and time for reflection. Our deepest learning is done when we reflect on what we have done and learned. Learning is not in the doing, it is in the reflecting on the doing.

### Final Word

This strategy is used to process readings. Its power is that each person in the group has an opportunity to express his or her opinion without any form of judgment from others. This helps to facilitate shifts in other people’s thinking.

- Work in groups of four (more than four takes too long and fewer than three compromises the exercise)
- Participants number themselves 1 through 4.
- Participants read the article. Keep the article short (15-20 minutes).
- Participants highlight 2-4 passages that capture their attention:
  - A new connection
  - A question
  - Affirmation
  - Disagree
- When the group is ready, participant #1 reads one of his or her highlighted passages AND DOES NOT COMMENT ON WHY THEY CHOOSE THE HIGHLIGHT.
- Participant #2 responds to the highlighting: Do they agree with the passage, have question about it? DO NOT ENGAGE IN A DISCUSSION – JUST LISTEN.
- Participant #3 responds, and then participant #4.
- When it is participant #1’s turn, he or she explains the significance of the passage to the others. He or she can reveal if his or her thinking changed while listening to the group member’s responses or if it stayed the same.
• Continue for the rest of the participants.

Remind the group to monitor their time. For a two-page article, working in groups of four, provide 60 minutes for the work.

The groups should report their findings to the class. This can be done with random volunteers from the whole group or one response from each table. Be prepared to summarize the report outs.

(Building From Clues)

( adapted from Wellman, 2002)

Building From Clues

This strategy combines conversation, movement, diverse learning styles, working in A/B groups, table groups, and the opportunity to look at data/research/different pieces of literature on a topic. It takes at least 60 minutes to work through. The strategy provides an opportunity to bring the threads of the workshop together and end in a culminating task. It is an energizing strategy and works well after lunch. The clues are not limited to readings, e.g., one station could be a video clip, another artifacts.

The facilitator needs time to set up the room without the participants present if possible (during a break). If you are using a video clip, check the machine before the day begins. Check out the room before the workshop to get an idea of where the clues will be placed/posted.

The facilitator designs the focus question for gathering the clues and a task that has participants using the clues in a realistic context. Ask participants to provide a visual representation and an oral presentation. Oral presentations might include singing, rap, speaking, role plays, etc.

Display instructions on the overhead or on chart paper:

• Clues are posted on tables, at video machine, etc. and numbered.
• Explain the process and manage the time spent at each clue.
• Participants work in A/B partner groups with pen and paper.
• Assign each group to a clue and allow 3-5 minutes for each clue.
• Encourage A/B partners to talk about each clue (based on the context of the question).
• Participants return to the tables and A/B partners organize their information in preparation to respond to the question and engage in a discussion with their table partners.
• When ready, the whole table discusses the question in the context of preparing for the task.
• Table prepares the task and the presentation of the task.

Focused Reading

This strategy promotes active engagement with text. It encourages participants to think while they read and compare and contrast their existing knowledge with the information that they encounter in the new material.

• Introduce participants to the symbols:
  
  ✓ = “Got it” - I know or understand this.
  
  ! = This is really important or interesting.
I do not understand this or this does not make sense.

- Assign the reading and encourage participants to use the symbols. This can be done at tables or you can mix people up if it is later in the workshop.
- Once reading is done, participants gather to compare their responses.

(adapted from Wellman, 2002)

### 3-Step Interview

This strategy helps participants personalize their learning and listen to and appreciate the ideas and thinking of others. Connect the process to A/B Partner strategy: one speaks while the other listens, no interruptions. In its purest form, the strategy requires participants to be active listeners. In this resource, “I Summarize, You Summarize” would prepare participants for the “3-Step Interview”.

- Invite participants to find a partner from another table.
- Partners designate an interviewer and an interviewee.
- The interview questions are posted on the overhead or chart paper.
- Control the time for each interview or provide a block of time.
- Once the pairs have completed their interviews, they join another pair and form groups of 4 and share what their partners had to say about the questions.

Sample questions:

“**What has been the most significant learning for you in the workshop?**”

“**What experiences have you had with _______?**” (relate to the topic)

“**What would you like to know more about?**”

“**How will you use what you are learning in the workshop?**”

“**What do you have questions about?**”

“**What are some important things to remember about _______?**”

(adapted from Wellman, 2002)

### Story Telling

Storytelling is part of traditional FNMI teaching and learning. The use of stories in a PD session honours the many storytelling traditions of FNMI cultures. Oral storytelling can be a good way to start a session and to set the tone for the workshop. Participants can also be encouraged to tell their own stories. When including storytelling in your workshop, remember:

- Chose stories that are connected to the theme.
- Have participants share their own stories in a sharing circle.

**Note: A sample story is available in the Appendices.**

### Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are tools for organizing and recording thoughts, processing information and preparing for a task. They are not as common as note taking on blank paper, and therefore may not be ‘natural’ for many people. The facilitator may have to encourage some participants to use
the organizer; however, do not push too hard. It is recommended that the facilitator use no more than two graphic organizers in a workshop.

The facilitator may wish to prepare a copy of the graphic organizer for each participant or have participants draw their own from the overhead.

**Note: Graphic organizers are available in the Appendices.**

Types of Graphic Organizers

**Venn Diagrams**
This organizer is used to compare and contrast two separate items or concepts.

- Draw two overlapping circles on the board, overhead or chart paper. You may have each table do their own diagram.
- Label each side with the name of one of the things you are comparing, e.g., FNMI culture and non-FNMI culture.
- Fill in each circle with attributes belonging to each culture. You may want to provide people a moment to think alone before filling in the circles.
- Fill in the center where the two circles intersect with shared attributes.

**Network Trees**
This graphic organizer displays a hierarchy of ideas. It is useful for articulating concepts and supporting details in descending order of importance. Many concepts and themes lend themselves to this form of organization.

- Write a concept high on the board and draw an oval around it.
- Draw 2 parallel ovals below the first and label them with the names of major categories.
- Draw parallel ovals below each of the categories to supply examples and details.
- Add further rows of ovals to refine the details and provide concrete examples.

*(adapted from Wellman, 2002)*

**Timelines**
This organizer is useful for displaying information in chronological order. The key is keeping words to a minimum and using pictures to enhance the organizer.
What’s Important and Why?
This organizer helps to focus listening or viewing. It also encourages people to think for themselves - to record what they believe is important and why. The tool can be extended to include “because”, which takes the thinking to a deeper level.

You may provide each participant with a copy of the organizer or invite them to draw it on their paper. In either case, use the overhead to explain how to use the tool. The information can be used for conversation formats such as “Reciprocal Teach” and “I Summarize, You Summarize”, as well as table and whole group discussions.

PMI Chart
A PMI chart is used when evaluating the positive and negative (pros and cons) of an option or situation. Participants fill in information under “Plus”, “Minus” and “Interesting Information” columns.

KWL Chart
KWL Charts are used during researching tasks. Participants fill in “what they Know”, “What they Want to find out” and “What they Learned”.

Problem Solving Flow Chart
When faced with a problem or issue, participants can use the problem solving flow chart to work through the possible solutions and their consequences.

Story / Skit Planner
This organizer helps participants organize their ideas for a story or skit for a role play activity.

Artifact Hunt
This strategy is like an anthropological quest to better understand the culture involved in an issue. By examining the symbols and artifacts that hold meaning for participants, group members bring to the surface the underlying values that produce and energize key aspects of change. You may select and/or generate a starter set of artifacts before the workshop. This will jump-start the process and provide more time for values exploration and work on envisioning the future.

- Work in groups of 3-4 people, using chart paper and markers.
- Introduce the concept of anthropological inquiry as it applies to the topic. That is, objects and artifacts hold symbolic meaning that represents underlying values in the culture. For example, the award displays in schools represent student achievement as well as a belief that recognition is an important part of motivation.
- Invite small groups to discuss and record on chart paper artifacts in their school that they might show to a visitor from another culture as a means of explaining what is important to their school. These could include examples of events, rituals, routines, or objects that have meaning for their particular school. You may wish to use the community rather than the school for this activity.
- Have small groups categorize their artifacts and label the categories on chart paper.
- Each small group then selects an artifact that exemplifies important values within their culture and shares it with the larger group.
- Small groups then identify and select 3-4 core values and explain how they relate to the topic.
- When the groups have completed the task, invite the whole group to focus on a future date - you set it - when they would visit the culture/school/community as anthropologists.
You will need to prepare a sample for the workshop: choose an artifact, describe the core values it represents, why it needs to be addressed, then address the core value within the context of the topic.

**Brainstorming**

Brainstorming may be used either as a connecting strategy or a processing strategy. In brainstorming:

- Flexibility and fluidity of thinking are encouraged
- The goal is to collect lots of ideas and all ideas are recorded
- Open acceptance of all ideas is essential
- Withhold judgment, both criticism and praise

They are several different types of brainstorming:

1. **Brainstorm and Pass:** Begin to the left of the recorder and offer ideas in turn. The group waits for each person to either offer an idea or say ‘pass’. Passing means “I can’t think of anything right now.” The recorder is included. Allow about three minutes.

   This format is a powerful way to increase participation and prevent people who are most vocal, most knowledgeable of most passionate about a topic form dominating a session. Limit the time spent on this activity.

2. **Brainstorm and Categorize:** This method supports the continued exploration and discovery of the topic. Create groups for brainstorming at tables. After ideas have been brainstormed, participants group the items into categories sharing like attributes. Titles are generated by each table. The information is recorded on charts and then posted around the room. Table groups may add items to the chart as the workshop progresses. The charts offer a picture of the working knowledge of the participants.

3. **Modality Brainstorming:** This method provides an opportunity for people to understand learning style differences. The brain processes and stores information in the main areas: visual, auditory, olfactory/gustatory, and the motor strip (kinesthetic). You may wish to use this strategy to demonstrate differences within a group and to discuss the balanced nature of First Nations’ approaches to learning.

   - Select a relevant topic, work with a recorder at each table, brainstorm and pass.
   - Give 3-4 minutes for people to generate the lists.
   - Each group reviews their list and draws a line under the 10th item.
   - Put the options on the overhead or chart paper using the following code:
     - **V** – visual
     - **K** – kinaesthetic (feelings both physical and emotional)
     - **A** – auditory (sounds)
     - **O/G** – smells and tastes

   - Recorder reads the first 10 items aloud, one at a time. The person who generated each item is invited to contemplate how the idea occurred in his/her brain. Was it a picture, a feeling, a sound, or a taste, or a smell?
   - It is important that the person who generated the ideas be the one who labels the modality. Some ideas may require double coding because the idea is stored in two
modalities. For example, an image of a fire may be a picture (V) and a feeling (K).

- Count up the number of modalities used to generate the list. By using just 10 items it is possible to establish the modality dominance for a group. The world population is roughly divided into 40% visual, 40% kinaesthetic and 20% auditory.

4. **Carousel Brainstorming:** This model is great for a shift of energy. Also, as people move from station to station, others recognize their value as a resource.

- Post large sheets of chart paper at various points in the room — one sheet for each group of 4-6 people. Each sheet has a question or topic written on it relating to the workshop theme/topic.
- Use table groups or mix the room up into new groups. Each group needs a recorder and a facilitator, who ensures everyone in the group gets a voice. Put a group at each station.
- Brainstorm ideas and write them on the paper (time limit of about 4 minutes)
- After the third rotation, reduce the amount of time.
- When the groups have been to all the stations, have them go around one more time quietly, no talking, and look at all the charts and prepare to talk about patterns of thinking they see.
- The groups share and discuss from their tables.

**Transforming the Information:**

Using the Learning

Understanding is not complete until the learner is able to transform their learning into practical application in the classroom, school, or community. In the workshop, the facilitator is limited to judging the depth of transfer through the use of strategies and processes. The facilitator must carefully consider the specific insights he/she wants the participants to acquire and design tasks and contexts that reveal whether or not participants are grasping the concepts in the workshop. It is the facilitator’s responsibility to collect evidence of the impact of the workshop.

For example, if you use “Building From Clues” as the last major piece of the workshop, design the question and task to reveal the participants’ cumulative understanding of the content. If the question is “What does it mean to belong in the classroom?” choose the clues from the readings and other work done on ‘belonging’ and the product will demonstrate the depth of understanding of the concept or skill.

The workshop is an event in the change process. The full transfer or application of learning will not be measurable, as there is no way for the facilitator to monitor what the participants after the workshop.
Reflections

Thinking about one's learning and thinking about one's thought process are keys to deeper learning. The activities themselves are only the beginning. Carefully crafted reflection questions and tasks make the learner reflect deeper into their thought process.

5-minute Reflection Poem (for the end of the day)

- Write one thing you LEARNED today
- Write one thing that HELPED you learn today
- Write one thing the you CONTRIBUTED to the learning today
- Write one thing you feel you can TRY
- Write how you FEEL

What were ... (throughout the workshop)

- My thoughts
- My feelings
- My awareness
- My judgments
- My insights
- My questions

... before/ during/ after the session

Metaphor and Analogy

This strategy provides participants an opportunity represent their learning and thinking using their own style - words, (poem, song, prose...) drawings, graphic organizers - and the power of metaphor and/or analogy.

- Provide the analogy or metaphor or participants choose their own analogy or metaphor. If the facilitator invites participants to share, provide chart paper and markers.
- Briefly explain the use of metaphor and analogy for deeper learning.
- Model an example, using your own preferred style and one other style. Prepare the examples ahead of time.
- Allow 10-15 minutes for participants to work.
- Participants can share in A/B small groups, table groups, or as a whole group.

5-3-1

This activity provides small groups the opportunity to compare, sort, and synthesize key learning and experiences.

- Participants work alone and jot down 5 words (about content and/or feelings) that come to mind when thinking about the topic.
- Participants share their items with their table.
- As a table, choose 3 words
- As a table, choose 1 word
- Table groups shares the word with the other groups and explains why they chose the word.
3-2-1

This activity summarizes the learning and leads into an action plan.

Variation 1:
- 3 things or important ideas that you want to remember
- 2 things you would like to know more about
- 1 idea that you will write about tonight

Variation 2:
- 3 interesting facts I learned
- 2 big ideas I will think about
- 1 question I need to think about

Here’s What, So What, Now What?

This activity allows participants to begin to plan how they will use their learning in their classrooms, schools, or community.

- Participants are encouraged to work in pairs, but do not force this.
- Model the activity first on the overhead, using an example based on the workshop topic. Prepare the example ahead of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Here’s What</th>
<th>So What</th>
<th>Now What?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>for recording learning during the workshop – new ideas, specific insights</td>
<td>for recording the participant’s interpretation of their learning</td>
<td>for developing an action plan based on the two previous columns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The need to belong is clearly linked to successful learning.”</td>
<td>“Belonging is not about intimate relationships rather, it is about being respected and accepted for who the person is.”</td>
<td>“One thing I am going to do in my classroom is greet each student each day as they come into my classroom and then say good bye to them at the end of the day/period.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Circle, triangle, square

This activity is a quick personal review for participants.

- Put the symbols on overhead or chart paper.
- Invite participants to think about:

Circle: What learning will stay around for you?
**Triangle:**
What stood out for you in this workshop?

**Square:**
What learning in the workshop was an affirmation for you – “I knew that already”?
Section 3: Planning

Section Summary:
- Introduction
- Initial Contact Phase
- Learning and Gathering Phase
- Final Preparation Phase

Introduction

A facilitator’s planning takes place in three phases:

1. Initial contact phase: contact is made with the community and participants
2. Learning and gathering phase: facilitator learns about the needs of the participants, the topic to be covered, the facilities and logistics of the workshop, and gathers the resources needed for the workshop
3. Final preparation phase: Facilitator makes final arrangements and prepares the facilities for the workshop

When planning a workshop or other professional development event, facilitators should consider what they will need to:

- Prepare themselves
- Prepare their audience
- Prepare the facilities

Initial Contact Phase

Rationale
Why is the initial contact / conversation important?

- Creates an opportunity
- Discover the basic idea of needs of school/ jurisdiction
- Can check your availability for date and time commitment
- Begin to build relationships
Planning the Initial Conversation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why is the planning conversation important?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The planning conversation is important as it is when you can identify outcomes, identify cultural specifics and atmosphere to create a successful learning activity and clarify:

- big ideas, specific insights and what is worth knowing
- evidence of understandings
- details—e.g. equipments, facility, food, preparation

A minimum of four weeks prior to the professional development activity, meet with your school or jurisdiction contact.

1. **Listen to their vision/needs.** Paraphrase and summarize what you hear to check your understanding. Work with the school contact to ensure you can do what they want you to do.

2. **Determine the goals.** Using the “Four Goals”, work with the school contact to determine which goal he or she wishes to address and which theme(s) within the goal they believe will suit their needs.

3. **Discuss the activity suggestions and assessment tools you will use in the workshop.**

4. **Find out who is coming to the workshop.** Are they coming by choice or request? Is it an intact group, e.g., a school staff?

5. **Plan for follow up.** Determine with the school contact what resources are available for implementation of the action plans after the workshop and what support there is for follow-up.

6. **Inquire about the location and space for the workshop.** Are there structural beams, posts in the middle of the room? Does the space have a source of natural light? Does it allow for small group work? Does it have wall space to post the work? Discuss your preferred room set up.

7. **Discuss start time, break times, finishing time and food.** Will lunch be brought in? If participants are going out for lunch, you need to allow at least 75 minutes for lunch.

8. **Determine shared responsibilities.** Determine who is responsible for copying handouts and providing equipment, e.g., overhead projector, chart paper. Who is responsible for your costs, e.g., supply teacher, cost of room, honorarium. Contact your APRDC Executive Director for support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpful Hint</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Use the planning organizer on the following page collect the information you need during your initial conversation.
Planning Organizer #1: The Initial Conversation

**Contact Information**
Name: _______________________________________
Organization: ____________________  Position: _______________________
Phone #: ________________ fax#: _______________ email: _________________

**Content Requested**
Goal to be covered: ________________________________________________
Topics / outcomes of interest: _________________________________________

**Audience**
# of people: ______________    Volunteer or mandatory: ___________________
Background of participants: _________________________________________

**Resources**
Resources to be provided by client: __________________

FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource
FNMI PD Checklist for School or Jurisdiction Contact

Date: ______________

To: ___________________ Phone #: ______________ fax#: ______________
From: ___________________ Phone #: ______________ fax#: ______________

Below is a checklist from our planning conversation. Please take a few minutes to read, complete, sign and return these two pages, within one week, to:

______________________________ at fax #: ________________________.

School Contact Information

School Name: _______________________ Contact Name: _____________________
School Phone #: ______________ fax#: _____________ email: _________________

Session Information

Title: _______________________________________________________________
Audience: ___________________________________________________________
Min / Max: _______ / _______ Date(s) / Time(s): __________________________

Learning Outcomes for your PD Session: ___________________________________

Site: ___________________________________________ Room: _______________

Requested Set-up: __ theatre __ classroom __ rounds __ Computer Lab __ Other

NOTE: Please send a map, address, and detailed directions to the workshop site. Please confirm participant numbers two weeks prior to a session. We will agree to confirm or cancel this session at that time based on the number of participants.
FNMI PD Checklist for School or Jurisdiction Contact (cont’d)

Audio Visual

Please ensure the following AV is provided:  
__ 1 flip chart and markers  __ TV and VCR  
__ CD Player  __ overhead and screen  __ LCD projector  __ Tape Player  
__ display for materials  __ Other ________________________________________

Will technical support be provided on site?  ___ Yes  ___ No

Advertising

Is this session open to your jurisdiction or community or specific to your school staff?  
Please explain.__________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Do you require a session write-up & presenter bio?  ___ yes  ___ no

If yes, when do you require these items?  ________________________________________________

Other

Who will be my contact on the session date?  (name, phone number, fax, email):  
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Notes:  ________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

I have read and agree to all terms. Where necessary, revisions have been indicated.

Signature of ARPDC FNMI Facilitator:  ______________________________________________________

Date checklist faxed to contact:  __________________________________________________________

CC. (select one)  ___ NRLC  ___ ERLC  ___ LN: ECRC  ___ CARC  ___ CRC  ___ SAPDC

NOTE: Required to complete ARPDC FNMI Facilitator Contractual Obligations
Learning and Gathering Phase

As soon as possible after the meeting, begin learning about your audience and topic, gathering your resources and planning your session.

1. **Learn about your audience.** Find out what you can about the participants and the community they live in. Use this knowledge to mold your workshop.

2. **Plan the content of the workshop.** Plan, in general terms, what content will be included in the workshop, including the outcomes that will be addressed.

3. **Collect and consult resources.** Decide what guests, articles, books and videos could be used in the workshop and that align with the themes.

4. **Learn about your Topic.** Take time to read current research and investigate the issues.

5. **Decide on what strategies to use.** Choose from the Strategies section or other resources.

6. **Plan your workshop outline.** Decide what activities and strategies you will use. Keep in mind the flow of the activities – ensure you are building towards your outcomes.

7. **Share the workshop outline with a colleague.** Ask the question: Will this workshop support the goals of the FNMI project?

---

**Facilitator Questions**

**Workshop Planning Considerations**

1. Given what you know about your planning conversation with the school community, what are some ideas, issues you want people to look at?

2. What are some patterns, trends, issues that are emerging for you as you plan the workshop and when participants are working in the workshop?

3. Given the opportunity to think through your plan, what are some specific actions you will take to ensure your success? The success (learning) of your participants?

---

**Helpful Hint**

Use the planning organizers on the following pages to help plan your workshop.
Planning Organizer #2: Learning about your Audience

People
Profession, cultural background, relevant experience/expertise: ____________________________

Name(s) of people: ___________________________________________________________

School
Name of school(s): __________________________  grades: _________________
Student population - number: ________________  Cultural makeup: ___________

Community
Name of community: ______________________________________________
Location: _______________________________________________________
Population - number: ________________  Cultural makeup: ______________

FNMI groups living in the area: _______________________________________

Local Aboriginal Organizations: _______________________________________

Barriers that impact FNMI students in the area: __________________________

Think about how this information will affect how you will manage your workshop, the content you will include and the activities you will do.
Reflection
Having read the above take time to reflect on this reading to determine how to use the Professional Development Activity Planning Template to structure your sessions. See page ??.

Goal: __________________________________________________________

Participant outcomes addressed: ______________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Activities
Activities to be used in the workshop:
Connecting or engaging: ___________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Processing or Activating: ___________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Transforming or Applying: ___________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Assessment:
Assessment Strategies: _______________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
## Planning Organizer #4: Gathering my Resources

### Resources:

**Books I need:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book 1</th>
<th>Book 2</th>
<th>Book 3</th>
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**Videos/DVDs I need:**

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<th>DVD 1</th>
<th>DVD 2</th>
<th>DVD 3</th>
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**Articles/Stories I need:**

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<th>Article 1</th>
<th>Article 2</th>
<th>Article 3</th>
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**Artifacts/manipulatives I need:**

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<th>Manipulative 1</th>
<th>Manipulative 2</th>
<th>Manipulative 3</th>
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**Posters/Artwork I need:**

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<th>Poster 1</th>
<th>Poster 2</th>
<th>Poster 3</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Will I need to contact others to get these resources? If so, who?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact 1</th>
<th>Contact 2</th>
<th>Contact 3</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Planning Organizer #5: Learning about my Topic

## My Topic:

________________________________________________________________________

## Theme(s) I will cover:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

## What I know:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

## What I need to find out:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Planning Organizer #6: Workshop Outline

My Topic: ________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Welcome and Introduction
Introduction of self: _______________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Introduction of participants: _____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Purpose of workshop: why we are here; clarification of outcomes: _________________
________________________________________________________________________

Engaging / Connecting with Your Audience
Connecting audience to their existing knowledge of the workshop topic: __________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Connecting audience to each other: building relationships and a safe learning community:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
 Processing / Activating
Teaching concepts and skills: ____________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
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___________________________________________________________________________

Dividing up the content: ______________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
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___________________________________________________________________________

Providing opportunities for participants to interact with the content - experiences to process information and reflect: ______________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Working in small groups and large group: ______________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
**Transforming / Applying**

Summarize the learning, clarify the learning, reflect on the learning against the outcomes:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Participants set goals and design action plans:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Closure:

Sharing learning, insights, goals, action plans:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

A final reflection:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Closing activity:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Final Preparations Phase

During this final phase the facilitator should:

1. **Review the workshop outline.** Make any final changes or revisions based on feedback from others.

2. **Create an agenda for the workshop.** See the tips below for creating an agenda and the sample agenda in the appendices.

3. **Create a workshop script.** The workshop script includes your notes of important ideas to bring up or examples and it to be used as a guide while facilitating the workshop. See the sample workshop script in the appendices.

4. **Create any presentation material you need.** These may include overheads, posters, handouts, graphic organizers, and examples.

5. **Review your resources.** Make sure you have everything you need (videos, books, artifacts, posters, articles) and confirm the date and time of any guest speakers).

6. **Go through your last minute checklist.** Make sure you and the facilities are ready to go.

**Tips for Creating an Agenda**

**When creating a workshop agenda, facilitators should:**

- Include an opening and closing prayer.
- Be realistic about how much material you can cover. It’s better to overestimate how long a task will take.
- Have a list of “emergency” activities to draw upon if you find you have extra time.
- Allow time at the beginning for participants to get comfortable in the room and time for introductions.
- Carefully consider the order of the activities so that there is a logical flow and they build towards an objective.
- Be creative! Add artwork and cartoons that suit your topic.

Try to follow your agenda as closely as possible, using a watch to keep things running on time. Be prepared to cut an activity if you are running long.

**Tips for Creating a Workshop Script**

**When creating a workshop script, include:**

- notes that will help you as you facilitate.
- cautions to remind you of possible problems or concerns.
- possible alternatives, in case your original idea is not working.
- examples to start participants on the right track.
Planning Organizer #7: Creating an Agenda

Title: _________________________________

Goal: ______________________________________________________________

Location: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Note: This organizer is for planning purposes only - type your final agenda in a separate document. Each workshop is unique and may have more or less than the number of activities listed below. Adjust to suit your needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity #1:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>Activity #2:</td>
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<td>Activity #3:</td>
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<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>Activity #4:</td>
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<td>Activity #5:</td>
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<td>Break</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Activity #6:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wrap up</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Closing Prayer</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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# Planning Organizer #8: Creating a Facilitator Script

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| **Opening Prayer** | Notes: |
| **Introductions** | Notes: |
| **Activity #1:** | Notes: |
| **Activity #2:** | Notes: |
| **Activity #3:** | Notes: |
| **Activity #4:** | Notes: |
| **Activity #5:** | Notes: |
| **Activity #6:** | Notes: |
| **Wrap up** | Notes: |
| **Closing Prayer** | Notes: |
Planning Organizer #9: Last Minute Checklist

Workshop: ____________________________________________________
Location: __________________________ Date: ___________________________
Name and role of Organizer: ___________________________________________
Phone #: _______________ Fax #: ______________ Email: _________________
Number of participants: __________________________________________

Equipment

___ Overhead projector (screen)
___ VCR and TV
___ Slide projector (screen)
___ LCD (screen)
___ Flip Charts
___ Black or white board
___ Other requirements:

Facility Checklist

___ Size of room
___ Windows?
___ Seating arrangement
   ___ classroom or lecture hall
   ___ open U or V
   ___ several small tables
___ 1 large round or square table
___ circle of chairs, no table
___ other arrangements:

Food

___ Times and arrangements

Preparation

___ Name tags
___ Agendas
___ Handouts
___ Pens and notepads
___ Extra overhead bulbs, extension cord
___ Charts
___ Overheads
___ Extra supplies: overhead pens, felt pens, masking tape, blank transparencies, plain paper, push pins

Last minute

___ Room arrangement OK?
___ Equipment in place, working?
___ Welcome sign posted?
___ Lighting?
Section 4: Workshops

Section Summary:
- Introduction
- Goal #1
- Goal #2
- Goal #3
- Goal #4

Introduction

Section 4 contains various activity ideas under different themes based on the four goals:

Goal #1  First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement is increased as measured by Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams.

Themes:
- Achievement Tests and FNMI Students
- Expanding Assessment and Evaluation for FNMI Students
- Classroom Tools and Strategies for Understanding
- Building Relationships to Improve Learning

Goal #2  The school has an environment that is respectful of and appreciates First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, history and worldview.

Themes:
- Appreciating FNMI Culture
- Fostering Respect and Avoiding Stereotypes
- Understanding FNMI Worldviews
- School as a Caring Community

Goal #3  Barriers preventing First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success are identified and removed by the school community.

Themes:
- Broadening Our Cultural Understanding
- Adding Aboriginal Content to the Classroom
- Creating a Supportive Community
- The Importance of FNMI Knowledge

Goal #4  Parents of FNMI students are involved in the school community and perceive the school as inviting and engaging to parents.

Themes:
- Involving FNMI Parents in the School Community
- FNMI Representation at all Levels of the School Community
- FNMI Recognition as an Integral Part of the School
- Helping your Child to be Successful in School
Activities

Facilitators can choose the activities that best fit the needs of their audience and mix and match from different themes, or even from different goals. For further explanation of an activity, refer to the “Strategies” section of this resource.

Graphic Organizers

The activity descriptions may refer to graphic organizers that participants can use during the workshop. These organizers help to solidify and organize people’s ideas and information collected. The graphic organizers can be found in the appendices.

Summary Sheets

These printable sheets contain summarized information from the resources and can be given as handouts or used as overheads / PowerPoint™ slides. The summary sheets help by:

- Reinforcing the key messages and facts contained in the material
- Giving visual reinforcement during discussion
- Keeping the group on topic and focused
- Giving the participants easy to digest excerpts that they can keep for future reference

Workshop Considerations

The tasks and activities included in a workshop should:

- Be varied to meet a variety of learning styles
- Build a safe and caring environment so teachers can explore their work openly and honestly
- Include humour, where appropriate
- Provide time for personal reflection
- Provide opportunities for participants to reflect and set goals for change
- Provide opportunities for participants to interact with the materials in multiple ways – e.g. discussions, representations of learning
- Provide time for participants to share their learning and what they plan to do with their learning.
Goal #1:
First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement is increased as measured by Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams

Themes for Goal #1:
1. Achievement Tests and FNMI Students
2. Expanding Assessment and Evaluation for FNMI Students
3. Classroom Tools and Strategies for Understanding
4. Building Relationships to Improve Learning

Sample Objectives:
Participants should:

- appreciate FNMI perspectives
- understand that there are many factors involved in the success of FNMI students
- understand the preferred learning styles of FNMI students
- understand the similarities and differences between FNMI students and others within their school community
- understand the key principles of assessment
- understand how to adapt assessment and evaluation for FNMI students
- understand that collaboration and school community relationships are key to the success of FNMI students
- appreciate and respect all cultures

Resource List:
Note: Most of the resources listed here are included in the tool kit.


Sample Activities

**Activity: Four Questions**

Divide the participants into groups of four. Each group member answers one of the four questions.

Questions ideas:
- “What do you hope to learn in this workshop?”
- “What is your favourite pastime?”
- “What does success mean to you?”
- “Why do you think FNMI students achieve lower scores on provincial achievement tests?”

Allow one minute for each answer. After all members have answered, switch the groups around and repeat the process.

**Activity: Brainstorming**

Allow the participants to read the quote from “Mental Health and the Academic Performance of First Nations and Majority-culture Children” silently, then read the quote aloud. Brainstorm ways that teachers, schools and communities can “nourish development” in FNMI students.

**Activity: Compare and Contrast**

Participants compare and contrast FNMI students in grade three with FNMI students in grade nine using a Venn diagram. The goal is to bring to light reasons why FNMI student performance might drop by grade nine.

**Activity: Focused Reading**

Participants are given the article “The Achievement Gap: Myths and Reality” and are asked to do a focused reading in which they mark the text with the three symbols (checkmark, exclamation point and question mark). The participants then discuss in groups the parts they marked with the three symbols and why they were marked.

**Activity: Motivate Me!**

Participants use role-playing to examine the impact of teacher, parent and community expectations on FNMI learner success. Participants take turns playing the teacher, parent or other authority figure and model poor and positive examples, such as:
- “Don’t be so hard on yourself - not everyone can expect to get good grades.”
- “C+ is a very good grade for you.”
- “Be realistic about your future – there are lots of jobs you can do without going to university.”
- “Nobody else in our family has gone to university, why should you?”
- “Grades aren’t important.”

Or

“I know you can do better than this. Do you need extra help?”
“You can do whatever you set your mind to.”
“You are just as smart as everyone else - show me what you can do!”

Discuss the impact of lower expectations on FNMI student achievement.

**Activity: Success Stories**

After reviewing the material from the article “Helping Children Succeed”, the participants split into groups and take turns summarizing what they learned (I Summarize, You Summarize).

Discuss lessons learned from these success stories.

**Activity: 5-3-1**

Participants work alone and jot down 5 words that come to mind when thinking about achievement tests and FNMI students. They then share their words with their table. As a table, choose 3 words. As a table, choose 1 word. Groups share the word with the other groups and explain why they chose the word.

**Activity: Action Plan**

Participants use the “Action Plan” graphic organizer to develop a plan for how they will use what they learned during the workshop in their classroom, school and/or community. Participants share their plans with the group.
“Born in and nurtured by the soil of home and community, Native children must inevitably extend their growing roots into the encroaching terrain of the majority culture.

A soil of challenge that is barren or unfriendly will choke growth.

One that nourishes development will help ensure that individual potential has the chance to flower.”


**Brainstorming**

“How can teachers help nourish the development of FNMI students?”
“How can schools help nourish the development of FNMI students?”
“How can communities help nourish the development of FNMI students?”

**Key messages:**

- Aboriginal students’ test results tend to drop as they get older.
- Aboriginal underachievement on these tests cannot be attributed to a single factor – it’s a complex problem with many factors.
- Attitude and environment are key factors that influence the success of Aboriginal students.
- Teachers and Administrators can influence the success of Aboriginal students on these tests.
**Misconception #1:** Aboriginal students have less academic potential, which is confirmed by lower scores on IQ tests.

This misconception was prevalent less than 40 years ago, but has been discredited by many studies. For example:

- **Bryde 1968**  
  Showed that South Dakota Sioux children outperformed their non-Aboriginal counterparts during the first three years of school. After grade three, grade point averages dropped to below non-Aboriginal students.

- **Beiser 1998**  
  A more recent study, it did not show a higher performance by Aboriginal students early on - Aboriginal students scored the same or slightly below non-Aboriginal students. However, it did show a similar drop in grades later on.

  Beiser states that IQ tests measure “the shaping of certain intellectual skills” rather than “inherent ability”.

  Therefore, even though Aboriginal students often score lower than non-Aboriginal students, this shows that Aboriginal students lack “school readiness”, not academic potential.

**Misconception #2:** Aboriginal students score poorly on standardized achievement tests because the tests are culturally biased.

The fact that Aboriginal students score lower than non-Aboriginal students on achievement tests is influenced by many factors beside differences in culture, for example:

**Factors That Play a Role in Student Success**  
From the Minority Student Achievement Network

- Racism
- Poverty
- Poor educational leadership
- School structures (size and grouping of buildings)
- Insufficient school and community support (tutoring and social activities)
- Inadequate early childhood literacy development
- Impersonal education environment
- Failure to establish a cultural context
- Low teacher expectations
- Lack of positive neighbourhood influences
- Negative peer pressure
- Instruction not aligned with student needs
- Assessments inadequate to fully capture students’ learning
- Summer setbacks
Facts about Aboriginal Student Achievement

In Alberta

According to provincial achievement testing, Aboriginal students perform:

- strongest in grade 3
- weakest in grade 9

High school graduation rate of Aboriginal students (1996):

- 15% less than non-Aboriginal students

Percent of students that complete university program:

Aboriginal students: 4%
Non-Aboriginal students: 14%

Aboriginal students upon entering the school system:

- English is often a second language
- Focus on cooperation rather than competitiveness
- Have less value for the written word (come from an oral culture)

Self Image and Confidence

Good self image and confidence in one’s abilities are important factors in being academically successful. Beiser’s study (1998) showed that Aboriginal and non-aboriginal students differed greatly when asked to rate their own abilities. Students were asked to rate themselves on such things as:

- People can depend on me.
- I am good at schoolwork.
- I can follow directions.
- I am just as smart as other kids my age.

Aboriginal students scored themselves significantly lower than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. The fact that FNMI students do not believe they can achieve academically undoubtedly interferes with them reaching their full potential.
Success Stories: #1 El Centro, California

Adapted from “The Achievement Gap: Myths and Reality”.

**The community:**
- Near Mexican border
- Traditionally lower-performing district
- Low income
- Unemployment rate of 34%
- Most residents spoke little or no English

**The “Inquiry Science” Approach**
- Innovative way to teach science
- Hands-on experimentation rather than passively observing
- Teachers serve as guides and collaborators
- Integrate reading, writing, math, technology and higher-order thinking skills

**The results:**
- Science test scores showed significant gains
- Dramatic improvement in mathematics and reading scores
- Scores in writing averaged around 90% on district writing exam
- Student interest and engagement improved because of active learning

Success Stories: #2 Twin Falls, Idaho

**The community:**
- More than 50% of students on lunch program
- Struggling with poverty, family instability, drug abuse and crime
- Scores well below the national average
- Mostly disadvantaged students with limited English proficiency

**The “Focus on Test Scores” Approach**
Involved:
- educating teachers, students and parents about standardized test design, content and structure
- teaching test-taking skills to students and parents within the context of the school curriculum, with a focus on improved student learning
- curriculum alignment
- test-taking practices
- peer, parent and community volunteer tutoring
- special attention for challenged and accelerated learners
- individual and group rewards
- constant monitoring of student performance

**The results:**
- after less than two months, test scores jumped an average of 18% across grade levels
- after a year, tests score jumped to 90% in three of the grades tested
Examples of Aboriginal Content Infusion


Muskowehiwan Band School, Saskatchewan - examples of Aboriginal Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Aboriginal Content Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Creating Star blankets, Tipi design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Instructing students in various types of pow-wow and round dance movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Teaching a comparative perspective of the government structures of the province and the reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Endangered animals, such as the eagle, and its significance to Aboriginal culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Indigenous food groups and traditional ways of healing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Elders tell stories and legends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Geometry of the circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Metawewinik Archeology Project:
- Students worked on several real archeological digs and participated in activities such as fire starting, flint knapping, petroglyph making, and traditional cooking
- Helps move the concept of history from abstract to concrete
- Involves Elders, who came to bless the site
- Develops cultural pride and a sense of identity

Father Gamache School:
- Use Native legends and concepts to teach Language Arts concepts
- Use First Nations plays and books to teach students how to create traditional artwork
- Be careful to distinguish between different Aboriginal groups (Cree, Dene, Métis, etc.)

Chief Mistawasis School:
- Interviewed local Elders about the history and culture of the reserve and legends
- Material was translated and edited to form social studies units for grades 1 to 9

Twin Lakes School:
- Offer a cultural camp to students from grades 1 - 12 every year
- Learn how to prepare traditional foods, hunt, fish with nets, trap and tell stories in the oral tradition
- Field trips and culturally relevant extracurricular activities are often effective means of supplementing course work and providing deeper insight into Aboriginal culture.
Sample Activities

**Activity: Introducing Your Neighbour**

Invite participants to pair up with the person to their left. If there is an odd number, create one trio. Explain that they will take turns telling each other their names, places of residence, places of birth and one thing they do in their spare time. They must listen carefully because they will introduce their partners to the group. Encourage people not to take notes and to use their listening and memory skills.

**Activity: Think of a Time ...**

Participants move to tables and are invited to “Think of a time” when they got a mark that they believed did not represent what they knew or how they had performed. Have participants think about how they felt. Participants then share their thoughts and feelings with a partner and later report out thoughts and feelings, which the facilitator records on chart paper.

**Activity: Final Word**

Working in groups of four, participants number themselves 1 through 4. Participants read the article “A Framework for Student Assessment” from the Alberta Assessment Consortium website. Participants highlight 2-4 passages that capture their attention:

- A new connection
- A question
- Affirmation
- Disagreement

Participants take turns reading their highlighted passages and responding, and then participants explain why they highlighted their chosen passages.

**Activity: Assessment File Cards**

Participants will share what assessment tools they currently use and why they use them by writing the information on file cards. Also included on the cards is the type of assessment the tool is used for and the learning style(s) it might match. Facilitator may choose to use the “Walk to Talk” conversation strategy to share the information.
### Activity: Write a Newsletter

Participants divide into table groups and each group writes a newsletter to the parents in their school explaining the purposes of assessment. Must be kept to 250 words. Allow about 20 minutes. Invite volunteers to read their letter to the group.

### Activity: Valid and Reliable?

After reviewing the material on summary sheets 1 and 2, have participants process the information using a Conversation Structure (e.g., “Reciprocal Teach”).

Participants consider how their experience with unfair assessment would have been different if their teacher had applied the concepts of ‘valid’ and ‘reliable’ to their practice.

Participants think about their own assessment tools and plans in their unit and consider whether or not their assessment plan is both valid and reliable.

### Activity: Revising Your Assessment Tools

Participants redesign the sample assessment tools brought to the session using the knowledge and information learned. Participants may choose to share their work with someone across the room.

### Activity: Stop, Start and Keep

Participants think about and jot down:

1 thing I will **stop** doing in my assessment practice
1 thing I will **start** doing in my assessment practice
1 think I will **keep** in my assessment practice

Invite volunteers to share their reflections.

### Activity: Reflection Poem

Taking 5 minutes at the end of the session, participants create a poem by writing:

- one thing you **LEARNED** today
- one thing that **HELPED** you learn today
- one thing the you **CONTRIBUTED** to the learning today
- one thing you feel you can **TRY**
- how you **FEEL**
Expanding Assessment and Evaluation for FNMI Students

**Purpose of workshop**
To increase the academic success of all students through the use of valid and reliable assessment practices

**Outcomes**
- To gain a deeper understanding of the purposes of assessment
- To explore a variety of assessment tools
- To design an assessment plan that is valid and reliable

The purposes of assessment are:
- To improve student learning
- To inform teacher practice
- To prepare students for adult life
- To report students’ progress to parents

Every learner is unique and therefore one size does not fit all. Assessment must reflect the uniqueness of learners.

Fair assessment needs be valid, reliable, and diverse, and attainable for all students in the classroom.

**Validity**
Is the appropriateness, adequacy and truthfulness of interpretations made from assessment information based on learner outcomes.

**Reliability**
Is the consistency of assessment results.
Assessment, evaluation, and communication of student achievement and growth are integral parts of schooling. Each part of the process should be a positive experience for students and promote growth. Practices should be carried out in such a way that they support continuous learning and development, and be congruent with the following principles:

1. Assessment, evaluation, and communication of student growth are based on the curriculum and are in line with the school's philosophy and programming principles.

2. Information about methods of assessment and results of evaluation is available to students, parents, and the community.

3. Student growth is assessed, evaluated, and communicated for all outcomes.

4. Evaluation and communication of student growth are ongoing and are used to plan effective programming.

5. Student growth is demonstrated through a variety of performances evaluated by the teacher.

6. Student growth is enhanced when students participate in the assessment, evaluation, and communication processes.

7. Student growth is enhanced when assessment, evaluation and communication are viewed positively by the student.

8. Methods of communicating student growth vary depending on audience and purpose.

9. Methods of assessment and evaluation of student growth are developmentally appropriate and vary depending on student learning patterns.
Benefits of Using Performance Assessment

Excerpt from “A Framework for Communicating Student Learning” from the Alberta Assessment Consortium website.

Performance assessment provides teachers with a tool that will help:

- identify a focus for instruction
- involve students in setting criteria, resulting in increased student motivation and understanding
- increase the level of consistency in evaluating student performance
- clarify what students know and can do
- generate specific and informative comments for students and parents
- identify outcomes to be reviewed or taught again (that is, highlight student strengths and weaknesses)

Performance assessment provides students with:

- an opportunity to increase their learning
- clear performance targets and the opportunity to achieve excellence
- an opportunity to be involved in setting the criteria
- an assessment that motivates and should have a real-world context
- an assessment that enables them to demonstrate what they know and can do
  - in more than one way
  - with more than one possible solution
- a way to reflect on their learning and set goals for improved performance

Performance assessment provides parents and the community with:

- information about what is important in a subject area
- a basis for working with students and the school to help improve performance
Changing views of learning, teaching, and assessing

The turmoil around assessment is not surprising. We are in the midst of an important shift in our thinking about learning and teaching. The traditional view of the learner as a passive recipient of information has given way to an emerging view of the learner as an active participant. This places new demands on teachers to:

- plan instructional activities that will engage learners who bring different kinds of background knowledge and experience to the learning situation
- design assessment strategies that will provide information about how learners are learning as well as information about what they have learned
- use assessment information to plan further learning activities that build on student strengths and meet their needs for further growth
Goal #1
Theme 3: Classroom Tools and Strategies for Understanding

Sample Activities

**Activity: Four Questions**
Participants take turns asking one another the following questions:

- “What do you hope to learn in this workshop?”
- “What is your favourite pastime?”
- “What do classroom tools and strategies mean to you?”
- “Do you have a story about an FNMI friend?”

**Activity: Sharing Circle**
Participants sit in a circle and take turns answering the question “What tools and strategies do you use in the classroom when teaching FNMI students?” The facilitator summarizes the sharing by emphasizing that a variety of classroom tools and strategies are required to attain understanding.

**Activity: Evaluating Classroom Resources**
Participants review various resources provided by the facilitator, deciding whether or not they are current, accurate and culturally viable using summary sheet 2. The participants then divide into groups and discuss guidelines for evaluating Internet resources and the issues particular to using Internet resources.

**Activity: Accessing FNMI Community Resources**
Participants brainstorm (can use the graphic organizer “Brainstorming Web”) different FNMI resources that can be found in their local community (e.g., Elders, social groups, artists, musicians, writers/poets, artefacts, field trips). Participants then divide into groups and discuss ways that these resources could be used to teach objectives in various subjects. The facilitator emphasizes the value of using local FNMI resources (reflect the cultural background of the community, promotes cultural identity, builds relationships).

**Activity: Professional Development**
Participants brainstorm topics that they would like to know more about and
training that would help them use appropriate tools and strategies for teaching FNMI students. For example:

- **Differentiated instructional strategies**
- **Preferred learning styles of FNMI students**

Participants then discuss ways that they could inform themselves on these topics (e.g., guest speakers, readings/research, workshops)

**Activity: Infusing the Curriculum**

Participants read pages 113 and 114 (Theme 4) of “In Their Own Voices” and discuss in groups what they have learned about the importance of infusing the curriculum with FNMI content.

The facilitator then presents several examples (from different subjects) from *Shared Learning* of integrating FNMI culture and knowledge into a curriculum. Participants discuss the examples and how they would use them in the classroom.

Participants then divide into groups and each group selects a curriculum outcome from various subjects and comes up with at least three different ways to use FNMI content when addressing the outcomes. Groups then share their ideas by reporting out as the facilitator records them on flip chart paper.

**Activity: Strategies for FNMI Students**

Participants review the strategies described on summary sheets 3 and 4 and discuss why these types of strategies work well with FNMI students, for example:

- **Talking Circles** - relate to FNMI oral traditions
- **Portfolios** - allow teachers to assess a wide variety of tasks
- **Services Learning** - hands on approach suits FNMI learners

**Activity: Here’s What, So What, Now What?**

Participants fill in the graphic organizer based on what they learned, why it’s important and what they can do with the information. Participants can work in partners or on their own.

**Activity: Action Plan**

Participants fill out the Action Plan graphic organizer and describe their goals and how they plan to achieve them based on what they learned in the workshop. The facilitator asks volunteers to share their action plans with the rest of the group.
**Classroom Tools and Strategies for Understanding**

**Identity**
- What makes us unique?
- How is learning connected with culture and language?
- How can we use and create tools and strategies that promote cultural identity?

**Research and Resources**
- How can we ensure that FNMI resources used in the classroom are relevant, appropriate and accurate?
- How can we use local expertise in the classroom?

**Curriculum**
- How can we incorporate Aboriginal perspectives in various subject areas? (e.g., Canadian history, government, art, stories, land management)

**Professional Development**
- What types of training and professional development (e.g., diversity training, best practices, FNMI learning styles) could help us develop and find appropriate classroom tools and strategies?
Students should be presented with accurate, objective information about FNMI culture, contributions and experiences over time. Use the following checklist when evaluating a potential resource and to help you decide whether a resource is appropriate or not.

### Aboriginal Resource Checklist

1. **Is the resource recognized by the Aboriginal community?**
   - **Yes**
   - **No**
   - **N/A**
   - Has the resource been validated by Aboriginal groups and/or Elders?
   - Has the resource been validated by Aboriginal authors and/or scholars?
   - Is the author qualified to deal with Aboriginal content?
   - Is the resource being used in other approved settings?

   **Comments:** _____________________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________________________

2. **Is the resource culturally authentic?**
   - **Yes**
   - **No**
   - **N/A**
   - Is the Aboriginal worldview accurately portrayed and/or interpreted?
   - Are Aboriginal values and beliefs accurately portrayed and/or interpreted?
   - Are Aboriginal traditions and customs accurately portrayed and/or interpreted?
   - Are cultural and societal roles accurately portrayed?
   - Is culturally diversity within the Aboriginal group recognized?
   - Is the way of life of Aboriginals in both the present and the past accurately portrayed?

   **Comments:** ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
### 3. Is the resource historically accurate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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</table>

- Are significant events of the past accurately portrayed?
- Is the process surrounding decisions, documents (treaties, etc.) accurately portrayed?
- Are Aboriginal contributions over time accurately portrayed?
- Has past contact with other cultures been accurately portrayed?
- Are historical events accurately linked with life today?
- Are dates and time periods accurate?

Comments:

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
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### 4. Is the resource balanced and objective?

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<th>Yes</th>
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</table>

- Is the resource free of stereotypical descriptions that present any person, group or culture in a less than objective manner?
- Does the resource refer to any person, group or culture in a solely positive or negative manner?
- Is there evidence of any bias for or against a particular person, group or culture?
- Are multiple points of view and/or interpretations included and given equal weight?

Comments:

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
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### 5. Is the language/terminology politically correct?

<table>
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<th>N/A</th>
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</table>

- Are all people, groups and cultures referred to or “named” respectfully or in a way that will not cause offence?
- Is the resource free of all derogatory terms for any culture or group?

Comments:

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
6. Are the graphics culturally accurate and/or politically correct?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are traditional structures, items of clothing and situations accurately portrayed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are people shown in attire that is appropriate for the situation portrayed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the graphics free of sacred items that should not be displayed for all to see?</td>
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Comments: 

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

7. Is the resource based on information from recognized sources?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the author(s) recognized as a qualified, objective source of information about all of the cultures, situations and/events covered in the resource?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there evidence that other contributors to the resource were carefully and objectively chosen?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all contributors recognized as qualified, objective sources of topically relevant information?</td>
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</table>

Comments: 

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

After you have completed the checklist, look back at the items you have marked “No”. Do they raise some concerns or problems with the resource?

If so, discuss the resource with colleagues or people from your local Aboriginal community and decide whether all or parts of the resource can be used in class.

Be aware that it is acceptable to use a resource to illustrate a point of view or opinion, as long as you use another resource that illustrates an opposing or alternative point of view.
The following excerpts are from the Health and Life Skills Guide to Implementation (K-9)

**Talking Circles**
Talking circles are useful when the topic under consideration has no right or wrong answer, or when people need to share feelings. The purpose of talking circles is not to reach a decision or consensus. Rather, it is to create a safe environment for students to share their points of view with others. This process helps students gain trust in their classmates. They come to believe that what they say will be heard and accepted without criticism. They may also gain an empathetic appreciation for other points of view.

Talking circles may initially require a facilitator to ensure guidelines are followed. People are free to react to the situation in any manner that falls within the following guidelines.

- All comments, negative or positive, should be addressed directly to the question or issue, not to comments that another participant has made.
- Only one person speaks at a time. Everyone else listens in a non-judgemental way to the speaker. Some groups find it useful to signify who has the floor. Going around the circle systematically is one way to achieve this. Passing an object, such as a feather, from speaker to speaker is another method.
- Silence is an acceptable response. No one should be pressured at any time to contribute. There must be no negative consequences, however subtle, for saying, “I pass.”
- At the same time, everyone must feel invited to participate. There should be some mechanism to ensure that a few vocal people don’t dominate the discussion. An atmosphere of patient and non-judgemental listening usually helps shy students speak out and louder ones moderate their participation. Going around the circle in a systematic way, inviting each student to participate by simply calling each name in turn can be an effective way to even out participation. It is often more effective to hold talking circles in small groups.
- Students should avoid comments that put down others or themselves, such as “I don’t think anyone will agree with me, but ...”. Words like “good” or “excellent” are also forms of judgement.

**Portfolios**
Portfolios are a chance for students to gather, organize and illustrate examples of their learning and accomplishments. It is the process of creating, collecting, reflecting on and selecting work samples that engages students in continuous reflection and self-assessment.

**Purposes**
Students may develop a portfolio for many purposes, including:
- documenting their activities and accomplishments over an extended period of time
- monitoring and adjusting their actions and plans
- communicating their learning with others
- expressing and celebrating their creative accomplishments
- providing a foundation by which to assess their personal growth and skill development, and to set future goals.

Portfolios develop students’ organizational skills and increase their sense of responsibility and ownership in their work. Students are encouraged to produce their best work, value their own progress and select products for their portfolio that represent what they are learning.
Benefits
Portfolio development can be a useful strategy because it allows teachers to see students’ thinking. It also gives students a format and motivation for completing assignments and is helpful in assessing and communicating student learning. Portfolios allow students a measure of autonomy and self-expression that can be highly motivating.

Service Learning
Service learning is a goal-setting and action process that positively affects others. All students can participate in service learning. Service learning provides benefits for everyone involved. For students, benefits include:
- strengthening academic knowledge and skills by applying them to real problems
- building positive relationships with a variety of people
- getting to know people from different backgrounds
- discovering new interests and abilities
- setting goals and working through steps to achieve them
- working cooperatively
- taking on leadership roles
- learning the value of helping and caring for others.

For teachers, benefits include:
- having meaningful, close involvement with students
- reaching students who have difficulty with standard curriculum
- establishing home/school/community partnerships
- helping the school become more visible in the community
- promoting school spirit and pride
- building collegiality with other school staff.

For the school and community, benefits include:
- increased connectedness between students, their schools and their communities
- improved school climate as students work together in positive ways
- more positive view of young people by the community, leading to stronger support for youth and schools
- greater awareness of community needs and concerns
- increased community mobilization to address key issues.

Sample service learning project

Goal: To make school a positive place for everyone.

Possible projects
- Create posters with positive messages on friendship, cooperation, cross-cultural understanding, school spirit and other topics.
- Start school-wide campaigns to eliminate put-downs. Make posters, organize noon-hour events and involve school staff.
- Begin campaigns using posters, buttons and bulletin boards to encourage students to strive toward higher academic achievement. Develop special awards for improvement. Organize mini-workshops and tutoring programs.
- Plan appreciation days for school staff.
- Plan appreciation days for school volunteers.
Research-Supported Instructional Strategies for Literacy

A fundamental question considered by all teachers is “What can I do so that my students learn effectively?” Teachers know that success in school programs raises students’ self-esteem, motivates further learning and creates personal, cultural and occupational opportunities.

While the following instructional suggestions emphasize the achievement of reading outcomes, all suggestions relate to other language arts as well. Tasks that focus on reading typically involve writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing outcomes. More importantly, best practice in reading instruction encourages students to employ these other language arts to improve reading comprehension. This section will consider how teachers should encourage students to read frequently, to employ reading strategies and to attend to textual detail.

1. Promoting Frequent Reading

Common sense suggests that students should read frequently to become skilful readers. Research clearly confirms the importance of frequent reading. The following instructional practices foster frequent reading:

- **Read Alouds** -- Read to students to model the joy and personal satisfaction known by readers. Talk about favourite texts and favourite parts of texts. Invite students to respond to your reading. Daily reading to all students is time well spent.
- **Reading For Enjoyment** -- Encourage students to read for pleasure. Allow class time for book talks, independent reading, and discussion about favourite books.
- **Read Alongs** -- Improve reading skills by encouraging students to follow the reading of a text by a competent reader. Involve parents or volunteers in reading to children with an emphasis on children following the text to connect the sight and sound of words. Consider book-on-tape as a valuable resource for students to follow the reading of a text.

All of these suggestions imply the importance of extensive library collections to appeal to a variety of tastes, interests and abilities. Remember that boys who resist stories and poems are often motivated by books containing information, favourite sports and practical “how to” information. Your library collection should include books with both male and female protagonists, books that connect directly to students’ familiar personal and cultural experiences. Books-on-tape and listening centres should feature prominently in the library collection.

2. Developing Reading Strategies

Current outcomes curricula include both skills and strategies in lists of learner expectations. It is of immense value for teachers and students to consider the connection between skills and strategies as well as to focus on personal control of reading strategies.

A practical instructional approach helps students learn about and select strategies they might use before, during and after reading a text. Students should consider:

1. **What strategies will I use before I read this text?**
2. **What strategies will I use as I read this text?**
3. What strategies will I use after I read this text?

The following chart presents student reading strategies frequently mentioned in professional literature along with related instructional strategies.

**Students’ Reading Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Reading:</th>
<th>During Reading:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Build or recall prior knowledge related to the text; use the title and</td>
<td>• Regularly make predictions and ask questions about as you read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illustration to think about useful prior knowledge.</td>
<td>• Chunk the text by looking for periods, question marks, exclamation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider your purpose for reading.</td>
<td>points, as well as paragraphs, or stanza breaks in poems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Predict what might be in the text.</td>
<td>• Visualize as you read. Run the movie in your mind. What do you see in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List questions that you have about the text.</td>
<td>each chunk of text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Link the text to personal experience. For example, if you are reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>about friendship, consider familiar experiences that connect to the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Check when something doesn’t make sense. Often you need to re-read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to confirm your understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Paraphrase. Explain the text in your own words.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After Reading:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Summarize what you have read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Answer questions that you identified before reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Decide whether your predictions were accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Check the text to confirm your interpretations. If you are answering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questions answer, then check the text, to improve your answer. This</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strategy is particularly important when you must answer multiple-choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questions in reading tests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher’s Instructional Strategies**

**Think Alouds:**
Model instructional strategies with a selected text. Tell students about your strategies before, during and after reading the text. You can complete think-alouds with students followed by students completing a think-aloud with a partner. Remember to emphasize that different readers use different strategies. It’s important that students use the strategies that work best for them on a given text.

**Prediction Activities:**
Chart students’ predictions and confirmations about a specific text with a form such as the following:
Reading and Writing Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Reading</th>
<th>After Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What I want I know about the topic:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I think I will learn about the topic:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I have learned about the topic:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Unfolding Method:
Have students cover a selected text with a piece of paper. Direct them to uncover ONLY the title and the illustrations.

1. Ask student to talk about background knowledge, make predictions and ask questions. Discuss why these strategies are helpful to readers.
2. Direct students to uncover the first chunk of text, preferably a complete sentence (often the first sentence of a poem or first paragraph in explanatory text.) Challenge students to use a selected strategy – visualizing; summarizing; questioning; predicting what follows. Again, remind students about the importance of these strategies in figuring out the meaning of text.
3. Lead the unfolding process chunk by chunk with special attention to the final chunk. For the final chunk, have students make a final prediction about the text. This instructional strategy affords you the opportunity to teach that the final chunk of text often emphasizes a main idea, presents a surprising twist, or presents a character’s or writer’s reaction. Attention to the final chunk is particularly helpful as students determine the meaning of the text.

Note: The method may be used as an oral exercise or a written exercise, i.e. students write on the paper than covers the text throughout the unfolding process.

3. Focusing on Textual Detail

Proficient readers are characterized by their attention to details in the text. They refuse to settle on an interpretation too quickly. Rather, they are more likely to use the following process:

1. Read the text.
2. Determine the meaning, possibly by answering questions.
3. Check the text to refine answers and/or interpretation. If the text does not fit the answer or interpretation, revision of interpretation is required.

The following instructional strategies emphasize close attention to textual detail:

Split Page Answering/Interpreting
Have students divide the note page in half. Following reading, direct students to note interpretations or to answer questions on the left side of the page. Then nudge students to check the text to refine answers or change answers on the right side of the note page. The
activity can also be used to emphasize speaking and listening outcomes. Following class discussion of a text, have students note changes and refinements to original interpretations on the right side of the page. The activity emphasizes how one's own interpretations are enriched by the interpretations of others.

**Sequencing Chunks of Text:**
Sequencing activities encourage attention to textual detail. Since sequencing activities involve the challenge of a game, they are often motivational to students. Cut up and scramble chunks of a brief text, possibly a short newspaper article or a short poem. Students then determine the correct order. Tactile learners particularly like to move the chunks of text as they consider possibilities.

**Graphic organizers:**
Particularly useful for visual learners, representational activities with graphic organizers encourage students to attend to textual detail. The annotated list of recommended resources that concludes this section will recommend titles that offer useful graphic organizers. Note that graphic organizers are often useful for writing tasks as well. Often students follow the sequence of discussion, reading discussion, and writing. Reading and discussion, guided by a graphic organizer build success in the writing task that concludes the instructional sequence. The following chart, an illustration of a graphic organizer can be used to encourage close reading of stories as well as pre-writing of stories or narratives.

**Somebody, Wanted, But, So, Then And It All Goes To Show That…….**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SOMEBODY</strong></th>
<th>Identify the central character (protagonist).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WANTED</strong></td>
<td>Identify where and when the story takes place and state the main character's goal--possibly something your character wishes for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BUT</strong></td>
<td>Identify the problem or challenge that the main character must deal with in the story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SO</strong></td>
<td>Indicate how the problem is resolved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THEN</strong></td>
<td>Note how the character reacted to the solution to the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND IT ALL GOES TO SHOW THAT…..</strong></td>
<td>Pay particular attention to the character's reactions and complete the &quot;And it all goes to show that...&quot; starter. This will help you interpret the story's theme.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4. Assessment Strategies**

While the assessment of reading typically focuses on reading skill, teachers wisely assess students' reading strategies as well as skill. By including reading strategies, teachers emphasize that know-how is critical for students to interpret increasingly complex texts.

The assessment of reading skill will correspond to reading outcomes that are central in a unit of work. Taxonomies such as Bloom's Taxonomy or Barrett’s Taxonomy remind teachers to include questions appropriate to the text. Literal or factual questions fit the informational content in texts. Inferential questions work when students must use background knowledge to interpret text or when they must synthesize different textual information to interpret meaning. Evaluative questions require judgment and challenge students to gather evidence to support their
judgments. For example, the evaluative question, “Is the title effective?” requires students to consider whether the title creates interest and whether it suits the contents that follow.

Teachers should also assess reading strategies. With an unfamiliar text, ask students to identify strategies employed before, during, and after reading. Ask students to comment on what they have learned about themselves as readers as well as their goals for future reading. As students become increasingly able to comment on personally effective reading strategies, their reading skills will also improve.

**Instructional Strategies for Writing and Other Language Arts**

Tasks that focus on writing often involve reading, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing outcomes. Indeed, best practice in writing instruction encourages students to employ these other language arts to write effectively.

1. **Writing to Learn as Well as to Communicate**

Research argues that frequent writing on its own is inadequate for skill development; frequent writing must be complemented with instruction in writing. Still, since students will not be skilful in activities that they do not practice, frequent writing is important to students.

One way to encourage frequent writing is to explore the question about why we write. Most students understand that people write to communicate. Fewer realize that people also write to learn, to explore and to understand. That is why teachers in several subjects include forms of journal writing in students’ programs. Such writing focuses on risk-taking and working through ideas rather than on correctness and conventional forms. Despite their exploratory purpose, journal entries are sometimes refined and polished to become final draft writing.

The following suggestions related to forms of journal writing:

- **Learning Logs**—Students write about their learning of a subject. Teachers prompt students to write about their current understandings, their uncertainties and their questions. Learning logs usefully include visual representations, goals and plans to complete specific tasks.

- **Personal Responses to Literature**—Personal responses to literature focus on connections between one’s life and a literary text as well as on one’s personal reading experience. Students comment on likes, dislikes, questions, predictions, and alternatives to choices made by the author. Personal response to literature often takes the form of a visual representation, perhaps a book cover or poster. It may also take the form of writing about experiences, situations, settings, conflicts and characters that connect the student’s life to the text.

- **Journals**—Pure journal writing programs allow total choice about what to write about. Learning logs and personal responses to literature are more connected to learning content. In journal writing, teachers encourage students to write about experiences of personal interest and significance. Teachers nudge students to consider the voice that is appropriate to the writing.

2. **“RAFTS” and Pre-Writing Strategies Appropriate to “RAFTS”**

Across grades and subjects, teachers help students focus on a writing task, discover ideas for
writing and develop their voice as writers by considering “RAFTS” variables. “RAFTS” is an acronym for Role, Audience, Format, Topic and Strong Verb. Strong Verb reminds students to be clear and in their purpose or purposes in any composition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R- ROLE.....From whose point of view am I writing?</td>
<td>self, character in a story, parent, friend, historical or political figure, author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- AUDIENCE.....To whom am I writing? What is my relationship to the audience?</td>
<td>self, friend, parent, author, politician, company, editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F- FORMAT.....What particular writing form is appropriate or assigned?</td>
<td>letter, story song, business letter, diary entry, eulogy, newspaper advertisement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T- TOPIC.....What am I writing about?</td>
<td>friendship, job application, favourite activities, junk food, rights and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S- STRONG VERB—What is my purpose or what are my purposes? What do I wish to achieve in my writing?</td>
<td>explain, condemn, describe, argue, deny, whine, thank, brag, commend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once students are certain about “RAFTS” variables, they can make focused choices of pre-writing strategies. Sometimes “RAFTS” variables are assigned in a writing task. Sometimes students get to choose.

When challenged to identify pre-writing strategies, students often mention brainstorming. While brainstorming is often helpful, the following pre-writing strategies may be even more helpful for writing formats identified below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Pre-writing Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>Use “Somebody, Wanted, But, So, Then, And it all goes to show that...” described in the Reading Strategies section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Encourage students to use direct observation. For example, instead of inviting students to recall a soccer game, ask them to observe a game with notepad in hand. Challenge students to assess their emotional responses and to note details that convey the emotion. In addition, challenge students to develop writing voice by noting unique details - details that may not be obvious to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanations or Expository Writing</td>
<td>Most students prefer a graphic organizer to an outline. Place “RAFTS” in the centre box. Identify three or four subtopics and organize specific information under each subtopic. This approach works well for computer searches of websites. Students note three or four specific questions about a topic and then search and make notes to find answers to these questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Drafting and Revision Strategies

In drafting, the writer's major focus is on keeping the flow going. The following suggestions apply when writers get stuck in drafting.

- Students may need to revisit their pre-writing work to change plans or to gather further information.
- Students often benefit from talking to someone about what they are trying to write.
- Students should place a checkmark above sentences that seem unclear and an “S” above spelling uncertainties. They should keep drafting and deal with these concerns when they revise.
- Students sometimes benefit from reading through everything that they have drafted to consider “What next” options.

Revision strategies should be guided by George Hillocks’ useful advice in *Research on Written Composition* (1986). In advocating instructional strategies that improve student writing, Hillocks emphasizes student revision with appropriate specific criteria:

“"As will be seen in the meta-analysis section of this review, students who have been actively involved in the use of criteria and/or questions to judge texts of their own or others, write compositions of significantly higher quality than those who have not." (p.24)

"As a group these studies conclude rather clearly that engaging young writers actively in the use of criteria, applied to their own and each others’ writing, results not only in more effective writing but in superior first drafts." (p. 160)

Before reading and assessing student writing, teachers wisely guide students to review for criteria such as:

- I changed this sentence to for clarity:
- I added the following detail to strengthen my writing:
- My introduction creates interest by:
- I employed the following transition techniques:
- Three precise and colourful words that I used are “___________”, “___________” and “___________”.
- An effective short sentence is:
- A sentence which begins with something other than the subject is:
- I checked on the following words for spelling correctness:
- I checked on the following matters of grammar/usage:

While students may use sheets with selected criteria to report on their revisions, some students prefer to use highlighters or post-it notes. With the highlighter approach, students note key criteria on a piece of paper and establish colour coding for each criterion. Students carefully use the highlighter to mark parts of the composition that illustrate success with the criterion. With the post-it note approach, students write one revision criterion on each post-it note. They place the post-it notes in the margin of the composition and draw a line in pencil from the post-it note to the part of the composition that indicates success with each criterion.
4. Assessment Strategies
In marking student writing, teachers wear two hats - the instructor's hat and the assessor's hat. In the assessor's role, teachers will probably employ a rubric or assessment tool that clearly specifies marking criteria. One reason that teachers sometimes develop rubrics with students is to help students understand assessment criteria. Another possibility involves challenging students to examine a rubric developed by someone else, to paraphrase what each criterion means and to suggest additions, deletions or modifications to the rubric. In their assessments, teachers should emphasize the same assessment criteria that students have used to revise their writing.

In the instructor's role, teachers celebrate student success in writing through displays and publication in school and other publications. In addition, teachers always respond to students writing with a positive comment and a simple suggestion for improvement. Research clearly argues that long epistles written by teachers have little benefit in improving student writing.
Goal #1
Theme 4: Building Relationships to Improve Learning

Sample Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Introducing your Neighbour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants divide into pairs and take turns exchanging information about their role in the school community and basic biographical information. Partners then introduce each other to the rest of the group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Sharing Circle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants sit in a sharing circle and take turns explaining how they think learning is enhanced through relationship building. The facilitator encourages the participants to share stories about relationships in their school community and how they have improved student learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Brainstorming</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants brainstorm the following questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What types of relationships are there in the school community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How are these relationships important to student learning?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The facilitator records the ideas of the participants and then works with the groups to draw conclusions based on the brainstorming.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Roles and Responsibilities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In table groups, participants review the information on the roles and responsibilities of the various members of the school community from summary sheet 1 and add to the list. The facilitator emphasizes the importance of each role and how the success of FNMI students is dependent on cooperation between these different roles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Reaching out to the Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic success for FNMI students in the provincial school system is the responsibility of the entire education community. Academic success for FNMI students will be more attainable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- through the increase of Aboriginal teachers, role models and leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- by using cooperative and diverse approaches to learning in the classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants divide into groups and each group is assigned one of the bullets listed above. Each group then creates a plan for achieving the goal described in the bullet (using the Action Plan graphic organizer). The groups then present their plans to the rest of the participants. The facilitator writes down key points and ideas from each group and leads a discussion once all groups have presented.

**Activity: Understanding Collaboration**

Participants do a focused reading of the article “Collaboration in Education: the Phenomenon and Process of Working Together” in which they mark the article with the three symbols (exclamation point, question mark and checkmark). Participants then discuss the article, in particular the passages that have been marked and why they were marked. The facilitator can use summary sheet 2 to lead a summary discussion in which participants apply what they have learned to how they would build relationships with FNMI peoples in their school community.

**Activity: Types of Community Involvement**

The facilitator reviews the continuum of Parent and Community Involvement and Partnerships (summary sheet 3) with participants. Participants then divide into groups and discuss what level of involvement they have in their own school community and then discuss ways that they could improve the relationships and community involvement.

**Activity: Reflections**

Participants write their:

- thoughts
- feelings
- awareness
- judgments
- insights
- questions

before and after the session.
## Building Relationships to Improve Learning

Adapted from “Building Communities of Hope”, *Community Schools Policy and Conceptual Framework*, Saskatchewan Education

### Roles and Responsibilities of the School Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Principal**      | - Has overall responsibility for the learning program as well as parent and community involvement, integrated services and community development  
                    - Encourages the representational participation of FNMI parents and community members  
                    - Identifies and develops leadership skills among parents and communities  
                    - Identifies and develops partnerships with community agencies and organizations, mobilizes resources and supports  
                    - Promotes the school and advises the larger community about its purposes, programs and successes                                                                                   |
| **Teachers**       | - Develop a knowledge of the community within which they are working and the educational needs of the FNMI students  
                    - Develop meaningful and challenging programs that respond to the needs and realities of students’ lives  
                    - Work cooperatively and collaboratively with other school community members to achieve excellence in the learning program and meet the needs of the students  
                    - Develop effective communications and liaison with parents and the home  
                    - Have a commitment to ongoing professional development in the areas of enhanced parent and community partnerships                                                                 |
| **Support Staff** (secretary, caretaker, librarian, counsellors, social workers, etc.) | - Are an active part of the support team for the FNMI students in the school  
                    - Develop a knowledge of the community within which they are working and of the educational needs of FNMI students                                          |
| **Students**       | - Take responsibility for their own learning and actively participate in the learning opportunities afforded by the education program and by access to the broad range of activities and supports  
                    - Provide peer support and assistance to other students                                                                                                                                |
| **Parents**        | - Provide the necessary nurturing and support their children need to participate effectively in school  
                    - Are actively involved in their children’s learning and participate in school programs and activities to the extent they are able                                                                 |
| **Board of Education** | - Develop and implement comprehensive employment and education equity policies  
                    - Develop a strategy for the selection, orientation, ongoing professional development and in-service training of staff                                                                 |
Understanding Collaboration


Collaboration ...

- is groups of people working together
- involves bringing people together for a common purpose
- involves some kind of transformation in the participants
- can be demanding
- is not simply dividing up the labour between different people in a group

Essential Characteristics of Collaboration:

1. Researchers and practitioners work together at all phases of the inquiry process.
2. The research effort focuses on “real word” as well as theoretical problems.
3. Mutual growth and respect occur among all practitioners.
4. Attention is given to both research and implementation issues from the beginning of the inquiry process.

The Three C’s of Collaboration:

Consultation:
- involves some kind of talk, the seeking or giving of information, or the sharing of expertise
- listening is essential

Collegiality:
- implies an equitable and friendly relationship among colleagues
- everyone’s knowledge and experience are valued
- “joint work” involving collective commitment of those who are working together
- “connected knowing” which grows out of relationships in which participants are reciprocally connected to one another
- cannot be forced

Cooperation:
- participants agree on common goals and work together to bring them to reality
- requires efforts to understand other people’s knowledge
- through understanding the knowledge each brings to the process, the goal can be achieved
### Continuum of Parent and Community Involvement and Partnerships

Adapted from “Building Communities of Hope”, *Community Schools Policy and Conceptual Framework*, Saskatchewan Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Basic Needs</th>
<th>Developing Openness/Two-way Communication</th>
<th>Supporting Learning at Home and in Community</th>
<th>Participating in Volunteer and Advisory Roles</th>
<th>Building Collaboration and Partnerships</th>
<th>Participating in Decision Making and Governance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>At home ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>At home ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>At home ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participating in Volunteer and Advisory Roles</strong></td>
<td><strong>Building Collaboration and Partnerships</strong></td>
<td><strong>Participating in Decision Making and Governance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safe, caring home environment</td>
<td>• Advise teacher of students’ likes and dislikes</td>
<td>• Interest in and encouragement for children’s learning</td>
<td>• Attending/assisting with school events</td>
<td>• Financial and “in kind” contributions</td>
<td>• Planning, problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adequate food, clothing, rest and shelter</td>
<td>• Attend meetings and events</td>
<td>• Creation of a study environment</td>
<td>• Fund raising</td>
<td>• Business partnerships and sponsorships</td>
<td>• Making decisions about budget, program adaptations, priorities, criteria for staff and/or staffing, school facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In School/Community ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>In School/Community ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>In School/Community ...</strong></td>
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<td><strong>In School/Community ...</strong></td>
<td><strong>In School/Community ...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nutrition programs</td>
<td>• Welcoming school environment</td>
<td>• Mentoring</td>
<td>• Mentoring</td>
<td>• Mentoring</td>
<td>• Mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clothing exchanges</td>
<td>• Parent, Student, teacher conferences</td>
<td>• Community development activities for safe, stable communities</td>
<td>• Community development activities for safe, stable communities</td>
<td>• Community development activities for safe, stable communities</td>
<td>• Community development activities for safe, stable communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Safe rooms</td>
<td>• School newsletters</td>
<td>• Leading 4-H, drama, photography, etc. clubs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parenting education</td>
<td>• Home visits</td>
<td>• Parent centres</td>
<td>• Parent centres</td>
<td>• Parent centres</td>
<td>• Parent centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community kitchens</td>
<td>• Surveys of parent opinion</td>
<td>• Providing advice on school issues/programs</td>
<td>• Providing advice on school issues/programs</td>
<td>• Providing advice on school issues/programs</td>
<td>• Providing advice on school issues/programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community use of facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Deciding on policy issues such as school code of conduct, student discipline, etc.</td>
<td>• Deciding on policy issues such as school code of conduct, student discipline, etc.</td>
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<td>• Deciding on policy issues such as school code of conduct, student discipline, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **At home ...**
  - Safe, caring home environment
  - Adequate food, clothing, rest and shelter
- **In School/Community ...**
  - Nutrition programs
  - Clothing exchanges
  - Safe rooms
  - Parenting education
  - Community kitchens
- **Meeting Basic Needs**
  - At home ...
  - In School/Community ...
  - In the School ...
- **Developing Openness/Two-way Communication**
  - At home ...
  - In School/Community ...
- **Supporting Learning at Home and in Community**
  - At home ...
  - In School/Community ...
  - In the School ...
- **Participating in Volunteer and Advisory Roles**
  - At home ...
  - In School/Community ...
  - In the School ...
- **Building Collaboration and Partnerships**
  - At home ...
  - In School/Community ...
  - In the School ...
- **Participating in Decision Making and Governance**
  - At home ...
  - In School/Community ...
  - In the School ...

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**FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource**
Goal #2: The school has an environment that is respectful of and appreciates First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, history and world-view.

Themes for Goal #2:

1. Appreciating the Value of FNMI Culture
2. Fostering Respect and Avoiding Stereotypes
3. Understanding a FNMI Worldview
4. School as a Caring Community

Sample Objectives:

Participants should:

- Appreciate FNMI traditions such as prayer circles, Elders, oral traditions, and protocol.
- Have a greater understanding of Aboriginal culture and factors in the school that impact the culture.
- Understand FNMI worldviews, beliefs and values
- Be able to recognize FNMI stereotypes
- Understand the importance of fostering respect and avoiding stereotypes in the classroom
- Be able to challenge their own preconceived notions and perceptions of FNMI culture
- Be able to measure their own growth over the course of the workshop
- Be able to create an action plan that shows how they will use their new knowledge and understanding of FNMI culture at school and in their community
- Be willing and ready to improve and build relationships in their school community

Resource List:

Note: Most of the resources listed here are included in the tool kit.


*Myself, Yourself*, (video) National Film Board of Canada

*Aboriginal Cultures and Perspectives: Making a Difference in the Classroom*, Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit and Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit, Regina: 1996.


Brendtro, Larry K., Martin Brokenleg and Steven Van Bockern, Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future, National Education Service, Bloomington, Indiana.


www.media–awareness.ca
## Goal #2
### Theme 5: Appreciating FNMI Culture

### Sample Activities

#### Activity: Like Me

Tell participants you are going to make an “I” statement, and if it is true they should stand or raise their hand. You may invite those standing and/or with hands up to look around the room and see who else has that same thing in common. Use statements such as:

- I am an elementary teacher.
- I am a person of Aboriginal descent.
- I have participated in an Aboriginal ceremony, despite not being Aboriginal.

#### Activity: Artifact Hunt

You may select and/or generate a starter set of artifacts before the workshop. Work in groups of 3-4 people, using chart paper and markers. Introduce the concept of anthropological inquiry as it applies to the topic. Invite small groups to discuss and record on chart paper artifacts in their school or community that might show to a visitor from another culture what is important to their school. Have small groups categorize their artifacts and label the categories on chart paper.

Each small group then selects an artifact that exemplifies important values within their culture and shares it with the larger group and explain how they relate to the topic.

*Example: a chalkboard/whiteboard - shows the value of written words and visual images. Relates to the topic in that Aboriginal culture does not value the written word in the same way, but does value visual images.*

#### Activity: Protocol and Respect

After the facilitator explains the importance of protocol in Aboriginal communities, participants divide into partners to talk about the concept of respect as it relates to protocol. Use an A/B “Alone/Together” format or other conversational format. Discuss the questions:

- **What does “respect” mean to me?**
- **How do protocols promote respect?**

Refer to “Protocols: A guide for Inter-Cultural Communication with Aboriginal People and Communities in Alberta”.

Activity: Oral Tradition and Learning to Listen

Participants divide into partners and take turns telling a short (3-5 minute) story on any topic. Without taking notes, the partner recounts the story back to his or her partner. As a group, the participants then discuss the relationship between oral traditions and developing listening skills - what can we learn about listening from Aboriginal culture?

Activity: Aboriginal Values

The facilitator reviews common Aboriginal values (summary sheet 1) and participants divide into groups. Each group is assigned a belief and is given five minutes to discuss how this belief offers valuable insight into the world around us and is a positive influence on a community. Each group then presents its thoughts and ideas to the other groups.

Activity: Focused Reading

The participants read pages 227 - 229 of “Open Hearts, Open Hands: Working with Native Youth in the Schools” and mark the text with the three symbols (checkmark, exclamation point and question mark). Participants then compare their responses and discuss.

Activity: Elders - Teachers, Advisors and Healers

The facilitator explains the importance of Elders to Aboriginal communities as the lifeblood of their culture. As a group, brainstorm different ways to incorporate Elders in the classroom and school community. Use the “Brainstorming Web” graphic organizer.

Activity: Action Plan

What do you want to be most aware of as you enhance a school environment that is respectful and appreciative of FNMI culture, history, and world-view? What are some steps a person might take to develop and enhance a school environment that is appreciative and respectful of FNMI culture, history and world-view? Is there a foundation in your school to build on?

Activity: 3-2-1

Participants write down and share:

- 3 things or important ideas that they want to remember
- 2 things they would like to know more about
- 1 idea that they will write about tonight
Aboriginal Values

Remember that FNMI students come from a culture that openly demonstrates the importance of ceremony, rituals, and traditions in their daily life. Respect for all life is a foundation of Aboriginal culture.

From the *Cree Language and Culture Guide to Implementation*, 2004

Laws of Nature

1. The natural world provides the gifts of life and place.
2. A people’s sense of place and identity is tied to the land and sea that has given the people life.
3. The natural world provides people with the necessities of life.
4. People must live in harmony with the laws of nature in order to be sustained by it.

Laws of Sacred Life

1. Each person is born sacred and complete.
2. Each person is given the gift of body with the choice to care for it and use it with respect.
3. Each person is given the capacity and the choice to learn to live in respectful relationships.
4. Each person is given strengths or talents to be discovered, nurtured, and shared for the benefit of all.

Laws of Mutual Support

1. People in groups of mutual support are strong. Alone, a person will not survive.
2. Identity comes from belonging in respectful relationships with others.
3. Agreement on rules enables cooperation and group strength.

Spirituality

“Everything in the universe has a spirit and is animate. The entire universe is alive with a constant dialogue or energy between all things that exist. For humans to live in balance with the universe, they must be aware of this dialogue and be careful not to insult or disrupt the spirits of animals, plants, wind or earth.”

An Elder is...

Someone who has been sought by their peers for spiritual and cultural leadership and who has knowledge of some aspect of tradition.

The keeper of wisdom, of ceremony, of the ancient songs that have been handed down from generation to generation.

A specific type of person who holds certain lifestyle and knowledge base.

Someone who has a gift of insight and understanding and is willing to share the knowledge that they possess.

Types of Elders

Community Elder: Practices cultural traditions, has cultural knowledge, has a physical presence through stories and demonstrations.

Elder Healer: Knows traditional medicines, conducts ceremonies, assists in conflict resolution through sweats, pow-wows and healing circles.

Elder Advisor: Shares cultural teachings, does spiritual counseling, does political advocacy through conferences and meetings.

Education

The education system used by traditional First Nations communities taught their culture's worldview and reflected it through example. Usually one relative took a child under his wing, sharing knowledge about the culture through storytelling. Traditional education did not involve abstract knowledge, but instead skills knowledge, and perspectives necessary for spiritual and social balance. The classroom was everyday life and students were aware of why something had to be learned. Lessons involved learning with laughter, exercise, family, spirituality, and active contribution to the community. The content of the lessons had been passed on from generation to generation. People would hear stories many times throughout their lives. Education was considered an ongoing process, and people were expected to continue learning throughout their lives.

Children often spent time with their aunts, grandparents, uncles. During tasks such as berry picking or curing fish, older generations shared stories with the younger ones. The stories would contain lessons in life or about the natural world or the importance of respect for the land. Traditional stories taught by offering examples of behaviour—sometimes positive and sometimes negative—but elders would not dictate or tell them what to do. Individuals were guided but they had to make their own decisions. Children learned practical skills through observation. Each child was seen as having a path given by the Creator to follow. It is not up to others, even parents, to change this path.

From the Cree Language and Culture Guide to Implementation, 2004
When hosting an Elder in your classroom, follow these guidelines:

1. Have an Aboriginal leader who works with the Elders assist you in approaching and making your request to an Elder. See “Requesting the Help of an Elder”.

2. Prepare the students for the visit from the Elder by reviewing good listening practices and manners (such as avoiding eye contact and not asking inappropriate questions). Explain the importance of the role of the Elder in your community and the value of his or her knowledge.

3. Invite the Elder to the school to meet informally with the students and staff before he or she visits the class so that the Elder can become familiar with and comfortable in the school environment.

4. While the Elder is visiting the class, remember to:
   - Ensure that the students listen politely and are helpful and welcoming to the Elder.
   - Have one of the students show the Elder around the class, the Elder’s sitting area and where to find the washroom.
   - Have breaks during which the Elder can relax in another room (if the visit is long).
   - Always supervise the students’ interaction with the Elder to ensure that he or she is treated with respect and courtesy.
   - Provide a light lunch or snack for the Elder, such as tea, bannock and jam.

5. At the end of the visit, thank the Elder formally with a handshake and have the students express their appreciation for the visit. Present the Elder with a gift such as a blanket, towel set, slippers, socks, etc. and encourage the students to present a class gift, such as a food basket containing preserves, cheese, crackers, fruit, bannock, and cans of soup.

## Sample Activities

### Activity: Introducing your Neighbour
Participants pair up with the person on their left and spend a few minutes getting to know one another. The partners then take turns introducing each other to the rest of the group.

### Activity: Sharing Circle
Participants sit in a sharing circle and take turns discussing what is meant by the term “respect”. Remember that sharing in a sharing circle is voluntary and nobody should be forced to speak.

### Activity: Brainstorming
Participants brainstorm examples of Aboriginal stereotypes that they have seen or encountered (e.g., *Pocahontas*). The facilitator records the ideas and examples on the white board or chart paper. This activity could also be completed individually before brainstorming as a group using the “Brainstorming Web” graphic organizer.

### Activity: Stereotyping
The participants divide into groups of four (see “Final Word”) and spend quiet time reading the section called “Societal Stereotyping” in *Aboriginal Cultures and Perspective: Making a Difference in the Classroom*. Each member of the group highlights a passage and then shares the passage with the others. The others respond and then the person who highlighted explains why he or she highlighted the passage.

### Activity: Myself, Yourself
Participants view a clip from the video *Myself, Yourself*, which describes the effects of stereotyping in the curriculum on First Nations and other peoples in Canada. After viewing, participants take turns writing important information from the video on the effects of stereotyping.

### Activity: Role Play
Participants work in groups to create short skits that illustrate one of the...
effects of stereotyping on Aboriginal students. The groups then present their skits to the other participants. Remember that some participants may not be comfortable acting in front of others, so think of alternative ways that they can participate (as director, sound effects, etc.).

**Activity: Ethnocentrism**

After reviewing the definition of ethnocentrism, participants create a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts Western and Aboriginal values and beliefs. As a group, participants discuss how to prevent an ethnocentric view in the classroom.

**Transforming**

**Activity: What can I do?**

Participants review some ideas for how to deal with stereotyping in the classroom and brainstorm to add to the list. They then create an action plan (see graphic organizer “Action Plan”) that describes what and how they will address stereotyping of Aboriginal people in the classroom or the community.

**Activity: What Were …**

Participants describe various personal elements before and after the workshop. For example:

**What were …**

- My thoughts
- My feelings
- My awareness
- My judgments
- My insights
- My questions

... before/after the workshop
Fostering Respect and Avoiding Stereotypes

**Ethnocentrism is ...**

... when you evaluate other races and cultures by criteria that are specific to your own race and culture.

**Values and Beliefs of Western and Aboriginal Cultures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Culture</th>
<th>Aboriginal Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of scheduling, clocks and watches, being on time</td>
<td>Importance of seasonal time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>Community-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors are marginalized</td>
<td>Seniors are central to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land is bought and sold (commodity)</td>
<td>Land cannot be owned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialism/consumerism</td>
<td>Saving and reusing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Similarities:**

- Value children as the future
- Value the beauty and grace of the natural world
- Most believe in a higher power
- Others?
Avoiding Stereotypes in the Classroom

As a teacher, what can I do to prevent stereotyping in the classroom?

1. Educate yourself by reading or watching videos on the subject.

2. Look for example of stereotyping in your community, for example, toys and games that portray First Nations people.

3. Pay attention to the representation of First Nations people in books and resources in your classroom.

4. Start your own collection of stereotyping.

5. When you encounter stereotypes with your class, use the examples to develop critical thinking skills. Educate your students about the problems associated with stereotyping, bias and ethnocentrism.

6. Make an effort to talk to Aboriginal leaders in and around your community. Ask them to visit the classroom to talk about their beliefs, customs and culture.

Adapted from Aboriginal Cultures and Perspectives: Making a difference in the Classroom, Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit, 1996.

Examples of Aboriginal Stereotypes

- Walt Disney’s Pocahontas, The Indian in the Cupboard, and Hiawatha
- Tonto from The Lone Ranger
- Many old “spaghetti westerns”
- Others?

Positive Aboriginal Role Models

- Graham Greene’s characters in Maverick and Dances with Wolves
- Tina Keeper’s character in North of 60
- Others?

“Should any major league team decide to name their professional team, regardless of the sport, after another ethnic group or culture, there would be a public outcry. Teams with names like the Montreal Haitians, Toronto Jews, Vancouver Sikhs or the Winnipeg WASPs would be rightly rejected out of hand. But Aboriginal people seem to be exempt from such consideration.”

Canadian Ojibway playwright, Drew Hayden Taylor.
For over a hundred years, Westerns and documentaries have shaped the public's perception of Native people. The wise elder (Little Big Man); the drunk (Tom Sawyer); the Indian princess (Pocahontas); the loyal sidekick (Tonto)—these images have become engrained in the consciousness of every North American.

Hollywood's versions of "how the West was won" relied totally on the presence of Native tribes, who were to be wiped out or reined in. "And, for the longest time," says Canadian Ojibway playwright Drew Hayden Taylor, "there wasn't a real 'Indian' to be seen on the movie sets: Native 'representation' was taken care of by Italians or Spaniards—anyone with dark enough skin to save on makeup."

As the portrayals of Native characters—either as primitive, violent and deceptive or else as passive and full of childlike obedience—extended to TV, novels and comics, they became familiar, comfortable signposts for much of Western civilization whenever it needed to acknowledge the Aboriginal presence. Since few people, especially in larger urban centres, actually came into contact with Indigenous populations, these portrayals, however inaccurate, had all the more impact. Though popular U.S. films rarely looked north of the border, these stereotypes etched themselves just as deeply into the Canadian psyche.

"We were well into the second half of the 20th century before it occurred to filmmakers that Native people were still around, and even leading interesting lives," says Taylor. "Groundbreaking films like Pow Wow Highway, Dance Me Outside and Smoke Signals provided fresh and contemporary—though still romanticized—portrayals of the Native community."

Film-maker Arthur Lamothe broke new ground in Québec from 1973 to 1983, with his 13 part documentary series La chronique du Nord-Est du Québec. The series, and Lamothe's subsequent work, puts First Nations people centre-stage and provides them with a venue to tell their own stories.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) made a real effort to improve the portrayals of Aboriginal people in its television dramas. Spirit Bay, The Beachcombers, North of 60 and The Rez used Native actors to portray their own people, living real lives and earning believable livelihoods in identifiable parts of the country. The Beachcombers and North of 60 drew substantial audiences among Natives and non-Natives alike.

Television in the United States has been slower to respond to criticism. Indigenous faces are still almost entirely absent from the small screen, except in the news or in documentaries. There have been a few efforts to change the situation, however. In the late 1990s, the American Indian Registry for the Performing Arts in Los Angeles published a directory of Native American performing arts professionals. And in 2001, after acknowledging that "Native Americans are virtually invisible on TV," CBS and NBC held talent showcases in major cities across North America to strengthen their databases of Aboriginal performers.
Sample Activities

Connect: Visual Synectics

Activity: Visual Synectics

Participants are shown various pictures related to FNMI worldview (e.g., traditional artwork, patterns) on an overhead and are asked to finish the sentence:

________________ is like _______________ because ...

The participants have three minutes to brainstorm around their tables and then one person from each table describes one of their ideas. Participants are then asked to finish the sentence:

________________ is not like _______________ because ...

The participants have three minutes to brainstorm and then one person from each table describes one of their ideas. The facilitator then summarizes the responses, linking to “FNMI Worldviews”. For samples of Aboriginal artwork, see [www.firstartcanada.com](http://www.firstartcanada.com) or [www.civilization.ca](http://www.civilization.ca) (ethnology collection).

Processing: Sharing Circle

Activity: Sharing Circle

Participants sit in a sharing circle and discuss “What does worldview mean to you?” The facilitator summarizes the key ideas that emerge during the sharing.

Activity: FNMI Youth Perspectives

Activity: FNMI Youth Perspectives

Participants divide into groups and volunteers read the stories “Live One Day with Me” and “Instead of Just Pumping Gas” from *The Seventh Generation* to the rest of the group. The participants then take turns and record their answers to the following questions:

What did you learn about FNMI worldviews from these stories?
What challenges do FNMI students face in schools today?
How do FNMI youths’ worldviews differ from non-FNMI youths?

The groups then share what they learned as the facilitator takes notes and emphasizes that life experiences impact human potential.
Activity: The Laws of Relationships

Participants divide into groups and create a short skit that illustrates one (or more) of the laws of relationships. Participants can use the Story/Skit Planner graphic organizer to plan their skit. Each group then presents its skit to the others. Once all groups have presented, the facilitator emphasizes some of the key ideas and highlights.

Activity: Oral Teaching

Participants divide into partners or groups and choose a curricular objective from any subject and take turns “teaching” the objective, using only oral communication, to the partner or rest of the group. Afterwards, the participants share their thoughts on the experience, for example:

- What challenges are there with oral teaching?
- What advantages are there with oral teaching?

The facilitator then summarizes what was learned from the exercise, emphasizing respect for oral tradition.

Activity: FNMI Values and Beliefs

Participants divide into groups and review the values and beliefs described on summary sheet 2 and discuss:

- Ideas that are new to them.
- Examples from their own experience that illustrate these values and beliefs.
- Other FNMI beliefs and values found in their own community.

Participants can also discuss what difficulties they would have if they were immersed in the FNMI culture of their community.

Activity: Valuing All Perspectives

The facilitator presents the diagram on summary sheet 3 and discusses the FNMI community approach as compared to the individualism of European-Canadian society. In FNMI culture, all perspectives have value – this is based on the belief of the interdependence of all things. Participants then discuss the importance of listening to and valuing different perspectives.

Activity: Circle, Triangle, Square

Participants reflect on the following and the facilitator writes their thoughts on a picture of a circle, triangle and square:

- What learning will stay with you?
- What stood out for you in this workshop?
- What learning affirmed what you already knew?
Understanding FNMI Worldviews

Worldview

People from different cultures have different ways of seeing, explaining and living within the world. A culture’s worldview is influenced by its values, beliefs and behaviours.

Values: What things are important?
Beliefs: How does the world work? What is your role in the world?
Behaviours: What behaviours are desirable? What behaviours are unacceptable?

All things are connected like the blood that unites us. We did not weave the web of life. We are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.

Chief Seattle, Suquamish Nation, 1854

The Importance of Oral Tradition

Oral tradition is fundamental to FNMI cultures. Transmission of information in an oral culture is a social process that reinforces relationships – those between young and old, those between ancestors and the living, and those between the living and future generations.

Laws of Relationships
From the Cree Language and Culture Guide to Implementation, 2004

Balance and harmonious relationships are key to FNMI worldviews.

Laws of Nature

1. The natural world provides the gifts of life and place.
2. A people’s sense of place and identity is tied to the land and sea that has given the people life.
3. The natural world provides people with the necessities of life.
4. People must live in harmony with the laws of nature in order to be sustained by it.

Laws of Sacred Life

1. Each person is born sacred and complete.
2. Each person is given the gift of body with the choice to care for it and use it with respect.
3. Each person is given the capacity and the choice to learn to live in respectful relationships.
4. Each person is given strengths or talents to be discovered, nurtured, and shared for the benefit of all.

Laws of Mutual Support

1. People in groups of mutual support are strong. Alone, a person will not survive.
2. Identity comes from belonging in respectful relationships with others.
3. Agreement on rules enables cooperation and group strength.
Theme 7, Summary Sheet 2

FNMI Values and Beliefs

Adapted from Teaching the Native American by Hap Gilliland

Note: FNMI values and beliefs vary from tribe to tribe and community to community.

A People-centred, Group-centred Society
- Life and thought are centred around people, not things
- There is great loyalty to close friends and respect for one another as people
- People are respected for their contributions to the group rather than individual accomplishments
- Expect that education should make students more able to contribute to the group
- Close trust and reliance on others is important

Cooperation and Sharing
- Generosity (with things, time and effort), sharing and helpfulness are considered the most important character traits
- People should be willing to share rather than work to get ahead or save for the future
- Helping the community is motivation for education

Respect for People, Especially the Elderly
- Respect for people and their feelings is very important in FNMI societies
- Personal relationships are based on mutual respect
- Are careful not to be disrespectful toward others
- Seniors are given great respect because wisdom comes with age

Courtesy, Privacy and Autonomy
- Are taught not to interfere in other people’s affairs or their rights as individuals
- Believe people are not meant to be controlled
- Almost never give advice unless asked
- All opinions should be valued

The Extended Family
- Kinship is identified with even the most remote family tie – all clan members are considered family
- Aunts and uncles are often considered parents
- Grandparents are often very involved in the raising of their grandchildren

Silence and Concise Expression
- May not be comfortable or used to expressing their own opinions
- Are not used to long discussions or explanations – prefer concise, short explanations
- Silence is never “uncomfortable” and companionship does not require conversation

Nonverbal Communication and Eye Contact
- Nonverbal communication is often used to control the back and forth of conversation
- Includes head nods, gesticulations, gaze, proximity, voice pitch, loudness, utterance length, and turn-taking pause duration
- Turn-taking pauses, tone of voice and eye contact differences between FNMI people and Anglo-Canadians often causes misunderstandings
Time for Thought
- Talk less than Anglo-Canadians and also pause for a longer time between speakers during a conversation (1 to 4 minutes is normal)
- This pause shows that you have thought about what the other person has said before responding
- Even if you have an answer right away, you wait before responding

Lack of Pressure from Time
- Many FNMI people believe that life should be easy going – European-Canadians say “Time flies”, Mexicans say “Time walks” and FNMI people say “Time is with us”.
- Many FNMI languages have no word for time
- Believe things should be done when the need arises, not at a particular time

Valuing Leisure
- For many FNMI cultures there is no distinct line between work and play - they both will bring happiness if in harmony with nature
- Traditionally, FNMI cultures only took from nature what they needed and did not work to gather more than they could use, so there was more leisure time
- They do not feel guilty, as European cultures do, about doing “nothing”

Sense of Humour
- FNMI people have always had a deep sense of humour related to life and inner feelings
- The humour of a culture is often the last thing that is understood

Harmony with Nature and the Environment
- FNMI people have a deep understanding of ecology because their existence depended on it
- Are not masters of their environment - do not conquer land and are not concerned with storing, saving, controlling and changing the land
- Chief Seattle said: “Whatever happens to the earth, happens to the children of the earth. The earth does not belong to us, we belong to the earth.”

Spirituality and Health
- Value spirituality, emotions and feelings as much as logic, science and reason
- See the world around them as spiritual
- Harmony with nature and spirituality are necessary to good health
- Spiritual beliefs can vary from tribe to tribe

Respect for Ceremonies
- Dances, pow-pows and sweat lodges are very important to many FNMI people
- Many ceremonies are sacred and should be respected in the same way as other religious events or holidays

Honesty
- Telling the truth and keeping one’s word is one of the most important human characteristics

Bravery, Independence and Emotional Control
- Bravery is a highly honoured trait
- Is often considered inappropriate to express strong feelings in public
Looking at Perspectives

For every action or issue there are many different perspectives. All perspectives should be valued equally, even those of children.

Listening to the perspectives of others helps you understand that your actions can affect other people. Instead of only considering your own feelings, you should try considering those of others around you.

Issue: A man wants to cut down a tree that is between his yard and his neighbour’s.

The tree drops berries every fall on my car, which is ruining the paint. Also, the shade from the tree makes it impossible to grow anything on that side of the yard.

I love to watch the birds that eat the berries on that tree throughout the fall and winter.

I climb that tree and can see all the way down the block. My friends and I play games in that tree.

I sit in the shade of that tree during the summer and read. There’s no other shade in the yard.

That tree turns bright orange and then red in the fall. It’s the only tree on the block that turns red - it’s beautiful!

That tree is a gift of nature and should be appreciated for its beauty and grace.

I remember when that tree was planted. The previous owner planted it when his son passed away. It has grown so big and strong.

There’s a family of squirrels that live in that tree - I’ve watched them over the years.
### Sample Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecting</th>
<th>Activity: Introducing your Neighbour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants divide into partners and take a few minutes to learn about each other (e.g., name, the significance of your name, family, birth place, relationships). Each partner then introduces the other to the rest of the participants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Brainstorming</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants brainstorm and the facilitator records their thoughts on:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What is meant by “relationship”?**

**What are three characteristics of good relationships?**

The brainstorming can be done individually on a post-it note, then with a base partner, then double pair share and posted on the wall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Demonstrating a Characteristic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants, working with partners, choose one of the characteristics and act out/demonstrate the characteristic to the group without divulging its name. The rest of the group then identifies the characteristic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processing</th>
<th>Activity: Video Clip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants view short clips from the movie <em>Shrek</em> that demonstrate the establishment of a relationship and a change in a relationship and discuss the following questions:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What caused Shrek to change?**

**How does Donkey caring affect the relationship?**

**How do relationships change?**

The facilitator then emphasizes the importance of relationships and how they change and develop.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Exploring Relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants divide into groups and provide the following information:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Name three kinds of relationships that exist within a family.**
Name three kinds of relationships that exist within a school.

The groups then answer the following question:

**Do the listed relationships extend into the greater community and back again? Why/ Why not?**

Each group then shares its answer with the rest and the facilitator records key ideas and messages.

**Activity: Destructive Relationships**

Participants do a focused reading of “Destructive Relationships” from *Reclaiming Youth at Risk*. In groups, they discuss passages that they marked with the three symbols (checkmark, question mark and exclamation point) and why they marked them. Speakers for each group then share highlights with the rest of the participants, and the facilitator records.

**Activity: Responsibility and Relationships**

The facilitator reads aloud the story on summary sheet 2 and then participants divide into groups and discuss the following question:

**What kinds of responsibilities do people or groups of people in a relationship share?**

Each group is then asked to choose a relationship in their school community (e.g., teacher/student, parent/teacher, administration/parents, teacher/community, student/community) and create and fill in a chart like the one below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person/group #1</th>
<th>Person/group #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each group then shares its chart with the others.

**Activity: Action Plan**

The facilitator writes several of the key messages covered during the workshop on the board, for example:

- **Students succeed when they experience positive relationships.**
- **Positive relationships require responsibility from both sides.**
- **Responsible relationships provide a safe environment that allows change and growth for all.**

Each participant then chooses one of the key messages and writes an action plan (using the graphic organizer) that describe how this knowledge will change what they do, how they act and how they feel.
School as a Caring Community

Purpose of this workshop:
To create an environment of belonging for all participants that will be extended into the school community.

For school to be a caring community, it must:

- Be safe and secure for all
- Provide a sense of belonging for all
- Be a place in which all are valued and respected for who they are

Note: Research shows that when a student feels some adult in the school cares about them, they are less likely to drop out of school.

Empathy is ...

- a key skill in building a caring school community.
- a skill, therefore it can be taught, learned, practiced.
- not the same as sympathy.

Relationships ...

- are inter-connected
- require responsibility
- are value-based and require trust, honesty, integrity

Family Relationships:

- Have similarities: care and responsibility
- Have differences: generational, parenting style
- Include, for example:
  - spouse to spouse, support and friend
  - parent to child, teacher, care-giver
  - sibling to sibling, guide and friend
  - Grandparent-child, teacher, guide, care-giver, Elder
  - auntie-child, care-giver, support
  - Older child-child, guide, support, care-giver

School Relationships:

- Include, for example:
  - Teacher/student (class-school-central administration-community)
  - Family (school-community)
  - Community (school-student)

Note: Elders maybe involved at all levels of the relationships.
Awi Usdi, the Little Deer

From *Keepers of the Earth: Native Stories and Environmental Activities for Children*, by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac

(Cherokee)

Back when the world was young, the humans and the animal people could speak to each other. At first they lived in peace. The humans hunted the animals only when they needed food or skins to make clothing. Then the humans discovered the bow and arrow. With this new weapon they could kill many animals quickly and with great ease. They began to kill animals when they did not need them for food or clothing. It seemed as if all the animals in the world would soon be exterminated. So the various animals met in council.

When the bears came together and talked about what the humans were doing, they decided they would have to fight back. "How can we do that?" said one of the bear warriors. "The humans will shoot us with their arrows before we come close to them."

Old Bear, their chief, agreed. "That is true. We must learn how to use the same weapons they use."

Then the bears made a very strong bow and fashioned arrows for it. But whenever they tried to use the bow, their long claws got in the way. "I will cut off my claws," said one of the bear warriors. He did so and then he was able to use the bow and arrow. His aim was good and he hit the mark every time.

"That is good," said Old Bear. "Now can you climb this tree?"

The bear without claws tried to climb the tree, but he failed.

Old Bear shook his head. "This will not do. Without our claws we cannot climb trees. Without our claws we will not be able to hunt or dig for food. We must give up this idea of using the same weapons the humans use."

So the bears gave up their idea of fighting back against the humans with weapons. One by one each of the animal groups met. One by one they came to no conclusion. It seemed there was no way to fight back. But the last group to meet was the deer.

Awi Usdi, Little Deer, was their leader. When all were gathered together, he spoke. I "I see what we must do," he said. "We cannot stop the humans from hunting animals. That is the way it was meant to be. However, the humans are not doing things in the right way. If they do not respect us and hunt us only when there is real need, they may kill us all. I shall go now and tell the hunters what they must do. Whenever they wish to kill a deer, they must prepare in a ceremonial way. They must ask me for permission to kill one of us. Then, after they kill a deer, they must show respect to its spirit and ask for pardon. If the hunters do not do this, then I shall track them down. With my magic I will make their limbs crippled. Then they will no longer be able to walk or shoot a bow and arrow."

Then Awi Usdi, Little Deer, did as he said: He went at night and whispered into the ears of the hunters, telling them what they must do. The next morning, when they awoke, some of the hunters thought they had been dreaming and they were not sure that the dream was a true one. Others, though, realized that Little Deer, Awi Usdi, had truly spoken to them. They tried to do as he told them. They hunted for the deer and other animals only when they needed food and clothing. They remembered to prepare in a ceremonial way, to ask permission before killing an animal and to ask pardon when an animal was killed. Some of the hunters, though, paid no attention. They continued to kill animals for no reason. But Awi Usdi, Little Deer, came to them and, using his magic, crippled them with rheumatism. Before long, all of the hunters began to treat the animals with respect and to follow Little Deer's teachings.
Goal #3:
Barriers preventing First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success are identified, and removed by the school community.

Themes for Goal #3:

9. Broadening Our Cultural Understanding
10. Adding Aboriginal Content to the Classroom
11. Creating a Supportive Community
12. The Importance of FNMI Knowledge

Sample Objectives:

Participants should:

• understand the barriers that impede FNMI learner success
• explain in their own words how the barriers impede FNMI learning
• explore their responsibility in creating and tearing down barriers to Aboriginal students
• understand Aboriginal values and behaviours and how to accommodate them in the classroom
• empathize with Aboriginal students who must learn in a culturally foreign environment
• set measurable goals for using what they have learned in the classroom or community
• appreciate the value of FNMI culture and knowledge

Resource List:
Note: Most of the resources listed here are included in the tool kit.


Pictures of artwork such as The Storyteller by Dale Stonechild, The Trickster by Leah Fontaine, Birth of the Earth by Arnold Jacobs, and Re-creating Turtle Island by Lloyd Pinay.


FNMI Elders, parents and community leaders


Sample Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecting</th>
<th>Activity: Sharing Circle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants sit in a sharing circle and share stories about times they have learned about other cultures, for example by attending cultural events, dances, dinners, through movies and literature.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Four Questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants connect with one another by splitting into pairs and taking turns asking and answering questions such as the following.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “What brought you to this workshop?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “How do you think culture can affect our learning?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “What is your favorite pastime?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “What does culture mean to you?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processing</th>
<th>Activity: The Secret Language Game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants divide into two groups—one large and one small. The small group is asked to leave the room and wait in the hall until called. The large group then devises a “secret language”, for example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• when the facilitator points to the board, they all stand up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• when the facilitator asks if they agree, they all chant “Yes, that sounds right to me!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• When the facilitator asks one of the participants (from the large group) a question, he or she answers it while walking in a circle waving his or her arms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The small group is asked back into the room and the game is played. After five minutes or so, they stop and reveal the secret language. The participants then discuss how the game made them feel from both sides:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• As someone who is asked to do things that seem odd so that they fit in with the group (large group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• As someone who feels that everyone else is speaking another language (small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The facilitator then relates this activity back to the topic of the importance of speaking the same cultural language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity: FNMI Values and Behaviours

Participants divide into groups of four and review the material on FNMI values and behaviours (summary sheet 1). They then discuss examples of these behaviours that they have witnessed and how they reacted to them. Also discuss the question:

*How does understanding someone’s cultural background help you understand what they say and do and how they interpret what is said to them?*

Activity: KWL Chart

Participants fill out (in small groups) what they know about the “Effects of Colonization on Aboriginal Students”. Participants then ask themselves what they would like to find out about the topic (i.e., questions they have). Participants then scan the article “Enabling the Autumn Seed: Toward a Decolonized Approach to Aboriginal Knowledge, Language and Education” and note what they learned. Facilitator could assign different sections of the article to different groups.

Groups then discuss how what they have learned has changed the way they feel about Aboriginal People (the facilitator encourages feelings of empathy and understanding).

Activity: Culture through Art

Participants are invited to get up and look at pictures of artwork such as The Storyteller by Dale Stonechild, The Trickster by Leah Fontaine, Birth of the Earth by Arnold Jacobs, and Re-creating Turtle Island by Lloyd Pinay. Participants are encouraged to share their impressions of what these works of art have to say about the culture of Aboriginal people.

Transforming

Activity: Here’s What, So What, Now What?

Participants record their learning during the workshop (new ideas, specific insights), their interpretation of their learning, and develop an action plan based on the two sections.

Activity: 5-minute Reflection Poem

The participants:

- Write one thing they LEARNED today
- Write one thing that HELPED them learn today
- Write one thing the they CONTRIBUTED to the learning today
- Write one thing they feel they can TRY
- Write how they FEEL
## Broadening our Cultural Understanding

**Note:** The following points are a generalization and may vary from community to community.

### FNMI Values and Behaviours
Adapted from “The Native American Learner and Bicultural Science Education” by Gregory Cajete

#### Personal differences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Respect the unique individual differences among people</td>
<td>• Return these courtesies as an expression of mutual respect. Discuss these values with the class when encouraging respectful interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stay out of others’ affairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Verbalize personal thoughts of opinions only when asked</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Quietness or Silence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• When angry or uncomfortable, often remain silent (especially in social situations)</td>
<td>• Do not perceive quietness or silence as indifference. Use other cues, what you know about the student and ask the student how they feel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Patience:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Virtue of patience is based on the belief that things unfold over time</td>
<td>• Avoid pressuring Aboriginal students to make quick decisions or responses. Allow them adequate time to process the information and give a thoughtful answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is needed to demonstrate respect, reach group consensus and allow time for “second thought”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Open Work Ethic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Believe work should be directed towards a distinct purpose and is done when it needs to be done</td>
<td>• Busy work should be avoided, as it goes against this concept and school work should be shown to have an immediate and authentic purpose. For example, have students complete projects that will benefit/involve their own community (e.g., recycling campaign).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Only that which is actually needed is accumulated through work (this supports a non-materialistic view)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Mutualism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Promotes a sense of belonging and solidarity with group members working towards security and consensus</td>
<td>• Incorporate cooperative activities on an equal footing as competitive activities. For example, the school could emphasize that all those that try out for a team are able to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goes against the competitive, grade-oriented North American school environment (e.g., promoting individual success and achievement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Nonverbal Orientation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Tend to prefer listening to speaking - rarely “talk for talking’s sake”</td>
<td>- Avoid pressing a class discussion or rapid questions - use the inquiry approach, role playing or simulation to assess whether they understand a concept. For example, have students reenact historic events or key scenes from literature studied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Talk, just as work, must have a purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Emphasis on affective rather than verbal communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Seeing and Listening:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Storytelling, oratory and experiential and observational learning are highly developed in Aboriginal culture</td>
<td>- Balance teaching methods that emphasize speaking with those that emphasize listening and observation. For example, have students watch a video or guest speaker and recount what they learned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Time Orientation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Believe things happen when they are ready to happen</td>
<td>- Allow for flexible scheduling within practical limits. For example, allow for flexibility in deadlines or allow students to create their own deadlines, when feasible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Time is relatively flexible and generally not structured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Orientation to Present:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Generally orient themselves in the present and the immediate tasks at hand</td>
<td>- Learning material should have a sense of immediate relevancy. For example, relate material covered to current events in the local news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Emphasis on “being” rather than “becoming”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Present needs and advantages tend to take precedence over possible future rewards—although this has changed over the past 40 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Practicality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Tend to be very practical-minded</td>
<td>- Learning and teaching should begin with various concrete examples, followed by discussion of the abstract. For example, lead the students on a field trip to observe plant life before discussing photosynthesis, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Respond well to material that are concrete or experiential rather than abstract and theoretical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Holistic orientation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI values and behaviours</th>
<th>Positive teacher response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Look at the world as a whole</td>
<td>- Relate details back to the bigger picture, how it fits into the system of the world and present material from a holistic perspective. For example, look at how historic events affected the individuals involved, as well as the community, province and country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"It is so important to actually have some knowledge of First Nations students. And I don’t mean just kind of a glib knowledge... Every opportunity I get, Indian students are teaching me things and this is wonderful. I just feel richer and richer for it.”

Teacher of Aboriginal students from University of Regina
Form “Strategies for Facilitating Success of First Nations Students” Mary Hampton and Joan Roy, 2002

Culture is ...
... the beliefs, characteristics, activities, fundamental values and outlooks, preferred ways of living, and aspects of personal identity that are shared by a group.

(Bull, Freuling and Chattergy, 1992)

Comparing FNMI and Anglo-Canadian Speakers
Adapted from “Cultural Conflicts: An Important Factor in the Academic Failures of American Indian Students” by Danielle Sanders, Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FNMI Speakers</th>
<th>Anglo-Canadian Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speak softly at a slower rate</td>
<td>Speak louder and faster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interject less</td>
<td>Interrupt frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use fewer “encouraging signs” (nodding, uh-huh)</td>
<td>Use verbal and physical encouragement frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal communication valued</td>
<td>Verbal skills highly prized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait before responding</td>
<td>Respond immediately</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Holistic Model of Education


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>Intelligence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive:</strong> Thought processes, the capacity to reason logically.</td>
<td>Linguistic, quantitative</td>
<td>Verbal/ linguistic Logical/ mathematical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional:</strong> All learning is accompanied by an emotional state, which can greatly affect the learning outcome.</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical:</strong> All learning occurs in a physical body. Mind-body harmony is an important element in the quality of learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Body/ kinesthetic Naturalistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesthetic:</strong> Beauty is a key aspect of human existence. Artistic expression of inner life is key to a happy life.</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>Visual/ spatial Musical/ rhythmic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual:</strong> The total and direct experience of universal love that establishes a sense of compassion, fraternity and peace towards all being.</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Goal #3
### Theme 10: Adding Aboriginal Content to the Classroom

### Sample Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity: Like Me</th>
<th>Connecting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants stand up or hold their hands up in response to various statements such as:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a grade 3 teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I grew up in this town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have met an Aboriginal Elder.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I teach Aboriginal students in my classroom.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Activity: Learning Partners

Participants are given cards that have different symbols on them, such as a feather, buffalo, drum, eagle, sun and tipi (see cards on summary sheet 2). Participants must match their symbol to others who have the symbol. When you call out the name of the symbol, participants find their groups and think of one activity they could use in the classroom based on their symbol. Encourage participants to think of ways to infuse the activity with Aboriginal content, while still relating to the curriculum (ELA, social studies and science are often the easiest to match). Participants share their activity ideas with the group.

### Activity: Matching Aboriginal Content to the Curriculum

Participants divide into groups and select a sample objective from various Alberta curriculums and subjects (see summary sheet 3) without looking (e.g., draw from a bag). In their groups they figure out ways they can teach the objective using Aboriginal content. Groups then pass their objectives to the group to the right and repeat the activity.

### Activity: Oral Tradition in the Classroom

Participants listen to a story (for example, the Creation myth from *Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30 Guide to Implementation*) and then compare and contrast Aboriginal oral stories with Western literature using a Venn diagram. The facilitator discusses the quote from summary sheet 1, emphasizing that translating and writing down a traditional story inevitably change it. Participants then discuss the relationship between oral tradition and drama - does drama offer more freedom (than the written word) to express yourself in a traditional way? Participants also discuss ways they can incorporate oral tradition in the ELA classroom.
### Activity: Infusing Aboriginal Content

Participants review the examples of infusing Aboriginal content from the various schools cited on summary sheet 4. Participants then divide into groups and develop a plan for infusing Aboriginal content in their school (can use the “Action Plan” graphic organizer). Groups then share their ideas.

### Activity: Revising the Curriculum

Participants do a focused reading of the article “Culturally Appropriate Curriculum” in which they mark the article with the three symbols (checkmark, exclamation point and question mark). Participants then discuss in groups the sections that they marked and why they marked them. The Facilitator should emphasize the importance of the infusion of Aboriginal content in the curriculum.

### Activity: Metaphor and Analogy

The facilitator presents an example of an analogy or metaphor that illustrates a concept learned during the workshop, for example:

- “Just as plants must be nourished with food that meets their nutritional needs, the minds of Aboriginal students must also be nourished with knowledge and experiences that meet their spiritual and cultural needs.”
- “Teaching Aboriginal students in a classroom without traditional content is like trying to fill a bottle with ice cubes - why not use the form that fits and fill the bottle with water!”

Participants then work together to write their own metaphors and/or analogies and share them with the group.

### Activity: Reflection 3-2-1

Participants write down:
- 3 things or important ideas that they want to remember
- 2 things they would like to know more about
- 1 idea that they will write about tonight or will try tomorrow

and then write:
- 3 interesting facts they learned
- 2 big ideas they will think about
- 1 question they need to think about
Adding Aboriginal Content to the Classroom

The lack of Aboriginal components in the programs of study in Alberta’s curriculum is a barrier to FNMI learner success.

Considerations for Adding Aboriginal Content:

- What is being learned must be meaningful to the learner (list examples of real life experiences).
- Access to resources that support the infusion of Aboriginal content in the curriculum must be accessible to all schools in Alberta.
- You cannot teach what you do not know: the practicing teacher and pre-service teacher preparation must include theory and practice of the Aboriginal content.
- In order for Aboriginal content to be accurate and relevant, there must be Aboriginal people working on curriculum and resource development.

Using Oral Storytelling in the Classroom

“Traditional tribal narratives possess a circular structure incorporating event within event, piling meaning on meaning, until the accretion finally results in a story. The structure of tribal narratives, at least in their native language forms, is quite unlike that of Western fiction; it is not tied to any particular time line, main character or event.”

(Gunn Allen 1986)

Benefits of using Oral Storytelling in the Classroom:

- Can be used to teach pre-literate children or ESL students
- Can be linked to drama
- Helps improve memory and public speaking skills
- Ties to a larger, more meaningful context
- Can be used in various subjects (cross-curricular)
- Helps reduce our dependence on written words, notes or scripts when presenting
- Others?
Adding Aboriginal Content to the Classroom - Symbol Cards
**ELA Grade 4**

**General Outcome 1**
Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences.

**Specific Outcome: Express ideas and develop understanding**
- compare new ideas, information and experiences to prior knowledge and experiences
- share personal responses to explore and develop understanding of oral, print and other media texts

**Consider others’ ideas**
- identify other perspectives by exploring a variety of ideas, opinions, responses and oral, print and other media texts

**Combine ideas**
- use talk, notes, personal writing and representing to record and reflect on ideas, information and experiences

**Science Grade 7**

1. **Investigate and describe relationships between humans and their environments, and identify related issues and scientific questions**

   - illustrate how life-supporting environments meet the needs of living things for nutrients, energy sources, moisture, suitable habitat, and exchange of gases describe examples of interaction and interdependency within an ecosystem (e.g., identify examples of dependency between species, and describe adaptations involved; identify changing relationships between humans and their environments, over time and in different cultures—as, for example, in aboriginal cultures)
   - identify examples of human impacts on ecosystems, and investigate and analyze the link between these impacts and the human wants and needs that give rise to them (e.g., identify impacts of the use of plants and animals as sources of food, fibre and other materials; identify potential impacts of waste products on environments)
   - analyze personal and public decisions that involve consideration of environmental impacts, and identify needs for scientific knowledge that can inform those decisions

**Math Grade 3**

**General Outcome**
Investigate, establish and communicate rules for numerical and non-numerical patterns, including those found in the home, and use these rules to make predictions.

**Specific Outcomes**
1. Sort, concretely and pictorially, using two or more attributes. [CN, PS, V]
2. Use objects and concrete models to explain the rule for a pattern, such as those found on addition and multiplication charts. [C, R, V]
3. Make predictions based on addition and multiplication patterns. [PS, R]
Sample Curriculum Objectives to Fuse with Aboriginal Content (continued)

Math Grade 5

General Outcome
Construct, extend and summarize patterns, including those found in nature, using rules, charts, mental mathematics and calculators.

Specific Outcomes
1. Develop charts to record and reveal patterns. [CN, PS]
2. Describe how a pattern grows, using everyday language in spoken and written form. [C, CN]
3. Construct and expand patterns in two and three dimensions, concretely and pictorially. [PS, V]
4. Generate and extend number patterns from a problem-solving context. [PS, R]
5. Predict and justify pattern extensions. [C, R]

Health Grade 8

W–8.9 describe rights and responsibilities of employers and employees in relation to workplace safety
R–8.1 describe characteristics of persistent negative feeling states; e.g., depression, mood disorders
R–8.4 analyze the effects of self concept on personal communication

Social Studies Grade 1

General Outcome
Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how identity and self-esteem are enhanced by their sense of belonging in their world and how active members in a community contribute to the well-being, growth and vitality of their groups and communities.

Knowledge and Understanding
1.1.3 examine how they belong and are connected to their world by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions for inquiry:

- What different types of communities or groups do you belong to? (CC)
- What helps us to recognize different groups or communities (e.g., landmarks, symbols, colours, logos, clothing)? (CC)
- In what ways do we belong to more than one group or community at the same time? (CC, I)
- In what ways do we benefit from belonging to groups or communities? (C, CC, I)
- What are our responsibilities and rights at home, at school, in groups and in communities? (C, CC, I)
Examples of Aboriginal Content Infusion


Muskowehiwan Band School, Saskatchewan - examples of Aboriginal Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Aboriginal Content Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Creating Star blankets, Tipi design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>Instructing students in various types of pow-wow and round dance movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Teaching a comparative perspective of the government structures of the province and the reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Endangered animals, such as the eagle, and its significance to Aboriginal culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Indigenous food groups and traditional ways of healing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Elders tell stories and legends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Geometry of the circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Metawewinihk Archeology Project:

- Students worked on several real archeological digs and participated in activities such as fire starting, flint knapping, petroglyph making, and traditional cooking
- Helps move the concept of history from abstract to concrete
- Involves Elders, who came to bless the site
- Develops cultural pride and a sense of identity

Father Gamache School:

- Use Native legends and concepts to teach Language Arts concepts
- Use First Nations plays and books to teach students how to create traditional artwork
- Be careful to distinguish between different Aboriginal groups (Cree, Dene, Métis, etc.)

Chief Mistawasis School:

- Interviewed local Elders about the history and culture of the reserve and legends
- Material was translated and edited to form social studies units for grades 1 to 9

Twin Lakes School:

- Offer a cultural camp to students from grades 1 – 12 every year
- Learn how to prepare traditional foods, hunt, fish with nets, trap and tell stories in the oral tradition
- Field trips and culturally relevant extracurricular activities are often effective means of supplementing course work and providing deeper insight into Aboriginal culture.
### Goal #3
**Theme 11: Creating a Supportive Community**

#### Sample Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecting</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity: Setting the Tone</strong></td>
<td>Elder or facilitator provides a focus for the day:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Say good things.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Think good things.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Hear good things.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Feel good things.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This may be put on a wall chart and posted at the front of the room.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processing</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity: Introductions</strong></td>
<td>The facilitator introduces himself or herself, including name, birthplace, where he or she lives, cultural background. The participants then divide into groups and take turns introducing themselves based on the facilitator’s model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The facilitator then introduces the purpose and objectives of the workshop, using summary sheet 1. Participants fill in what each key idea means to them and volunteers share their ideas with the others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity: Racism and its Effects on FNMI Education</strong></td>
<td>The facilitator leads a discussion on racism faced by FNMI students using summary sheet 2. Participants add to the lists of forms and effects of racism, as well as strategies for change and use stories of their own experiences to bring to life these examples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As participants report out, the facilitator may notice participants’ experiences, assumptions, and expectations around FNMI students. Participants should also begin to recognize their own assumptions and expectations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity: Focused Reading</strong></td>
<td>In preparation for the reading, participants predict what the article might say in regards to building a supportive community. Participants then read “A Vision for Learning Beyond Testing and Choice” and note passages, insights and ideas of interest, keeping in mind:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What questions emerge as you read the article?

Alone, participants examine their questions, think about other readings they may have done, and consider their predictions and assumptions prior to the reading. Participants then discuss the article in groups, in particular any questions they might have about the article. Groups are asked to answer the question:

What did you learn about creating a supportive community?

Each group reports out to the others what they learned and the facilitator records the key ideas.

Activity: Artwork Action Plan

Participants divide into groups then read and discuss the excerpt from Teaching the Native American on summary sheet 3. The groups then each create an artistic piece (using collage, paint, drawing, artifacts, etc.) that expresses the cooperative community supporting FNMI learners that they hope to achieve. Once finished, each group presents their artwork to the others and explains the imagery and symbolism.

Activity: Reflection

The facilitator asks the participants to reflect on their learning, and asks:

“What are some ways you can begin to remove barriers to Aboriginal learner success in your school?”

Answers might include: educating students and staff on problems associated with racism, emphasizing and reinforcing testing skills with Aboriginal students, developing a supportive school environment.

“How will you continue to develop a strong, supportive learning community for FNMI learners?”

Answers might include: setting up a peer support group for Aboriginal students, including Aboriginal content where possible, involving the local Aboriginal community in the school.

Participants consider these questions alone and then share their ideas with their groups. Volunteers then share their groups’ findings with the others. Alone, participants then answer one of the following questions:

“What will you take away from this experience that will influence the way you interact with your FNMI students and neighbours?”

“I imagine yourself writing a message to yourself about removing barriers for FNMI learners, what might the letter say?”

Transforming
Creating a Supportive Community

Purpose:
Understand that a lack of positive Aboriginal community support and non-Aboriginal community support is a barrier to FNMI learner success.

Key Ideas:

**The honor of one is the honor of all in FNMI communities.**
What does this mean to you?

**Recognition of success within one’s community is critical for a healthy sense of self-efficacy.**
What does this mean to you?

**Non-FNMI people can make a positive environment for FNMI learners.**
What does this mean to you?

**Celebrating FNMI achievement can help build a supportive environment.**
What does this mean to you?
The Effects of Racism

Adapted from Literature Review on Racism and the Effects on Aboriginal Education

### Forms of racism that affect FNMI people

- Verbal Abuse
- Psychological Abuse
- Low expectations/self-fulfilling prophecy
- Socially marginalized and/or isolated
- Denied professional support and/or attention
- Rules and procedures to facilitate failure

**Others?**

### Effects of racism on FNMI people

- Limits opportunities
- Blames the victim
- Leads to internalization of low self-worth
- Produces hostility
- Leads to early school exit

**Others?**

### Strategies for Change

- Acknowledge that racism against FNMI people is a problem
- Educational institutions must be accountable and responsive
- Incorporate anti-racism education in all educational institutions (staff and students)

**Others?**
Theme 11, Summary Sheet 3

Working with Parents and the Community

From Teaching the Native American by Hap Gilliland

Not only is it important that the teacher know the community and the parents of the students, but the parents and other members of the community can contribute greatly to the success of the child's education if they are informed, if they understand what is being done and why, and, if they understand that their help and assistance are needed. An example of this involvement at the early childhood level is the "Natural Math" project at the Oklahoma Seminole Head Start programs. Math projects that involved the normal uses of math in the home, some of which were definitely related to the Seminole culture, were demonstrated and taught to parents of the preschool and kindergarten children, and the parents conducted these activities with their children in their homes. Not only did this help the children learn math concepts, but it helped to make both children and parents see the relationship of what they were doing in school to their lives outside of school. A summary by Butterfield and Pepper of 100 research studies shows clearly that parent participation in the school in any form improves parent attitudes and behavior, as well as student achievement, attendance, motivation, self-esteem, and behavior. As Grant and Sleeter have said,

Complaints that Native parents show little interest in the education of their children have often been voiced by teachers and administrators. However, recent hearings such as those conducted by the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force... have proven that Native parents are keenly interested and have expressed a strong commitment to the education of their children as well as a great deal of apprehension about what will happen if their children do not do well in school... Parents are the strongest influence a child can have. If the parent demands school attendance and supervises homework, the child may adjust more readily to life in school.

However, many parents are unsure about how to help their children or influence the school. Most are very hesitant to take the first step in contacting the school. Therefore home visits and other approaches that get the parents involved in an ongoing way can have a great influence on the success of students.

Parents and other community members can be brought into the school to instruct the children in arts and crafts, community organizations, traditions, and the world of work, as well as helping with field trips, interest clubs, and other activities. They should be included in curriculum planning and in new teacher orientation. As the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force stated:

Often schools have failed to make clear to students the connection between what they learn in school and what they must know to live comfortably and contribute to society. Problems can be overcome through partnerships between schools and organizations that prepare individuals for careers and promote economic security. Partnership organizations can send specialists to help in the schools, offer services for students to participate in meaningful work, provide training, and promote a work ethic. Partnerships can also demonstrate the relationship between what is learned in school and what knowledge and skills are needed by adults.

Parents, schools, and communities together can show young children that school and learning are important. Partnerships can reinforce the idea that every student is expected to complete school and to develop the skills and knowledge to become self-sufficient and to contribute to the development of independent communities.
Sample Activities

**Activity: Like Me**

The facilitator read off various different statements and the participants stand up or raise their hands if the statement applies to them. For example:

- I am a teacher.
- I have participated in a traditional First Nations ceremony.
- I enjoy the outdoors.
- I know what tribe(s) live in and around my community.
- I know someone who is Métis.

**Activity: Brainstorming**

Participants brainstorm what they know about the history of FNMI culture in Alberta. The facilitator records their ideas on the board and stops after ten minutes. They then analyze what they know and the facilitator points out any gaps in their knowledge.

**Activity: Who are the First Nations and Métis?**

The facilitator sets up various stations around the room that include artifacts, crafts, photographs, artwork and newspaper articles/brochures that contain information about the FNMI cultures represented in the community. He or she could include the material on summary sheets 1, 2 and 3, or present this separately to the participants.

Participants then move around the room, spending 5 minutes or so at every station. After everyone has had time to examine the stations, the facilitator leads a discussion based on the following questions:

- What are your overall impressions of what was presented?
- What did you learn that surprised you?
- What did you see or read that confirmed what you already knew?

**Activity: The Great Law of Peace**

Participants divide into groups and read the excerpt on the Great Law of Peace (summary sheet 4). The facilitator points out that Aboriginal nations had democracy before Europeans settled in North America. Each group then generates what lessons could be applied to today's political issues based on the Great Law of Peace. Each group then presents what they
discussed to the others. The Facilitator notes key ideas and messages and summarizes after all groups have reported out.

**Activity: Understanding FNMI Teaching**

The facilitator writes the following statement on the board: Lack of respect for the carriers of knowledge in the FNMI cultures is a barrier to FNMI learner success. The participants are led in a discussion of what is meant by this statement.

The facilitator then introduces the concept of Aboriginal teaching and how it differs from European teaching, bringing up the following points:

- **FNMI culture recognizes that their wisdom comes from those who have lived.**
- **Honoring the value of the knowledge of the Elders is a clear demonstration of respect for their knowledge.**
- **Aboriginal Elders are teachers**
- **Aboriginal education has been an effective process of thousands of years and is based on life experience as the way to knowledge**

Participants then read the passage (pages 144-145) “Implementing Bicultural Science Education” from “The Native American Learner and Bicultural Science Education” (included in the tool kit), paying particular attention to the description of Aboriginal teaching. In groups, they discuss the value of understanding FNMI techniques and learning strategies when teaching FNMI students and how traditional knowledge can be used in the classroom.

**Activity: 3-2-1**

Participants write down:
- 3 things or important ideas that they want to remember
- 2 things they would like to know more about
- 1 idea that they will write about tonight

**Activity: Promoting FNMI Knowledge Action Plan**

Participants use the graphic organizer #1 Action Plan (see appendices) to plan how they will actively promote FNMI knowledge in their community. Volunteers can present their action plans to the rest of the participants.
Facts about First Nations and Métis People in Alberta

From Indian and Northern Affairs Canada: www.ainc-inac.gc.ca

First Nations

In Alberta there are:
- 44 First Nations in three treaty areas
- 123 reserves
- Approximately 700,537 hectares of reserve land

The most commonly spoken First Nations' languages are:
- Blackfoot
- Cree
- Chipewyan
- Dene
- Sarcee and
- Stoney (Nakoda Sioux)

Treaty 6
Signed at Carlton and Fort Pitt in 1876
Covers central Alberta and Saskatchewan
16 Alberta First Nations*

Treaty 7
Signed at the Blackfoot Crossing of Bow River and Fort Macleod in 1877
Covers southern Alberta 5 Alberta First Nations

Treaty 8
Signed at Lesser Slave Lake in 1899
Covers portions of Northern Alberta, BC, Saskatchewan and part of NWT
23 Alberta First Nations

*TThe Saddle Lake First Nation and Whitefish Lake (Goodfish) First Nation are administered separately but are considered one band under the Indian Act.

Métis

From the Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30 Guide to Implementation

Alberta is the only province that has passed legislation specifically for Métis people. On November 1, 1990 the Government of Alberta proclaimed legislation that provides for a unique form of government on the Métis Settlements. Developed cooperatively by the Province of Alberta and the Alberta Federation of Métis Settlements Association, this legislation establishes the only Métis land base and the only form of legislated Métis government in Canada. It was created in an effort to accommodate Métis aspirations of securing their land base, gaining local autonomy and achieving self-sufficiency.

The Alberta Government set aside land in 1938 for the Métis people. Then the eight Métis Settlements were established by the Métis Settlements Act. The eight Métis Settlements are: Buffalo Lake, East Prairie, Elizabeth, Fishing Lake, Gift Lake, Kikino, Paddle Prairie, and Peavine. These 8 geographic areas in Alberta have a land base of 1.25 million acres, that's the size of Prince Edward Island. This makes the Métis Settlements of Alberta distinct from other Métis Organizations in Canada due to Land-base. Each Settlement has its own diverse economy but all eight are bound together by culture, history and Provincial Legislation.
### Early Aboriginal History Timeline

From the *Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30 Guide to Implementation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15,000–</td>
<td>Earliest North American occupation. Artifacts found in the Yukon from this time. Albertan landscape is gradually uncovered by melting ice and becomes vegetated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11,000 BC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,000 BC</td>
<td>Oldest evidence of Amerindian people (nomadic hunters) living in the St. Lawrence River valley. Alberta is almost free of ice. Hunters armed with large thrusting spears camp by the mountainside. Last of the giant ice-age mammals disappeared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6000 BC</td>
<td>Neolithic farming begins in North America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000–</td>
<td>Earliest petroglyphs and Okanogan pictographs. People in Alberta began using the spear thrower to hunt, allowing them to throw the spear harder, faster and farther than by hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000 BC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000 BC</td>
<td>Food storage becomes more common. Pemmican is commonly used as a long-lasting food source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2500 BC</td>
<td>The first known ceremonial sites known as Medicine Wheels appeared. The tipi is developed and becomes popular from this time onward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 BC–100 BC</td>
<td>Long distance trade becomes important, including the trade of fine stone, copper and shell. Later trade includes volcanic glass, flint and grizzly bear teeth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD 250–AD 1000</td>
<td>A new group joined the two distinct cultural groups inhabiting Alberta and area. This new group introduce the bow and arrow and pottery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD 500</td>
<td>Beginning of farming in Great Lakes region, possibly ancestors of Iroquois nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300–1500</td>
<td>Evidence of Iroquoian living in villages in Quebec and Ontario.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1535</td>
<td>Cartier sails to Quebec and encounters Iroquois living on what would become the island of Montreal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circa 1580</td>
<td>Decimation of the Iroquoian people (due to disease and war).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1634–40</td>
<td>Europeans introduce diseases to Native people; half the Huron people die.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Provincial Museum of Alberta website: [www.pma.edmonton.ab.ca](http://www.pma.edmonton.ab.ca)
RESERVE

Alexander ........................................ 134  E-3
Alexis .............................................. 133  E-3
Allison Bay ..................................... 219  A-5
Amber River .................................... 211  A-1, A-2
Assineau River ............................... 150F  D-2
Beaver Lake ..................................... 131  D-4
Beaver Ranch .................................... 163  C-3
Beaver Ranch ..................................... 163  A-B  B-3
Big Horn .......................................... 144  A-2
Bistcho Lake .................................... 213  A-2
Blood ................................................. 148  H-4
Blood ................................................. 148  A-H-4
Blue Quills First Nation Reserve  ....... 146  E-3
Boyer River ....................................... 164  B-2, B-3
Buck Lake ........................................... 133C  F-3
Bushe River ....................................... 207  B-2
Carcapo Settlement ........................... 187  B-2
Cardinal River .................................... 234  F-2
Charles Lake ...................................... 225  A-5
Child Lake ......................................... 164A  B-2
Chipewyan ......................................... 201  B-5
Chipewyan ......................................... 201A-E  B-5
Clear Hills ......................................... 152C  C-1
Clemlawater ..................................... 175  C-4
Cold Lake .......................................... 149  E-5
Cold Lake .......................................... 149A-B  D-5
Coin Lake .......................................... 223  A-5
Cornwall Lake .................................... 224  A-5
Cowper Lake ...................................... 194A  C-5
Devil's Gate ....................................... 220  A-5
Dog Head ............................................. 218  A-4
Drrift pipeline River ......................... 150  D-2
Duncan's ............................................ 151A  C-2
Ewen Valley ........................................ 216  G-3
Elk River ............................................ 233  F-2
Enmineskin ........................................ 139  F-4
Fort McKay ......................................... 174  C-4
Fort Vermilion .................................... 173B  B-3
Fox Lake ............................................ 162  B-3
Freeman ............................................ 150B  D-2,  E-5
Gregoire Lake .................................... 176A-B  C-5
Gregoire Lake .................................... 176A-B  C-5
Grouard ............................................. 229  D-3
Grouard ............................................. 230  D-3
Grouard ............................................. 231  D-3
Halcor ................................................ 150C  D-2, D-3
Hay Lake ............................................ 209  A-2, B-2
Heart Lake ......................................... 167  D-4
Horse Lake ......................................... 152B  C-1
Horse Lake ......................................... 152D  C-1
House River Indian Cemetery ............. 178  C-4
Jackfish Point ..................................... 214  A-2
January ............................................... 194  C-3
Jean Baptiste Gambell ....................... 183  D-4
John O'R Prairie .................................. 215  B-3
Kehewin ............................................. 123  E-5
Louis Bull .......................................... 138B  F-4
Makoko ............................................... 120  E-5
Montana ............................................. 139  F-4
Namur Lake ........................................ 174B  B-4
Namur River ....................................... 174A  B-4
O'Chiese ........................................... 203  F-3
O'Chiese Cemetery ............................ 203A  F-3
Old Fort ............................................. 217  B-4
Pakashane ......................................... 150D  D-2
Peace Point ........................................ 222  E-5
Peigan ............................................... 147  H-4
Peigan ............................................... 147B  H-3
Pigeon Lake ....................................... 138A  F-3
Puskiakwinwini .................................. 122  E-5
Sand Point ......................................... 221  A-5
Saddle Lake ....................................... 125  E-4, E-5
Samson ............................................. 137  F-4
Sarcee ............................................... 145  G-3
Sawridge ........................................... 150G-H  D-3
Siksika ............................................. 140  G-3
Stoney ............................................. 142, 143, 144  G-3
Stony ............................................... 142B  G-3
Stony Plain ....................................... 135  E-4
Sugeon Lake ...................................... 154  D-2
Sugeon Lake ...................................... 154A  D-2
Sungeon Lake ...................................... 150A  D-2, D-3
Sungild Cree ....................................... 202  F-3
Swan River ......................................... 150E  D-3
Tailcree ............................................ 173  B-3
Tailcree ............................................ 173A  B-3
Unipouheos ....................................... 121  E-5
Upper Hay River .................................. 212  A-2
Wabamun .......................................... 33A-B  E-3
Wabasca .......................................... 166  D-4
Wabasca .......................................... 166A  D-4
Wabasca .......................................... 166B  C-3
Wabasca .......................................... 166C  C-3
Wabasca .......................................... 166D  D-3
Wadsln Lake ....................................... 173  B-5
Whitecourt ........................................ 232  E-3
Whitefish Lake .................................... 128  E-4
William McKenzie ............................ 151K  C-2
Winedfrd Lake .................................... 194B  D-5
Woodland Cree .................................... 226-228  C-2, C-3
Zama Lake ........................................... 210  A-1, B-1

FIRST NATION RESERVE NUMBER (S)

Alexander ........................................ 134
Alexis .............................................. 133, 232-234
Athabasca Chipewyan .......................... 201, 201A-G
Beaver ............................................. 131
Beaver Lake ...................................... 131
Bigstone Cree ...................................... 166, 166A-D 183
Blood Tribe ........................................ 148, 148A
Chipewyan Prairie ............................. 194, 194A-B
Cold Lake ......................................... 149, 149A-B
Dene Tha' ........................................ 207, 209-214
Drift pipeline River ............................ 150
Duncan's .......................................... 151A  151K
Enoch .............................................. 135
Ermneskin ......................................... 138, 138A *
Fort McKay ......................................... 174, 174A-B
Fort McMurray .................................... 175, 176, 176A-B
Frog Lake ......................................... 121, 122
Heart Lake ......................................... 167
Horse Lake ......................................... 152B-C
Kapasewino ....................................... 229, 230, 231, 150A-B
Kehewin .......................................... 123
Little Red River .................................. 162, 215
Loon River Cree .................................. No Reserve
Louis Bull ......................................... 138B
Lubicon Lake .......................... 113, 114B
Lubicon Lake .......................... 113, 114B
Miksiew Cree ...................................... 217-225
Mitsana ............................................ 139
O'Chiese ........................................... 203, 203A
Paul .................................................. 133C-A
Peigan ............................................. 147, 147B
Saddle Lake ....................................... 125, 128
Samsen Cree ....................................... 137A
Sawridge ........................................... 150G-H
Siksika ............................................. 146
Stoney ............................................. 142, 142B, 143, 144, 144A, 216
Sturgeon Lake ................................. 150, 154A-B
Sucker Creek ...................................... 150A
Sunchild Cree ..................................... 202
Swan River ......................................... 150E-F
Tailcree ............................................ 163, 163A-B, 173, 173E-A
Tsui Tma Nation ................................. 145
Whitefish Lake .................................... 155, 155A-B
Woodland Cree .................................... 226-228

* Held jointly by Four Bands (Ermineskin, Samson, Montana and Louis Bull)
From the *Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30 Guide to Implementation*

The following is a translated excerpt from the Great Law of Peace, which was negotiated by the People of the Longhouse before 1450. This treaty involved the Seneca, Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida and Cayuga peoples.

“I am Tekanawita.

*With the statesmen of the League of Five Nations, I plant the Tree of Great Peace.*

*I plant it in your territory, Atotarho, and the Onondaga Nation, in the territory of you who are firekeepers.*

*I name the tree Tsioneratasekowa, the Great White Pine.*

*Under the shade of this Tree of Great Peace, we spread the soft, white feathery down of the Globe Thistle as seats for you. Atotarho, and your cousin statesmen.*

*We place you upon these seats, spread soft with the feathery down of the Globe Thistle, there beneath the shade of the spreading branches of the Great Tree of Peace. There shall you sit and watch the fires of the League of Five Nations. All the affairs of the League shall be transacted at this place before you. Atotarho and your cousin statesmen, by the statesmen of the League of Five Nations.*

*Roots have spread out from the Tree of Great Peace, one to the north, one to the east, one to the south, and one to the west. These are the Great White Roots, and their nature is Peace and Strength.*

*If any man or any nation of the Five Nations shall obey the laws of Great Peace (Kaianerekowa), and shall make this known to the statesmen of the League, they may trace back the roots to the Tree. If their minds are clean, and if they are obedient and promise to obey the wishes of the Council of the League, they shall be welcomed to take shelter beneath the Great Evergreen Tree.*

*We place at the top of the Tree of Great Peace an eagle, who is able to see afar. If he sees in the distance any danger threatening, he will at once warn the people of the League.*

Goal #4:
Parents of FNMI students are involved in the school community and perceive the school as inviting and engaging to parents.

Themes for Goal #4:
13. Involving FNMI Parents in the School Community
14. FNMI Representation at all Levels of the School Community
15. FNMI Recognition as an Integral Part of the School
16. Helping your Child to be Successful in School

Sample Objectives:
Participants should:

- make connections and generate new ideas and insights
- interact in safe and caring ways
- think deeply about the goal and to explore the goal from a variety of perspectives
- generate questions, and encourage inquiry around the content
- make changes in their thinking
- set goals and create and action plans
- share their new ideas, connections, insights, feelings about the content of the workshop
- challenge the goal
- inquire/clarify their thinking
- move out of their comfort zone
- become motivated to change/implement ideas in their school, classroom

Resource List:


National Aboriginal Achievement Awards website: www.naaf.ca


www.pwsb33.ab.ca/survey/aboriginalstudy.pdf


“Indian and Métis Education: Engaging Parents as Partners”, SSTA Research Centre Report: 
www.ssta.sk.ca/research/indian_education/93-10.htm
Sample Activities

Activity: Introducing your Neighbour

Participants divide into pairs and spend a few minutes finding out about the other person, for example:

- Where they live.
- Where they were born.
- What they do in the community.

Each partner then briefly introduces the other to the rest of the group.

Activity: Sharing Circle

Using an Eagle feather, participants take turns answering the question:

“What are some things you have noticed in your experience working with FNMI parents in the school community?”

The facilitator provides a few moments for participants to think about the question and record responses. Once everyone who wishes to speak has had a turn, the facilitator summarizes the key points (about the participants’ experiences, insights) raised by the participants.

Activity: Reading

Participants read the article “The Middle School Achievement Project: Involving Parents and Community in School Improvement” while keeping in mind the situation at their own school. Working with table groups, participants use the “Final Word” strategy to process the article. Participants could also discuss the benefits and challenges to having a shadowing day at their school by filling out a PMI chart.

Activity: Guest Speaker, “My Journey in My Child’s Education”

An FNMI Parent is invited to speak to the participants about parent involvement in the school community and how parental involvement is critical to learner success. Participants listen and are encouraged to use the graphic organizer “What’s Important and Why?”
After speaker, the facilitator allows time for clarifying questions and invites participants to ‘feedback’ to speaker what they heard as important aspects of parent involvement in the school community that may support learner success. The guest speaker has an opportunity to respond, elaborate, and clarify. The facilitator records the questions and answers and then reports out. The objectives of this activity are to:

- Clarifying possible misunderstandings
- Provide an opportunity for FNMI parents to be heard by the school community
- Expand awareness of how FNMI parents are involved in the school community on behalf of their children

**Activity: Personal Reflection**

Participants reflect on the three points of reference:

- your experience,
- the guest speaker, and
- the reading

The goal is to consolidate the learning on the ways FNMI parent involvement support their children’s work at school. This reflection can be done alone or in partners. After a suitable amount of time, volunteers are asked to report out as the facilitator records, pulling all the information together and making connections.

**Activity: How to Enhance FNMI Parental Involvement**

The speaker responds to the question: “What are some changes in the school community that will enhance FNMI parent involvement” as the facilitator records the comments.

**Activity: Reflection**

Facilitator summarizes the learning and participants are asked to reflect on the question:

“Given that we have looked at the ideal and the reality of the parents, what are some steps you can take to enhance and support FNMI parent involvement in the school community?”

This activity can be done alone or with a partner. After time has been given to reflect, volunteers report out to the group. The guest speaker listens to the learning of the group and their plans.

**Activity: 3-2-1**

Participants write down:

- 3 things or important ideas that they want to remember
- 2 things they would like to know more about
- 1 idea that they will write about tonight
Involving FNMI Parents in the School Community

Misunderstanding: FNMI parents are not involved in their child’s life through the school community

Misunderstanding: Effective parent involvement in the school community is determined by their visibility in the school.

Key Messages:

- Parent involvement is critical to learner success.
- FNMI parents are often perceived as invisible by the school.
- Some FNMI parents feel unwelcome in the school – their involvement must be teacher initiated. Consistent and continuous encouragement and support for parent involvement is needed.
- Standard measures of parent involvement – guest books, volunteers in the school, check lists – do not provide an accurate picture of FNMI parent involvement.
- All parents appreciate an educator who listens and will visit with them.
- Poor communication between school and home discourage parent involvement in the school.
- Educators must become aware of the types of parental involvement which are not seen at the school.
- Teacher visits to the homes and community are appreciated and build relationships.
- Take time to learn the culture and protocols of the FNMI communities that are enrolled in your school.
The Shadow Study Technique

- Engages an individual in the observation of a student or teacher for an entire day
- Actions, activities and behaviours of the person being shadowed are recorded every five to seven minutes (written notes)
- When shadowing is complete, notes are analyzed for trends and patterns
- Gives a picture of life in the school / classrooms
- Educates the shadower as well as the person being shadowed

Benefits of Shadowing

- An excellent vehicle for getting parents and community involved
- Shadowing by parents and community members provided teachers with information that would help them improve and grow
- Provides parents and community members with new insights about the nature of students

Would shadowing work at your school?

Discuss whether a shadowing project like the one described in the article would work in your school. Think about the benefits, challenges and possible ways you could modify the program.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pluses</th>
<th>Minuses</th>
<th>Other Interesting Info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• May encourage FNMI parents to get involved in the school community</td>
<td>• FNMI parents may not be comfortable doing this type of task (too judgmental?)</td>
<td>• Could be modified by making the shadowing more interactive - allowing the shadower to participate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Could be a good way to get ideas on how to modify instruction for Aboriginal students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource
Sample Activities

**Activity: Round the Room and Back Again**

Each participant writes one thing he or she knows about the topic, e.g., “I know that FNMI parents are not represented at all levels of our school community”. Individuals then take their paper and move around the room sharing their examples and listening to the examples of others. The challenge is to rely on auditory memory - experiencing the oral culture of Aboriginal peoples. After participants have moved 5-7 times, they return to their tables. Table groups share their lists and look for patterns of similarities and differences in the room.

**Activity: Continuum**

The facilitator draws a continuum on the board or overhead. On one end is “Little or no FNMI involvement” and on the other end is “Cooperation and collaboration with FNMI people”. The participants are then asked to mark where various things fit on the continuum, such as:

- FNMI representation in the school board
- FNMI involvement in the school council
- FNMI involvement in parent groups

**Activity: Focused Reading**

Note: This activity is of particular interest for school administrators.

Participants read “Leadership in Community Schools: A Frame Analysis”, marking the text to show information that reinforces what they already knew (checkmark), things that they question (question mark) and interesting new information (exclamation point). Participants then share what they noted with others in their group and discuss what they learned and what they did not understand in the article. Each group then shares their ideas with the others as the facilitator records key ideas. The facilitator can use summary sheet 1 as a summary of some of the information in the article.

**Activity: Working Together**

Participants read “Getting Teachers and Parents to Work Together”, focusing on the lists of recommendations for teachers and FNMI parents. In
groups or as a whole, participants then review each recommendation and decide whether it applies in your school community.

Participants then work together to create an action plan for encouraging and promoting these recommendations in their school community, for example by creating a poster/display, writing an article for the school or community paper, having an inservice with school staff and FNMI parents.

**Activity: Brainstorming**

Participants divide into groups and brainstorm ways to involve FNMI parents at each of the following levels:

- Board
- Trustee
- School Council
- Parent groups
- Elders from community
- Teacher curriculum committees

Each group then shares its ideas with the others as the facilitator records the key ideas.

**Activity: Engaging Parents as Partners**

Participants review the material on summary sheet 3 in table groups and discuss what they learned about:

- The different types of parental involvement
- How to involve FNMI parents in the school community
- Where to start in their own community

Participants summarize the information and respond to it, drawing on their own experiences and prior knowledge.

**Activity: Understanding FNMI Parents**

Participants review the comments and opinions of FNMI parents collected by the Peace Wapiti School Board on summary sheet 4. Each participant then chooses an opinion/experience and explains how it helps them to better understand the point of view of the FNMI parents in their community.

**Activity: Here's What, So What, Now What**

Participants fill out the graphic organizer “Here's What, So What, Now What” based on what they learned during the workshop. Volunteers share their responses. The ideas generated from this task can be used to create an action plan.
FNMI Representation in the School Community

**FNMI parental representation is desired at all levels:**

- Board
- Trustee
- School Council
- Parent groups
- Elders from community
- Teacher curriculum committees

**Key Points:**

- In some cases, the school community is not viewed by many FNMI parents as a safe and caring place for them.
- FNMI parents need to be acknowledged and recognized as capable contributors to all levels of education.
- Administrative involvement and support in advocating for FNMI parent representation on school committees is critical to changing the environment for FNMI parents in the school.
- All provincial levels of leadership need to support over time FNMI mandates.

**Efforts in Parental Participation**

Adapted from “The Participation of Indian and Métis Parents in the School System” by Sydney Davis, *The Canadian Journal of Native Education*.

- Attempts to increase participation in education by FNMI parents in Quebec and Saskatchewan have had limited success

**Why don’t school committees work?**

- Analysis of 11 school committee over one year showed that most discussion items were concerned with getting and receiving information related to the role and function of the committee – education-related topics got very little attention
- These types of parent committees are an effective means of generating widespread parental support, but seldom result in fundamental changes to the school system. FNMI parents may become disappointed and frustrated of this lack of reform

**Why don’t home school liaisons work?**

- Home school liaison programs have developed in Saskatchewan Aboriginal communities to “bridge the gap” between home and school
- Fundamental obstacles to these liaison programs is the role of liaison officer – he or she is an employee of the school board and becomes and envoy of the school, job descriptions are vague or non-existent, often takes 6-9 moths for him or her to get started. The liaison’s professional interests may conflict with the interests of the parents (conflict of interest). Torn between becoming an agent of change and a defender of the status quo.

**New Approaches**

- Parent committees that are separate from the school and lobby the school board for change
- FNMI cultural, political and women’s organizations that establish education committees
Adapted from “Getting Teachers and Parents to Work Together” by Dick Littlebear

**Recommendations for Teachers Working with FNMI Parents**

1. Teachers need to become aware of their own culture.
2. Teachers need to become aware of tribally specific differences (what is acceptable to one tribe may not be acceptable to another).
3. Teachers must learn about their students’ tribes including their histories and the aspirations of parents and the local community.
4. Teachers should not rely on preconceived stereotypes and popular misconceptions about FNMI culture.
5. Teachers need to make the curriculum more acceptable to FNMI students and their families.
6. Teachers should encourage FNMI parents to further their own education.
7. Teachers should be aware of linguistic differences and influences on their students.
8. Teachers should keep their expectations of FNMI students high.
9. Teachers must remember that FNMI students are not necessarily experts on their own culture.
10. Teachers should be careful about speaking about people from the community, as FNMI students often have large extended families and other strong community ties.
11. Teachers should try to enhance the self-perceptions of FNMI students by using positive role models, including FNMI content, etc.
12. Teachers should encourage leadership skills among their students.
13. Teachers can introduce preventative strategies for alcohol and drug use.
14. Teachers should be aware of the communication patterns common among FNMI people in their community.
15. Teachers should not deliberately shame a student.
16. Teachers should not think of themselves as “saviors” of their FNMI students.
17. Teachers should try to grow and learn about the FNMI community of their town or city.

**Recommendations for FNMI Parents Working with Teachers**

1. Parents should understand that non-FNMI teachers may not be knowledgeable about a tribe’s culture and may make mistakes of fact or protocol.
2. Parents should volunteer to visit the classroom as presenters or aides and to act as positive role models.
3. Parents must visit the school and talk to teachers and administrators about their child’s education.
4. Parents can reinforce what their children learn in school by talking to their children and by visiting the school.
5. Parents are the first educators of their children and must instill in them the desire and will to be educated (emphasize the importance of education).
6. Parents must instill positive traditional FNMI values in their children.
7. Parents should be cautious about expressing dissatisfaction with the school or its staff in the presence of their children.
Engaging Parents as Partners

Adapted from “Indian and Métis Education: Engaging Parents as Partners” SSTA Research Centre Report: www.ssta.sk.ca/research/indian_education/93-10.htm

This report is a summary of the discussions at the 1993 SSTA Forum on Indian and Métis Education.

Overview of Participation Continuum
School boards recognize the important role that parents have to play in the education of their children and therefore attach great importance to the direct involvement of parents in this process. A number of important studies have shown that parental involvement is directly related to children’s success in learning. Experts say that broad parental involvement with school issues establishes a powerful climate for student learning both at home and in school, reduces behaviour problems and supports positive motivation for academic achievement. Boards of education recognize that specific actions need to be taken in order to make this involvement a reality. Effective schools and school systems foster the active involvement of their communities in program delivery and school governance. Participation in the operation of a school or a school system can be viewed as a continuum. One end the continuum includes involvement in the ongoing activities of the school while the other end represents involvement in the governance of the school or school system. Four major categories of participation along this continuum may be described as:

- communication,
- curricular support,
- collaboration, and
- autonomous control.

Participation In Education Continuum

Communication: Parents and community are spectators of the educational activities in the school. They may be recipients of written communications such as newsletters and calendars, purchasers of products sold by the school, or spectators at school functions.

Curricular Support: Parents and community are directly involved in the curricular activities of the school. They play a role as supervisors, volunteers, tutors in the operations of the school.

Collaboration: The advice of parents and the community is sought on various issues as part of a shared governance structure established to direct a school or education system. Involvement varies from election as school board members to the establishment of structures permitting diverse groups to have input and share in the important decisions of the school or education system. A number of structures facilitate this type of involvement. They range from the ad hoc committee established to deal with a particular question to a formally established ongoing committee that has a formalized mandate or identifies the items with which it will deal.

Autonomous control: The established governance structure provides parents and community members with the authority to independently run their schools. Examples include a separate school, “church” school or school controlled by an Indian Band Council.
Engaging Parents as Partners (continued)

Adapted from “Indian and Métis Education: Engaging Parents as Partners” SSTA Research Centre Report: www.ssta.sk.ca/research/indian_education/93-10.htm

"What Makes Parental Involvement Successful?"

Forum participants shared the following key points:

1. A Welcoming Climate can be developed when we:
   - Create a comfortable environment
   - Recognize some community members feel skepticism and fear around schools
   - Provide a place for parents to have a "cup of tea"
   - Build and staff schools with thoughtful, caring administrators who are willing to make changes and teachers who take part and create a welcoming climate in every classroom
   - Foster a positive attitude of openness, that allows people to change and develop positive attitudes toward schools
   - Incorporate Community schools concepts
   - Encourage teachers to go to reserves to meet and visit with families
   - Open the school to the community
   - Create a culturally conducive school
   - Foster and develop success, for success breeds success
   - Empower parents--express an earnest, sincere desire to include parents
   - Hold interviews at band offices, provide transportation
   - Serve food
   - Train staff to welcome parent volunteers
   - Open the library after hours to the community
   - Invite parents to call teachers by their first name
   - Use an integrated services approach to maximize use of the school facility
   - Contact parents on a regular basis
   - Have locally elected boards and school councils
   - View "religions" as "value systems"

2. A Sense of Mutual Respect is Essential

Respect can be demonstrated when we:
   - View parents as partners
   - Include Aboriginal people as staff at various levels - administrators, teachers, aides
   - Nurture culturally aware institutions
   - Develop committed leadership that encourages public institutions to be equitable for all students
   - Examine all decision-making structures--Avoid separating people by language and culture
   - Increase flexibility in rules and legal issues, etc.
   - Communicate respect fully and frequently
   - See the need for awareness and understanding of barriers and the challenges of change and crossing cultures
   - Attend or host special cultural activities
   - "Know ourselves and who our children are"
   - Believe that cross-cultural education is for EVERYONE
   - Although ‘festival' approach may foster racism, cultural mosaics help to increase respect for self and others
3. Parents Must Share a Common Cause and Reason for Involvement
This can be developed through:
- Curriculum and extra-curricular activities that reflect interests of parents. "Cultural power"
- Parent volunteers
- Cooperative ventures
- Contacting parents about their children and making decisions about them
- Forums that encourage meaningful input
- Everyone working together
- Increased parent awareness to become involved
- A belief that what we do in schools is valued and meaningful
- Video-taped parent-student soccer games
- Elder programs
- Parent advisory groups setting directions
- Community leaders participating and involving others--such as grandparents. A respectful approach and invitation to respected elders is so important.
- Curriculum that is relevant to students and parents
- Educators being encouraged and valued as learners
- Implement these ideas

Planning for Action
The following guidelines offer suggestions for developing a plan to increase parental involvement.

1. As a staff develop a rationale for increasing parental involvement
To be successful, a school initiative of this nature requires active support and involvement of all staff members. This is particularly true if proposed changes present a threat to individuals. The staff must understand why increasing parental involvement is an important initiative and how parents may be involved in the school. Remember, all schools currently involve parents in the school; you must build upon what exists.

Activity: Devote a staff meeting to the answering the following questions:
1. How do we currently involve parents in the school?
2. Why would we want to increase parental participation of all cultural groups in our school?
3. What resources are there in the school and the community that would assist us in this initiative?
4. What barriers are there to this initiative?

You may wish to close the staff meeting by creating a committee to lead in the development of a school plan to increase parental involvement. Initially, the committee can synthesize the responses to these questions.

2. Obtain division board and local board or parent council support for initiatives
If children from a reserve attend your school, you will also want school committees, or band council support. You may want representatives from these groups on your committee.
Engaging Parents as Partners (continued)

Adapted from “Indian and Métis Education: Engaging Parents as Partners” SSTA Research Centre Report: www.ssta.sk.ca/research/indian_education/93-10.htm

3. Assess the School Community
Hold a parent meeting to solicit support for and input into the school plan. It is extremely important that representation from all parts of the community attend this meeting. The meeting could commence with an overview of the rationale that has been developed and a description of what is meant by parental involvement. Parents could then be divided into groups to answer the following questions.

1. What is the school doing well in involving parents in the school?
2. On what areas of parental involvement should the school concentrate?
3. How can we assist in enhancing parental involvement in the school?
4. What barriers are there to parents becoming more involved in the school?

Consider closing the meeting by expanding the committee charged with developing this plan by adding a number of parents. It is important that parents be representative of the community. Remember, committees that are too large have difficulty functioning effectively.

4. Develop the Plan
At this point the committee can commence designing a plan to meet local needs that utilizes local resources. Important resources include: information from the staff meeting(s) and the public meeting(s), resources that have been identified earlier or gathered in support of the initiative, and the parents and teachers on the committee.

5. Implement the Plan
A very important part of the implementation involves the communication of initiatives to the various school and community audiences.

6. Assess the Plan
Remember to assess the plan in terms of its original objectives. Stakeholders should be involved in the assessment.

7. Revise the Plan
Revise the plan in accordance with feedback from the assessment and to meet evolving needs.
1. What experiences encouraged you or discouraged you in school? Was there anyone in particular who helped you in school?

Only eight people felt they had been encouraged in school. Although some people mentioned family and friends as encouraging them in their education, five people indicated that teachers provided them most encouragement in school. Mrs. Davidson was one teacher who kept me going when I wanted to quit grade 12,” said one parent. Another parent indicated it was her grade 8 teacher who encouraged her to stay in school. However, she also said “another teacher had no tolerance for us.” Another parent said activities and her friends helped her to get through school.

Most parents (16 of 24) indicated they received no encouragement, but were rather discouraged, in school. Seven parents identified racism and prejudice specifically as the major reasons for discouragement.

“Prejudice discouraged me. I didn’t fit in,” said one parent.

Another parent indicated that racism discouraged him. He felt left out because he didn’t get invited to trips, events or games.

A parent said she was discouraged by “being native, having to defend myself with teachers and students.” She said she was encouraged by “seeing my friends going down, going nowhere in life. Having nothing, wanting to eat.”

“The biggest problem I faced was racism,” said one parent. “It wasn’t very bad or was nearly nonexistent in the city schools, but in the smaller schools it is everywhere. The sad thing about it was that a lot of the teachers showed me racism as well. I was not encouraged when I had something to complete or complimented when I finished something. It was more like, ‘Oh, you actually finished. I thought you wouldn’t.’ I was made to feel like I was worthless and not wanted.”

“My determination encouraged me,” said another parent. “I was discouraged by the attitude of other peers toward me and the lack of interest from teachers.”

Other factors also discouraged parents from completing school. “I, myself, was very interested in my schooling. I became discouraged when I had to be a mother to my younger siblings.”

Other parents indicated that school was very boring or “pointless.”

“No one really helped me in school,” said a parent. The work was hard, but she said she got things done and decent marks got her through. “Mean classmates, mean teachers” was what discouraged her most.

2. What is your opinion of the quality of schools your children are now attending?

Half of the parents (12) were satisfied with the quality of the schools. “My opinion is the quality is better,” said one parent. “My children are doing good and haven’t had any serious complaints. Teachers and staff have been fair to my kids.”

Two parents indicated the high school was doing a better job than the elementary and junior high school.

Another parent indicated the elementary school quality was very low. There is “no equality in teacher time for students. If a child is not fitting to a teacher that child is pushed along. My daughter is in grade 2 and still struggling with her teacher. I demanded a resource to take her to
outside screening and it was that request that got her the valuable extra help she desperately needed. She should have been given that help from the beginning of school."

Five had no opinions about school quality. Several of the remaining parents commented about discipline. “Schools these days are not teaching children respect. There is no discipline and many of the problem children are not learning.”

Several of the remaining comments related to the theme of prejudice. “Very, very prejudiced,” said one parent.

Another parent said the schools are very racist toward Native youth. “They do not encourage the children and it seems they do not want them in the schools at all,” she said. “One youth said a teacher was being racist toward him and when asked she replied, ‘I never taught Natives before.’ Like we are slower or do not have the thinking capacity as other peoples.”

Finally, a parent said she didn’t see anything wrong with the school [structure] itself. “They [just] don’t care about the Native children.”

3. In your opinion, what can be done to improve the education of your children?

Seven parents had no answer or didn’t know what to suggest to improve the education of their children, but the remaining parents suggested a range of ideas from special training for teachers to help them avoid racism to the establishment of a Native school. Five parents touched on the theme of racism. Comments were: “Stop the racism in the faculty.” “Change teachers’ attitudes toward Native students.” “Treat students equally.” “Treat them with respect.”

“Stamping” kids with the “bad guy” brush is a problem stated a parent. “Teachers are not always right, students do have things to say.”

Several parents indicated more Aboriginal teachers and counselors are needed as way to create more understanding and tolerance of differences among Native students. One parent indicated that “more traditional people [are needed] to do and talk to [students] to bring up their self-esteem.” Better screening of potential teachers is required, suggested another parent. “Are they really wanting to teach or just want to be bullies?”

A parent suggested the schools need training to “help those teachers who do not know anything about us!”

A number of parents suggested more time is needed working one-on-one with Native students with better understanding of student’s individual needs. More money, more teaching assistants, more teachers per grade would make it possible to give extra attention to students who need it. One parent suggested just understanding and listening more would help. She said “everyone is different. They may be difficult to understand. Take time and realize where and what you could do to help kids like this, not ignore and let them be because they’ll end up quitting.” Another parent added, “Treat us as equals; do not ignore us because we are different.”

“Help them find their goals early and guide them towards them. Try to identify problems early and address them. Make them feel secure and wanted,’ suggested a parent.

“The children that have learning or behavior problems should be helped instead of pushed through the system,” said a parent. “I personally know a fifteen-year-old boy that is in grade 10 and he cannot read. What’s up with that?”
From “Improving The Aboriginal Educational Experience In Public Schools” By John Fisher and Leith Campbell. Research findings prepared for Peace Wapiti School Board, June, 2002

Maybe “we should be looking at our own school!” suggested a parent. There is “no support for our kids that need help. You have to be forceful in order to get help. You have to demand to get help! We need advocates for the parents who cannot speak for themselves.”

Several parents indicated that many Native students are quieter than other students. “Understand why the kids are shy,” suggested a parent. “Do not discipline shyness as not knowing.” Teachers “could have a little understanding of quiet, shy kids; not just leaving them unattended,” said another parent.

Several parents said greater variety in learning activities is needed. Make school relate more to the outside world, said one parent. Another parent said more “field trips are needed” with activities that are less one sided. [Activities that would appeal to Native youth and support Native culture?] More involvement with parents and more fun activities, suggested another parent. More education is needed on smoking and drug abuse, said a parent.

“Parents need to know the importance of education,” said a parent. And “children need to [learn] the importance of education from their parents.” Another parent said, “My child needs to take his own initiative to want to do things he wants to do or not do.” Somehow we need to “have them come to school,” a parent suggested.
Goal #4
Theme 15: FNMI Recognition as an Integral Part of the School

Sample Activities

**Activity: Four Questions**

The facilitator writes the following questions on the board and the participants divide into groups. Use questions such as:

What do you hope to learn from this workshop?
What does “recognition” mean to you?
What are your favourite pastimes or hobbies?

Each group member takes a turn answering the questions for the rest of their group.

**Activity: Sharing Circle**

The facilitator writes the following on the board and reads it to the group:

FNMI culture needs to be recognized and respected as an integral part of the school.

Participants then sit in a sharing circle and share stories and opinions about the recognition of FNMI students in their school and community.

**Activity: Brainstorming**

Participants brainstorm the various achievements of the FNMI students and people of their community. What talents, skills, and goals do they have? The facilitator summarizes the ideas and emphasizes that displaying and celebrating FNMI achievements in the local and world community helps to make the school more inviting for FNMI parents.

**Activity: Awarding FNMI Achievement**

Participants review the material presented in summary sheet 1 about the National Aboriginal Achievement Award. In groups, they discuss the following questions:

What is the value of these types of awards?
How could this award be promoted in the classroom or school?
Are there local awards for Aboriginal achievement in your school?
If there is no such award locally, could you create such an award? How?

Volunteers from each group present the highlights of the group’s discussion to the others.

**Activity: FNMI Role Models**

Participants review the material on FNMI roles models from summary sheet 2. The facilitator leads a discussion and/or brainstorming on the importance of having positive FNMI role models for FNMI students.

The participants then divide into groups and create action plans for:

- **Finding positive FNMI role models from the community**
- **Using role models in the classroom**
- **Incorporating these role models into the school community**

Each group then presents its action plan to the other groups.

**Activity: Quotes and Letters**

The facilitator has the participants take turns reading a quote to the rest of the group. Participants then divide into groups and choose one of the quotes as inspiration for a “letter to the editor” for the school or local paper. The letter should address “recognizing FNMI culture as integral to the community”. Each group then shares their letter with the others.

**Activity: Group Achievement**

Each group decides on an award for each of its group members based on his or her achievement and contribution during the workshop. The facilitator then presents “awards” to each group based on their input and progress during the workshop, for example, “imagination award”, “creativity award”, “hard work award”, or “cooperation award”.

**Activity: 5-minute Reflection Poem**

Participants write:

- one thing they LEARNED today
- one thing that HELPED them learn today
- one thing the they CONTRIBUTED to the learning today
- one thing they feel they can TRY
- how they FEEL
National Aboriginal Achievement Awards

From www.naaf.ca

In the rich traditional lives of Aboriginal nations, honouring, or offering recognition for initiative, achievement and selflessness, is a common practice. From eagle feather to honour song, the endeavours of the individual to the well-being of the collective, were respected and celebrated from primordial to present. The National Aboriginal Achievement Awards are a modern manifestation of an ancient tradition.

The National Aboriginal Achievement Awards were established in 1994 to pay tribute to United Nations International Year of the World's Indigenous People. The NAAA is an awards system recognizing career achievements by Aboriginal people in diverse occupations. In total 14 awards are presented to recognize twelve occupational achievers, one lifetime achievement recipient, and a youth achiever who receives a $10,000 prize to further their education.

The awards were created as a way to build self-esteem and pride for the Aboriginal community and to provide role models for Aboriginal youth. For the general public, the awards cast the capabilities and aspirations of Aboriginal people in a new and powerful light. They serve to inform this audience of the strides that can be made when an individual has the discipline, drive and determination to accomplish their goals.

Sponsored by the public and private sectors, they are an initiative of the Aboriginal community and represent the highest honour the community bestows upon its own achievers. The Awards are bestowed to individuals of First Nations, Inuit and Métis heritage who have reached a significant level of achievement in their respective occupations. Each recipient receives a beautifully stylized lucite sculpture. Embedded in the body of the award is the National Aboriginal Achievement Award image created by artist Maxine Noel. Each recipient also receives an honouring medallion created by Coast Salish artist, Susan Point. To date 140 outstanding men and women have been recognized for their career achievements.

Sample of Previous Recipients:

Pearl Calahasen - Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, first Métis woman ever elected in Alberta, MLA since 1989
Osuitok Ipeelee - sculptor
Tina Keeper - actor

Special Youth Award

The National Aboriginal Achievement Awards will bestow a special youth award upon a young achiever between the ages of 15 and 24 who is of First Nations, Inuit or Métis ancestry. The youth recipient will receive a $10,000 scholarship to further their education and/or career, and will be recognized at the gala event. There is no cash prize for the 12 career achievers or the lifetime achievement award recipient.

To nominate a youth achiever, complete the official nomination form and send to the NAAA Secretariat with two letters of support and a résumé or biographical equivalent. The nomination form and letters should articulate a strong and coherent argument as to why the nominee would merit the youth award.
Adapted from *Safe and Caring Schools for Aboriginal Students*, the Alberta Teachers' Association

**Why are role models important?**

- help FNMI students see the possibilities for their own success
- counter negative stereotypes that feed prejudice and discrimination
- is important in the development of self-esteem and self-respect

**How can I recognize and promote role models in the classroom?**

- Use FNMI role models to illustrate success, pride and accomplishment
- Use a bulletin board, posters or a class website to feature FNMI success stories
- Integrate FNMI role models into language arts (autobiography, poetry, literature, etc.) and social studies (historic figures, political activists, etc.)
- Have FNMI role models visit the class and describe how they worked towards their accomplishments

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### FNMI Role Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Names</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activists</td>
<td>Mary Two-Axe Earley, Giindajin Haawasti Guujaaw, Buffy Sainte-Marie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>Gary Farmer, Chief Dan George, Graham Greene, Tina Keeper, Tanto Cardinal, Jay Silverheels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architect</td>
<td>Douglas Cardinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>Dinah Anderson, Kenojuak Ashevak, Kiawak, Ashoona, Pitseolak Ashoona, Ramus Avingaq, Dorothy Grant, David Hannan, Gilbert Hay, Shirley Moorhouse, Daphne Odjig, Bill Reid, John Terriak, Christine Sioui, Wawanoloath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletes</td>
<td>Waneek Horn (water polo), Tom Longboat (track and field), Alwyn Morris (kayaking), Brian Trottier, Jordin Tootoo (hockey), Darren Zack (baseball)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Wade Cachagee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Filmmakers</td>
<td>Alanis Obomsawin, Denis Arcand</td>
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<td>Historian</td>
<td>Terry Lusty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical Figures</td>
<td>Joseph Brant (politician and missionary), Gabriel Dumont (military leader), Louis Riel (politician), Chief Crowfoot, Joseph Brant (Mohawk, Ontario)</td>
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<td>Law</td>
<td>Rose Boyko, Roberta Jamieson</td>
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<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Cornelia Weiman</td>
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<td>Musicians</td>
<td>Susan Aglukark, John Kim Bell, Fara, Tom Jackson, Kashtin, Laura Vinson, Buffy Sainte-Marie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writers</td>
<td>Jeanette Armstrong, E. Pauline Johnson, Kateri Damm, Basil H. Johnston, Nora Dauenhauer, Mitiarjuk Nappaaluk, Joseph Dion, Drew Hayden Taylor, Tomson Highway, Thomas King, Carla Robinson</td>
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Elders’ Thoughts on Education


Quotes on Education from Elders

“We came from a system of laws and relationships. The laws were the parameters of acceptable behaviour within each relationship. Our lifestyles have changed a lot but the necessity to survive with integrity is still with me. We must elevate our discussion in a way that we can identify the principles.”

Wes Fineday, Regina

“We need Elders to provide us with the guiding principles and to interpret for us how the traditional principles are to be translated in the contemporary urban context.”

George Calliou, Sucker Creek, Alberta

“Business cannot be separated from the environment. The environment cannot be separated from the government. Government cannot be separated from social and economic issues. People cannot be separated from all of the above. Perhaps it is time to recognize this and make efforts to reinstate a whole-life perspective in education.”

Patrick Kelly, Sto:lo Nation

“What will happen a hundred years from now? We depend on the wage economy but nothing much is going on. There are not a lot a jobs for our people. Our trapping is being extinguished slowly. Our young people don't eat wild meat. They want peas and pork chops from Edmonton. It is a mixed up lifestyle. We have to give our kids independence. Something is missing from the education system.”

George Blondin, Rae-Edzo, NT

“I could master some of the things that were fed to me, but I didn't know how to place them internally. Tell me and I will spit it out back to you, but how it fits in my perspective, it didn't make sense.”

Yaqui voices

“Under self-government we are able to bring things back to our people, develop our traditional laws. We are trying to put ourselves back together. We speak with one voice. We try to bring back as much as we can into our life, into our own future. When the government paddles the other way, we know why. We make them straighten up the boat so that nothing will go against us no more.”

Roddy Blackjack, Little Salmon/Carmacks, YT
Goal #4
Theme 16: Helping your Child be Successful in School

This workshop is adapted from the former “Learning for Success” project in British Columbia (1991/99). The project adapted the workshop from “The Circle of Courage” (Brendtro, Brokenleg, Van Bockerin: 1991).

Target Audience: FNMI Parents

Sample Activities

**Connecting**

Begin with a short passage from the book *Reclaiming Youth at Risk*

**Introduction:**

The Facilitator introduces the topic:

*Our work together is based on “The Circle of Courage”, from Reclaiming Youth at Risk. It has become a book for all people who work with children and youth who are struggling but it also is a valuable resource for working with all children. Every child needs to feel that they belong, that they are capable, that they are good at something and, that they have the privilege and responsibility of sharing with others.*

**Activity: Talk About...**

Participants are invited to think about: “What are some wishes, dreams, and desires you have for your children?” (2 minutes). Participants then share their thinking with a partner (3 minutes). Participants then share one of their partner’s ideas with the table group. (recorder takes down ideas on chart paper)

**Processing**

**Activity: Ten Most Important Qualities**

Participants are asked to think about their wishes and desires for their children, then list the 10 most important qualities you would like to see in your child (3-4 minutes). Participants then circle the three that are most important to them and are asked to consider:

- why these qualities are important to them
- What worries them most about their child?

Participants then ask themselves if it matches the most important words they chose. The participants then divide into partners and decide who will speak first (The listener is not to interrupt.). He or she then shares the three most important qualities and why.

**Option:** Participants share what worries them about their child. Do not ask people to do this if you think they are not feeling safe. Asking ‘the room’ to
do this with the option of ‘passing’ may also be difficult as it will single out the people who want to pass.

**Activity: The Courage Circle**

Facilitator walks through each quadrant providing a brief summary of each quadrant, writing key words in each quadrant as he or she speaks.

Participants generate the three most important things that you would see, hear, feel, or notice in a child that feels a healthy sense of belonging, has mastery of a skill, a concept, knows he/she can take of themselves (independent) and is generous to others (5-7 minutes).

**Activity: Exploring a Quadrant - Healthy Behaviour**

Participants divide into four groups. Each group is given one quadrant. Each group is given a different colored chart pen - they keep this marker for the entire process. Each team records the key points from each person’s thinking: the 3 most important positive things you would see, hear, feel, or notice (10 minutes).

Have teams post their charts - make sure there is space between the chart paper. Invite participants to visit each poster as a team and add suggestions (3-4 minutes at each poster, facilitator signals for people to move between charts).

Invite participants to reflect alone: “What were you aware of as you read through the charts?” “What connections did you make to your own children?” Invite participants to share their reflection with the whole group.

**Activity: Exploring a Quadrant - Unhealthy Behaviour**

In the same 4 groups, with the same quadrant, participants are given new chart paper. Each group label its chart and each group discusses and records what they would see, hear, feel, and notice in a child that does NOT feel a sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity (15 minutes).

Instead of posting this time, you may wish to have participants pass their paper to the table on their left. That team reads and may add suggestions (5 minutes/paper). Continue passing the papers around until they reach the original team. Post these papers beside the healthy charts.

Invite participants to read each quadrant, healthy and unhealthy behaviors and note what they are noticing about the behaviors. Facilitate a short discussion on what they noticed.

Invite participants to reflect alone (3-4 minutes). “What were you aware of as you talked about the unhealthy signals?” “What connections did you make to your own children?” Invite participants to share their reflections with the group of the first question BUT NOT THE SECOND. If you think the group is feeling safe, invite participants to share what they noticed about their own child with their partner.
### Activity: Looking Back at your Lists

Participants are asked to look back at their lists of the three most important qualities they would like to see in their child. They are asked: “What do you notice about your list and the list shown in the “Circle of Courage”? (3 minutes). Participants share their ideas with their partners (2-3 minutes).

### Activity: Generating Ideas

Participants are asked to think about one quadrant that interests them the most. Each of the four tables represents one of the quadrants. Participants move to the quadrant of their choice and work with the group who comes to that table to share and generate ways to nurture a healthy sense of belonging, or mastery, or independence, or generosity (20 minutes).

### Activity: Sharing our Thinking - 3-2-1

Participants write:

1. **3** things you feel good about that you are already doing with your child
2. **2** things you have learned at this workshop
3. **1** new thing you plan to try
**Goal**
The goal of this workshop is to reinforce and build upon the positive parenting and nurturing skills we have in our community. Together we will celebrate what we do well and support each other in the generating of new ideas as we talk about ways to help our children be successful in school.

"None of us is as smart as all of us together."

I have invited you to work in partners because we know that when people work together on important topics everyone benefits. We all get smarter as we polish our thinking against the experience of others.

Findings from research done on reading and on how the human brain learns also tell us that we get smarter when we talk through our ideas and stimulate our thinking in many ways. We no know that talk, perceptive challenging talk, is one key to kindling success.

**Unhealthy Behaviours**

Discouragement among children and youth is not a new phenomenon. Discouragement is a common human emotion, everyone experiences discouragement at some time in their lives. A person who has the skills and support from family and/or community to overcome discouragement is able to move past the feelings and move on with their lives.

Alienated children and youth, those who do not have positive relationships with family and/or community can sink deep into discouragement and eventually into consistent unhealthy behavior patterns. These negative patterns of behavior dominate the person’s life and activities such as school have little or no relevance to their lives. Their only goal in life is to survive the emotional pain.

In 2004 we have far too many alienated children and youth, discouraged, angry and deep into patterns of unhealthy behavior. We see these children all around us. One discouraged child is too many.
The Circle of Courage

Adapted from Reclaiming Youth Network website: www.reclaiming.com

The Circle of Courage is ...

- a model of youth empowerment
- based on contemporary developmental research, the work of early youth pioneers, and FNMI philosophies of child care
- encompasses four core values: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity
- these values are validated by contemporary child research and compare favorably with Coopersmith's bases of self-esteem: significance, competence, power, and virtue

The Four Quadrants

| Belonging          | FNMI culture celebrates the universal need for belonging: “Be related, somehow, to everyone you know.”
|                   | treating others as family forges powerful social bonds of community
|                   | the tribe, not the nuclear family, always ensured the survival of the culture – though parents might fail, the tribe was always there
| Mastery           | an important lesson in FNMI Aboriginal culture is that one should always observe those with more experience to learn from them
|                   | the child is taught to see someone with more skill as a model for learning, not as a rival
|                   | one must strive for mastery for personal reasons, not to be superior to someone else
| Independence      | FNMI teaching is designed to build respect and teach inner discipline
|                   | children are encouraged to make decisions, solve problems, and show personal responsibility
|                   | adults model, nurture, teach values, and give feedback, but children are given opportunities to make choices
| Generosity        | a central goal in FNMI child-rearing is to teach the importance of being generous and unselfish
|                   | in helping others, youth create their own proof of worthiness: they have the power to make a positive contribution to another human life
Excerpt from the International Child and Youth Care Network website:  www.cyc-net.org

By Martin Brokenleg

This excerpt is from the first in a series of four journal issues exploring the principles of Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity that are embodied in the Native American Circle of Courage. The author introduces the conceptual background of this model of youth development and discusses the first principle — Belonging.

Cultural Tails and Personal Tales

Our worldviews are shaped by our cultural and family attachments. Each of us drags around a cultural tail a thousand years long, as well as our more personal family tale. My Lakota (Sioux) grandfather was born in the mid-1800s and did not see his first White man until after the encroachments of Custer’s cavalry. He proudly carried the name Brokenleg, which memorialized an injury incurred in his job of training wild horses. Up until his death at 99 years of age, he only spoke Lakota as he would tell us, his grandchildren, stories of our culture before we were subjugated by European settlers.

My father should have been given his own special name, but, following the European patriarchal tradition, he was given the surname of his father and the first name of Noah. When he became old enough to go to school, he was captured and hauled away in one of the trucks that came each fall to our reservation from government or church sponsored boarding schools. The motto of colonial education at the time was "Kill the Indian to save the child." Thus, Whites thought they were rescuing these children from savage families and bringing them to civilization as embodied in militaristic boarding schools. These children, who had never experienced force dealt out in anger by an adult, were beaten if they spoke their native language.

The Europeans believed Indian children were little primitives in need of socialization. In reality, they had brought with them a very backward theory of child development, one that assumed children were evil and had to be punished into submission. In contrast, tribal peoples had already embraced many democratic principles and had sophisticated systems of childrearing. The goal of discipline was to teach courage instead of obedience. Elders used respectful communications with children to instill the values of being a good relative. In the words of a Lakota leader:

The days of my infancy and childhood were spent in surroundings of love and care. In manner, gentleness was my mother's outstanding characteristic. Never did she, nor any of my caretakers, ever speak crossly to me or scold me for failures or shortcomings.

(Standing Bear, 1933, p. 46)

Anthropologists have long been aware that North American tribal cultures had very different systems of discipline than the coercive obedience and harsh corporal punishment common in Western culture. At the core of the punitive mindset of the latter is a view of the child as inferior to the adult. If one were to say “You are acting like a child” in any European language, this would be interpreted as an insult. In my Lakota tongue, this phrase would be “You are acting like a sacred being,” which is certainly not a putdown. When an early treaty was broken by the U.S. government, a Lakota chief remarked, “What would we expect from people who beat their sacred beings!”
**We Are All Relatives**
In traditional tribal kinship systems, the siblings of my parents would also be my mothers and fathers, and the persons Europeans call cousins we would call brothers and sisters. Most everyone with white hair was a grandparent. Similar kinship models exist among tribal peoples worldwide, as reflected in the African adage, "It takes a village to raise a child," and the Cree belief, "Every child needs many mothers."

Noted psychoanalyst Erik Erikson studied childrearing on our reservations to prepare a chapter in his book *Childhood and Society* (1950). He was shocked to discover that some Sioux children didn't even know who their "real" parents were until it came time to fill out papers for school admission. Lakota grandmothers did not share Erikson's concern that shared parenting was destructive to a child. In fact, they were more concerned about the poor little White kid who had only one mother - what would happen if that mother were too young, immature, or overwhelmed by her own problems?

My aunt, Ella Deloria, was a teacher and anthropologist who described the spirit of belonging in Native American culture in this manner: “Be related, somehow, to everyone you know” (Deloria, 1943, p. 46). The ultimate test of kinship was not genetic but behavioral: You belonged as a relative if you acted like you belonged. Treating others as kin forged powerful human bonds that drew everyone into a network of relationships based on mutual respect.

**The Circle of Courage**
In 1988 we were asked by the Child Welfare League of America to make a presentation on Native American child development principles to an international conference in Washington, DC. We called our synthesis of this research on tribal wisdom the Circle of Courage, and it has been the basis of various publications, including our book *Reclaiming Youth at Risk* (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 1990). We worked with Lakota artist George Blue Bird, who created the art that illustrated these principles. The Circle of Courage as reproduced here is a medicine wheel, The Circle of Courage which is used by tribal peoples to illustrate that all must be in balance and harmony. The art accompanying the Circle is reproduced on the cover of this issue.

The Circle of Courage portrays the four developmental needs of children: Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity. The various Native tribes do have many differences, but these four principles can be found in the traditional writings and practices of indigenous peoples throughout North America. These values grew out of cultures with structures markedly different from the structure of hierarchal European society. Riane Eisler (1987) contended that the two basic models of cultures are the Dominator and Partnership paradigms. The Dominator culture was the traditional model that appeared throughout much of European history. The Partnership model may well have existed in European antiquity and is still seen in many tribal cultures that are organized around more democratic principles.
Section 4: Workshops

Section Summary:
- Introduction
- Goal #1
- Goal #2
- Goal #3
- Goal #4

Introduction

Section 4 contains various activity ideas under different themes based on the four goals:

Goal #1  First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement is increased as measured by Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams.

Themes:
- Achievement Tests and FNMI Students
- Expanding Assessment and Evaluation for FNMI Students
- Classroom Tools and Strategies for Understanding
- Building Relationships to Improve Learning

Goal #2  The school has an environment that is respectful of and appreciates First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, history and worldview.

Themes:
- Appreciating FNMI Culture
- Fostering Respect and Avoiding Stereotypes
- Understanding FNMI Worldviews
- School as a Caring Community

Goal #3  Barriers preventing First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success are identified and removed by the school community.

Themes:
- Broadening Our Cultural Understanding
- Adding Aboriginal Content to the Classroom
- Creating a Supportive Community
- The Importance of FNMI Knowledge

Goal #4  Parents of FNMI students are involved in the school community and perceive the school as inviting and engaging to parents.

Themes:
- Involving FNMI Parents in the School Community
- FNMI Representation at all Levels of the School Community
- FNMI Recognition as an Integral Part of the School
- Helping your Child to be Successful in School
Activities

Facilitators can choose the activities that best fit the needs of their audience and mix and match from different themes, or even from different goals. For further explanation of an activity, refer to the “Strategies” section of this resource.

Graphic Organizers

The activity descriptions may refer to graphic organizers that participants can use during the workshop. These organizers help to solidify and organize people’s ideas and information collected. The graphic organizers can be found in the appendices.

Summary Sheets

These printable sheets contain summarized information from the resources and can be given as handouts or used as overheads / PowerPoint™ slides. The summary sheets help by:

- Reinforcing the key messages and facts contained in the material
- Giving visual reinforcement during discussion
- Keeping the group on topic and focused
- Giving the participants easy to digest excerpts that they can keep for future reference

Workshop Considerations

The tasks and activities included in a workshop should:

- Be varied to meet a variety of learning styles
- Build a safe and caring environment so teachers can explore their work openly and honestly
- Include humour, where appropriate
- Provide time for personal reflection
- Provide opportunities for participants to reflect and set goals for change
- Provide opportunities for participants to interact with the materials in multiple ways – e.g. discussions, representations of learning
- Provide time for participants to share their learning and what they plan to do with their learning.
Section 5: Assessment

Section Summary:

- Introduction
- Participant Assessment Worksheets (#1 - #5)
- Facilitator Assessment Worksheets (#6 - #10)

Introduction

Assessment is the best way to truly see the strengths and weaknesses of your workshop. Various elements of the workshop should be assessed by the participants and the facilitator, such as:

- **Material** (resources such as film, articles, books, artwork, etc.)
- **Activities** (what was done in class with the content)
- **Delivery** (how the workshop was facilitated)
- **Facilities** (the workshop environment)

Participants should also assess their own learning and changes to their perceptions and thinking.

Allow time at the end of the workshop for participants to fill out assessment forms, as otherwise they are unlikely to fill them in. Emphasize the importance of the assessments to the FNMI professional development program.

Use any or all of the workshop assessment forms that follow to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop.
## Workshop Assessment #1: Expectations

**Name of workshop:** ________________________________

**Date:** ____________________  **Facilitator name:** ___________________

Please complete the sentences in each box:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I came expecting ...</th>
<th>I got ...</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I value ...</th>
<th>I want next ...</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Workshop Assessment #2: Remember, reflect and question

Name of workshop: ___________________________________________________

Date: ______________________ Facilitator name: _______________________

List as many key words or phrases as you can recall about the topic:
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

What 3 ideas/skills presented in the workshop do you consider most important?

Idea/Skill #1: ______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Idea/Skill #2: ______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Idea/Skill #3: ______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

What 3 questions has this workshop raised for you?

Question #1: ______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Question #2: ______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Question #3: ______________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Workshop Assessment #3: 3-2-1 Reflection

Name of workshop: ____________________________
Date: __________________ Facilitator name: ____________

3 things I learned today

1. 
2. 
3. 

2 observations I made about my learning today

1. 
2. 

1 “ah-ha!” insight I had today

1.
Workshop Assessment #4: Questions to Ponder

Name of workshop: ___________________________________________________

Date:_______________________  Facilitator name: _________________________

What were the strengths of the workshop?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

What changes would you make to improve the workshop?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

What are you still wondering about?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

How do you plan to use what you have learned in this workshop?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Other comments

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Workshop Assessment #5: Favourite and Least Favourite

Name of workshop: ___________________________________________________

Date: __________________________ Facilitator name: _________________________

How well were the planned outcomes met?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Super</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacing and process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What did you enjoy most in the workshop?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

What did you find most useful for your work?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

What would you change about the workshop?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Other comments

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Workshop Assessment #6: Facilitator Reflections

Name of workshop: ___________________________________________________

Date: _______________________ Facilitator name: _________________________

What aspects of the workshop were the most effective? Why?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

What aspects of the workshop were the least effective? Why?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

How successful do you think the workshop was overall? Why?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

What changes will you make for next time?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Other comments
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Workshop Assessment #7: Goal #1 Evidence of Understanding

Name of workshop: ___________________________________________________

Date: _____________________  Facilitator name: _______________________

The participants showed an ability/ willingness to:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Engage in activities and discussions throughout the workshop.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>Explanation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Take ownership of ___________: shifting their language from &quot;You&quot; and &quot;They&quot; to “I” and “We”.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Understand the importance of infusion of Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Question own teaching strategies.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Examine current, accurate, culturally relevant resources for FNMI students.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Examine current research that addresses the issue of FNMI students academic achievement.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Leave the workshop wanting more information and excited about future outcomes for FNMI student achievement in academics. The passion is kindled.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Recognize the uniqueness of the variety of the Nations.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Demonstrate honest reflection and express thoughts and feelings without judgment.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Leave the workshop feeling valued, knowing they are a valued part of the process.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Collaborate with other educators and community members to improve the academic success of FNMI learners.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Workshop Assessment #8: Goal #2 Evidence of Understanding

Name of workshop: ___________________________________________________

Date:_______________________  Facilitator name: _________________________

The participants showed an ability/ willingness to:

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Full and active participation in the workshop activities</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Demonstrate change in “I believe” statements</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Be motivated to change beliefs and attitudes, experience personal growth,</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Appreciate being in the room.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Demonstrate animation and voice desire for more learning</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ask questions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Share ideas and experiences</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Assumption of risk: open to change, willingness to change; acknowledgement of need to change</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Post workshop discussion about their learning</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The participants showed an ability/ willingness to:

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Identify the barriers to FNMI learner success</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Know that barriers impact FNMI learner success</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Shift their thinking to personal responsibility for remove the barriers that are in their control - inspired</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Engage in the workshop.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Participate in the activities.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Respond and interact with the research, resources and the people in the room.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Attentive - listening to others.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Inquisitive - asks questions.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Workshop Assessment #10: Goal #4 Evidence of Understanding**

**Name of workshop: _________________________________**

**Date: __________________ Facilitator name: ________________**

**The participants showed an ability/ willingness to:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The activities</th>
<th>Explanation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Share their new ideas, connections/insights, feelings about the content of the workshop.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Challenge the goal: “The goal is not doable because____.”</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Inquire/clarify their thinking: “What do you mean by that?”</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Move out of their comfort zone: “I realize now what I need to do ______ .”</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Be motivated to change/ implement ideas in their school/classroom.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Engage in discussions and activities.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 6: Appendices

Appendices included:

- Agenda Sample
- Facilitator Script Sample
- Graphic Organizer #1: Workshop Action Plan
- Graphic Organizer #2: My Perceptions of FNMI Students
- Graphic Organizer #3: Brainstorming Web
- Graphic Organizer #4: Venn Diagram
- Graphic Organizer #5: KWL Chart
- Graphic Organizer #6: PMI Chart
- Graphic Organizer #7: Problem Solving Flow Chart
- Graphic Organizer #8: Story/Skit Planner
- Graphic Organizer #9: Timeline
- Graphic Organizer #10: What’s Important

Tools (from Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30 Guide to Implementation)

Backgrounders (from Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30 Guide to Implementation)
Sample Agenda

Appreciating FNMI Culture

Grande Prairie Junior High - January 15, 2004

Goal: The school has an environment that is respectful of and appreciates First Nations, Metis and Inuit cultures, history and world-view.

8:30  Opening Prayer
8:35  Introductions
9:00  “Like Me” - who are we? A chance to learn more about what we have in common
9:30  “Artifact hunt” - looking at artifacts in your school or community that might show to a visitor from another culture what is important to your values and beliefs
10:15  Break
10:30  “Protocol and Respect” - looking at FNMI protocols and how they foster respect in the community
11:45  Lunch
1:00  “Oral Traditions and Learning to Listen” - practice your listening skills through FNMI traditional storytelling
1:45  “Aboriginal Values” - learn about traditional Aboriginal values and what they bring to your school and community
2:30  Break
2:45  Focused Reading “Open Hearts, Open Hands”—read about native culture and discuss in groups
3:45  “Action Plan” - create an action plan for using what you have learned in the classroom and community
4:15  Wrap up
4:45  Closing Prayer

Thank-you for your participation and for helping to make this workshop a success!
Sample Facilitator Script

Appreciating FNMI Culture

Grande Prairie Junior High - January 15, 2004

Goal: The school has an environment that is respectful of and appreciates First Nations, Metis and Inuit cultures, history and world-view.

Before they arrive:
- Make sure you put up the posters and put supplies on the tables
- Remember to make one place wheelchair accessible for participant
- Set up the projector – check to make sure it is level

Opening Prayer:
- use “Welcoming” prayer from last workshop, but only the short version

Introductions:
- make sure that people are comfortable before beginning introductions
- model by introducing yourself - keep the tone friendly and light (smile!)

“Like Me”:
- remember that most participants will be non-Aboriginal junior high teachers
- extend this activity if you find people are still reserved and quiet
- add a fun one if it seems appropriate

“Artifact hunt”
- remember to show props (trophies, photos from around the community)
- check part way through to make sure people “get” this activity and are staying on topic

“Protocol and Respect”
- give examples that illustrate the concept of respect

Lunch:
- have sample stories available for participants to look through as they eat lunch (some will be staying and some will be eating off site)
- remember to play music

“Oral Traditions and Learning to Listen”:
- if there is time, start by reading the traditional creation story
- write story ideas on the board and look for people who are having trouble thinking of an idea

“Aboriginal Values”
- remember to give them time to really think about this information before discussing
Sample Facilitator Script - continued

Focused Reading “Open Hearts, Open Hands”
- if there is time, read quote on first page of article to set the tone
- point out posters and talk about the artwork on them – what do they tell us about Aboriginal values and beliefs?

“Action Plan”
- show the sample action plan when explaining how to use the graphic organizer
- remember to emphasize the importance of the action plan – this is how they make the workshop “work”

Wrap up
- remember to go through the flip charts and remind them of important points or discoveries
- have resource lists available for those who are interested
- remember to give out assessment sheets (give 5 minutes to fill them out) and collect them before they leave

Closing Prayer
- Use the “Farewell” prayer
- Try to say goodbye to each individual before they leave

After they leave:
- Return projector to room 224
- Don’t forget to take posters!
- Lock the door!
## Graphic Organizer #1
### Workshop Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short term goal(s)</th>
<th>What I have to do to achieve this goal</th>
<th>Supplies / resources I will need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long term goal(s)</th>
<th>What I have to do to achieve this goal</th>
<th>Supplies / resources I will need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Graphic Organizer #2**  
**My Perceptions of FNMI Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Why or why not:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is wrong to treat FNMI students differently than other students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Academic success is not as important to FNMI students as non-FNMI students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. FNMI students do not have the same pressure to get good grades as non-FNMI students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. FNMI students do not enjoy participating in class as much as non-FNMI students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. FNMI students prefer to spend time with other FNMI people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write at least ten adjectives to describe FNMI students.
# Graphic Organizer #5

**KWL Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What I know</td>
<td>What I want to find out</td>
<td>What I have learned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name: ____________________
Date: ____________________
Graphic Organizer #6
PMI Chart

Name: ___________________
Date: ___________________

Title: ____________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plus</th>
<th>Minus</th>
<th>Interesting Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graphic Organizer #7
Problem Solving Flow Chart

Name: ____________________
Date: _____________________

Issue/Problem:

Solution #1:
- Short Term Consequences:
- Long Term Consequences:

Solution #2:
- Short Term Consequences:
- Long Term Consequences:

Solution #3:
- Short Term Consequences:
- Long Term Consequences:

Solution #4:
- Short Term Consequences:
- Long Term Consequences:

The best solution is _____________________ because:

FNMI Facilitator Professional Development Resource 183
Theme: ____________________________________________________________

Setting:

Characters:

The problem/conflict:

Attempts to solve the problem:

Why the first attempts fail:

The solution or how it will turn out:

Name: ______________________

Date: _____________________
# Graphic Organizer #10
## What’s Important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s Important?</th>
<th>Why?</th>
<th>Because ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Name: ____________________  
Date: _____________________
Elders

Elders are the “spiritual librarians” of their communities and the keepers and teachers of oral traditions and knowledge. They keep and share knowledge of traditional ceremonies, stories and teachings from centuries past. Elders can be men or women of any age, but are often older members of the community.

Elders are considered vital to the survival of Aboriginal cultures and the transmission of cultural knowledge is an essential part of the preservation and promotion of cultural traditions and their protocols. Elders are always to be treated with great respect and honour.

The Roles of Elders

The roles of Elders vary greatly from community to community, as do the protocol and traditions they teach. Elders can be spiritual guides, healers, medicine men and women, artists, seers and councillors. Elders often perform such services as:

- Giving prayers before meetings
- Describing or performing traditional ceremonies
- Sharing traditional knowledge
- Giving spiritual advice to individuals
- Demonstrating traditional crafts and practices
- Teaching the community’s protocols

The wisdom of the Elders can be divided into two types: Spiritual Advice and Traditional Knowledge. According to Elder’s teachings, Spiritual Advice is the teachings of prayers to the Creator for personal well being or ceremonial activities. Traditional Knowledge has to do with knowing how to live in a way that is respectful to Mother Earth.
Requesting the Help of an Elder

When requesting the help of an Elder, follow these guidelines or the advice of someone in your community who works with the Elders:

1. Ask an Aboriginal community leader who works with the Elders or a fellow teacher with experience which Elder(s) would be best suited for your request, e.g., an Elder who has specific knowledge on a ceremony, the history of the community or a traditional skill.

2. With the help of the Aboriginal community leader and the permission of the governing body, arrange to meet with the Elder. To develop a trusting relationship, one or more home visits should be made with the Elder before making your request.

3. Find out beforehand if a tobacco offering is required. Tobacco, a traditional and sacred plant, is often offered before a consultation with an Elder. The offering of tobacco can change the atmosphere of a meeting from informal to formal. When offering tobacco, your mind must be clear, open and honest.

4. When the Elder indicates that he or she is ready and introductions have been made, state your request in a respectful way. For example:

   “We would be honoured if you would give a prayer at our next meeting.”
   “I would be honoured to benefit from your advice and guidance.”
   “We would be honoured if you would visit our class to share your knowledge on ….”

   It is also important that the Elder understands what kind of guidance you are requesting: Spiritual Advice or Traditional Knowledge.

5. If the Elder accepts the tobacco from you, he or she is accepting your invitation or request. The tobacco will then be offered to the Creator during a prayer for life and good health.

   If the Elder declines the tobacco, he or she is declining your invitation or request. The Elder may have prior commitments or unable to help you. Ask your community leader for clarification.

Gift-giving

Honorariums and gift giving are honoured traditions that come from the principle of reciprocity – when you take, something must be given in return. Once the Elder has fulfilled your request, an honorarium and/or gift should be given to express your gratitude and appreciation. Your Aboriginal community leader or guide will be able to give you some guidance on what is appropriate.
Hosting an Elder in the Classroom

When hosting an Elder in your classroom, follow these guidelines:

1. Have an Aboriginal leader who works with the Elders assist you in approaching and making your request to an Elder. See “Requesting the Help of an Elder”.

2. Prepare the students for the visit from the Elder by reviewing good listening practices and manners (such as avoiding eye contact and not asking inappropriate questions). Explain the importance of the role of the Elder in your community and the value of his or her knowledge.

3. Invite the Elder to the school to meet informally with the students and staff before he or she visits the class so that the Elder can become familiar with and comfortable in the school environment.

4. While the Elder is visiting the class, remember to:
   - Ensure that the students listen politely and are helpful and welcoming to the Elder.
   - Have one of the students show the Elder around the class, the Elder’s sitting area and where to find the washroom.
   - Have breaks during which the Elder can relax in another room (if the visit is long).
   - Always supervise the students’ interaction with the Elder to ensure that he or she is treated with respect and courtesy.
   - Provide a light lunch or snack for the Elder, such as tea, bannock and jam.

5. At the end of the visit, thank the Elder formally with a handshake and have the students express their appreciation for the visit. Present the Elder with a gift such as a blanket, towel set, slippers, socks, etc. and encourage the students to present a class gift, such as a food basket containing preserves, cheese, crackers, fruit, bannock, and cans of soup.

Tobacco and Print

In many Cree nations, Elders are traditionally given gifts of tobacco and “print” (a cotton broadcloth material two meters in length). The colours of a print are traditionally white, yellow, red, blue and green. You should be aware of the significance of the colours and the preferences of the Elder and choose accordingly.

For more information about Elders in your area and the protocol for interacting with them, contact your local Aboriginal council.
Protocols

Protocols are codes of etiquette that describe appropriate and respectful behaviour and ways of communicating when working with or visiting Aboriginal communities. Using proper protocols means following the custom of the people or community you are working with. Understanding and following protocols can bring about meaningful conversations that are relevant to the persons involved.

Each Aboriginal community has its own protocols. Protocols can change in a community without notification, for example when a new chief and council are elected. Protocols also change depending on whether the situation is informal or formal.

Examples of Protocols

Some examples of protocols are:

- Giving tobacco (Cree) or blankets or towels (Inuit) to an Elder when seeking their knowledge or counsel.
- Contacting the council and explaining your intentions before visiting an Aboriginal community.
- Opening or closing a meeting with a prayer.

Why do Protocols exist?

Protocols exist to …

- build trusting, honest relationships
- show respect for Aboriginal culture, values and beliefs
- allow others to speak in the voice and style of their cultural group
- create balance in the consultation and negotiation process
- open peoples’ minds to different attitudes
- improve relationships with Aboriginal communities
Understanding Protocols

When working with an Aboriginal community, it is important to understand what is important to the people who live there. Protocols reflect Aboriginal beliefs and values such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protocol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Get to know the community members, and understand and honour their protocols, expectations and unique qualities without stereotyping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>There are similarities and differences within and between Aboriginal communities related to languages, culture, and traditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Traditions</td>
<td>Personal contact and dialogue are extremely important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>It takes time to learn about Aboriginal communities and their members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Western cultures have played a role in shaping Aboriginal communities in the past and present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Family, extended family and community obligations have a higher priority than business and other concerns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arranging a Visit to an Aboriginal Community

When arranging to visit an Aboriginal community, follow these guidelines:

1. Find someone who can guide you, such as an Aboriginal liaison worker, cultural advisor or another member of the community (parent or teacher). Consider whether you will be covering topics that are gender-specific during your visit. If so, you should choose a female guide for female topics and a male guide for male topics.

   *If you do not know anyone who can help, look on the Web site of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs for a community profile. Scan the community profile for the name of an organization that has a successful working relationship with the community and contact them for advice and information about the community dynamics.*

2. Educate yourself on the structure, history, protocols, values and beliefs of the Aboriginal community you will be visiting. Fill out the organizer on the last page of this tool. Your guide should be able to provide much of the information you need.
3. Ask your guide to make arrangements for your visit to the community. Be prepared to share personal background information about yourself and the purpose of your visit.

4. After several days if you are still waiting to hear about your visit, follow up informally with the Aboriginal liaison worker by phone to see how the arrangements are going. Be patient and as flexible as possible. Allow time for a response.

5. If more time passes and you have not heard back, follow up with a letter to the Chief and Council.

6. If more time passes and you have not heard back, contact the local governing body by phone to explain your needs. Discuss what you would like to do on your visit and get direction on how to proceed.

**Visiting an Aboriginal Community**

While on your visit to the community, you may have an opportunity to visit with Elders. When visiting with an Elder, be sure to treat him or her with respect and patience. See Tool 18 Aboriginal Elders for more information. The following are some basic ideas to keep in mind.

- Speak carefully and use language that is respectful of the beliefs and values of the person you are speaking with.

- Be prepared to visit with many different Elders.

- Different community members may have different cultural values and beliefs.
Visiting an Aboriginal Community

Community: ________________________   Tribe: _________________
Number of residents: ____________  Approximate size: _____________

Purpose of my visit:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Name of my guide/advisor and his/her role in the community:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

People I will visit:
1. _________________  What I know about his/her beliefs, values and protocol:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. _________________  What I know about his/her beliefs, values and protocol:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. _________________  What I know about his/her beliefs, values and protocol:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4. _________________  What I know about his/her beliefs, values and protocol:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Other things I should keep in mind during my visit:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Background 1

From Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, 30 Guide to Implementation

Worldview and Education

Each Aboriginal group expresses their culture in various ways—a result of geographic circumstances and each group’s unique history. At the same time, many Aboriginal peoples throughout North America share guiding thoughts and traditional values which are similar in nature.

This common thread running through many Aboriginal cultures is sometimes referred to as a foundational worldview. It reflects the traditional values and guiding principals of Aboriginal societies. It suggests the way Aboriginal people see themselves in relation to all else.

Traditional Aboriginal education is based upon this worldview—it’s a holistic process where learning takes place in all four spheres of human experience: spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental. Spirituality, relationship and the expression of traditional values are the heart of Aboriginal education. Each sphere is addressed in each subject area or learning activity. For example, a science lesson would incorporate the spiritual, physical, emotional and mental spheres. This is in contrast to Western education where these dimensions tend to be addressed more in isolation—for example, the physical sphere is addressed in physical education and the spiritual sphere is addressed in religion or not at all.

In a contemporary setting, Aboriginal education is what happens when attitudes, approaches and actions allow Aboriginal students to become fully participating co-creators of our society. Aboriginal education recognizes the significant and valuable contributions—past, present and future—of Aboriginal people to our society.

Effective Aboriginal education doesn’t exclude other cultures but ensures that non-Aboriginal students and Aboriginal students alike are given the opportunity to see Aboriginal perspectives and the strengths and gifts of Aboriginal people reflected in our schools.

Let’s look at five strong and common threads in the Aboriginal worldview and brief examples of how you could bring them into your classroom.
Worldview and Education – continued

1. A holistic perspective

While Western education often focuses on verbal thinking, and uses an analytic approach to learning, Aboriginal worldviews address the whole person, encompassing their mental, physical, emotional and spiritual capabilities in relation to all living things.

This worldview sees a unified vision, rather than an artificial fragmentation of concepts. Western education often artificially separates learning into discrete subject areas. An Aboriginal perspective would see math, art and history as the whole learning in a lesson about positioning a pattern on the walls of a tipi or on a mural in the school hallway.

To foster this perspective:
- Build lessons around meaningful content that relates to students' experience and engage them in tasks based on their learning interests.
- Allow opportunities for visual symbolic thinking and holistic rather than analytic approaches to education.
- Look for cross-overs in subject area, for example, social studies, literature and art.
- Explore the ways in which learning can happen in different time frames. Can you change time frame on a field trip, for example, to accommodate opportunities for holistic learning?

2. The interconnectedness of all living things

The Aboriginal worldview recognizes the interconnectedness of all living things and the spirit that exists within each. Spirituality, personal health, community health and the health of the environment are understood to be interrelated.

With the recognition that we're connected to all things come the questions—What are my relations to other people? To nature? To the land?

Each individual assumes a responsibility for themselves, not in isolation, but in relation to all else. Each individual is regarded as a participating, contributing member of the group. Cooperation and sharing are vital.

To foster this perspective:
- Create a classroom community. Encourage each student to be a contributor.
- Encourage students to be aware of their sphere of influence and to always consider the impact of their actions.
3. Connection to the land and community

A sacred relationship with nature is the heart of traditional teachings and practices. From the understanding of the interconnectedness of all things comes the understanding that the well-being of the earth is essential for our survival.

Aboriginal people have been shaped by the land on which we live. We feel a stewardship towards the land—environmental concerns, both globally and locally, are very real for us. Our Elders remind us that we can live without many material things, but we can’t live without clean water, clean air, good soil—the gifts the earth provides.

Growing out of our connection to the earth, the Aboriginal worldview encompasses a fluid sense of time and the cyclical flow of change—day and night, the seasons, life and death.

Our connection to the Earth also teaches us about the importance of place and the connection to a place of belonging. The Earth provides the land on which we build our communities—land and community dictate a way of life.

To foster this perspective:
- Explore ways in which you can create a sense of home in your classrooms and schools for your students and families. How can you bring people into your classroom and welcome them?
- Recognize and celebrate the seasons and the changes that they bring. Use nature as your classroom. Mark occasions. This tends to be easier at elementary levels and harder in high school, where bigger, less personal surroundings and the pressures of curriculum mean that, rather than celebrating the seasons, for example, we mark the year by mid-terms and finals.
- Create opportunities for experiential learning. For example, if you’re teaching students about traditional Aboriginal food such as blueberries, plan the lesson so that you can take students out to the land and actually have the experience of picking berries.

4. Everything is always changing

In Aboriginal worldviews, people, relationships, situations—everything is dynamic. Individuals change and Aboriginal cultures evolve and adapt. Learning is recognized as a creative process from which new structures, forms and practices evolve.

To foster this perspective:
- Recognize that many aspects of mainstream learning try to lock a position into place—position papers, persuasive writing, debates, etc. Focus less on opinion and argument, right and wrong, and more on constructivist thinking and dialogue.
- Explore relationships and process between concepts. Encourage your students to go beyond dichotomous “this OR that” thinking. Help them focus to hold multiple possibilities instead.
- Be aware that Aboriginal languages tend to be more verb/process-based than English, which is more noun-based. Your Aboriginal students may be more process oriented in how they express themselves.

Native cultures are dynamic, adaptive and adapting, not limited to the past … they can invent structural forms and institutions as needed to ensure and strengthen group/individual survival.
Worldview and Education – continued

5. Strength in power with

In Aboriginal cultures, the worldviews reflect *power with*, rather than power over. The image for this concept is a circle, where “all creation” is included as equals, rather than a pyramid, where power increases as you move up.

*Power over* is a hierarchy, where the few stand above the many. *Power with* is a dialogue, where everyone stands on the ground, face to face.

Here are some ways to reflect *power with* in your classroom:

- Learn from your students about how they learn best, rather than deciding beforehand which strategies to use with them. Work in genuine collaboration with your students to determine the approaches that are most effective.
- Involve your students when making decisions about the classroom. Develop their skills so that they become effective at making real decisions about things that matter. Work toward consensus.
- Invite older or stronger students to mentor younger or less strong students. Find ways to reverse the process, e.g., find a skill that a younger student could mentor in an older.
- Welcome and validate parent input into decisions made about their child. Treat them as full partners in the collaboration to support their child’s learning.
- Recognize that parents are likely to have expert knowledge about their Aboriginal community. Ask for their help and advice in choosing classroom visitors and connecting with other resources.

Meeting the Need: Cultural Continuity

Aboriginal people often say, “Our children are our future.” By extension, then, the future depends on the effectiveness of education. Education shapes the pathways of thinking, transmits values as well as fact, teaches language and social skills, helps release creative potential and determines productive capacities (*People to people, nation to nation: Highlights of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples*, 1996, p. 82).

Overall, Aboriginal people want two things from the education system:

- They want schools to help children, youth and adults learn the skills they need to participate fully in the economy.
- They want schools to help children develop as citizens of Aboriginal nations—with the knowledge of their histories, languages and traditions necessary for cultural continuity (*People to people, nation to nation: Highlights of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples*, 1966).

When working with students in the classroom, we have come to ask many Aboriginal students about positive learning experiences in school. Every positive learning experience they name involved times when culture was reflected in the classroom or when there was a strong relationship of respect and encouragement with an educator.
Worldview and Education – continued

Regardless of their heritage, children learn best when they learn in context—when they can relate what they learn to their experience. In this sense, Aboriginal children are often at a disadvantage because many aspects of Aboriginal culture are not reflected in their classrooms.

To work effectively with Aboriginal students you will need to realize how vital cultural continuity is to their achievement.

What do we mean by cultural continuity?

It’s the process of integrating culture into the students’ daily learning, a process that encourages the students to learn from a position of wholeness, where they can see their reality and experience reflected in what’s being learned and how it’s being taught.

Cultural continuity threads through both content and process in the classroom. It involves culture in its broadest and deepest sense—it includes the worldviews and traditional values of Aboriginal peoples. These are expressed in history, religion, laws, the arts, patterns of communication, decision-making and relationships among individuals and groups—and all other aspects of human interaction and endeavour.

Aboriginal students are often under pressure to adapt to mainstream approaches—those who succeed in mainstream schools have learned how to live in two cultures. Those who don’t succeed in adapting may risk being labelled (“learning disabled” or “oppositionally defiant”) when often, it’s a lack of cultural continuity in their classroom that places them at a disadvantage.

In support of Aboriginal education, Alberta Learning published its comprehensive First Nations, Métis and Inuit report (February, 2002). Its goals include:

• high quality learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible, accessible, and affordable to the learning
• excellence in learner achievement.

Schools and teachers across the province are encouraged to provide culturally appropriate education for their Aboriginal students.

Point of View—Cultural Continuity: Recapturing Our Wholeness

... if we go back to the origin of the word heal ... it is structurally related to the word whole, which is in itself related to the word holy. And this is something I understand we are all trying to do together.

I would suggest not only to native people, but to many people, there has been a history of people being told to amputate a part of themselves to be able to fit something that’s rigid and not built for them in the first place. Amputate our language, spirituality ... With the idea of realizing you did not have to cut off a part of [your]self in the first place ... you really can be whole.

The healing process is a way of recapturing our wholeness ... What we are doing ... is a sacred thing, and I cannot emphasize that enough. It is not [just] about academic credits ... It is a sacred work to reclaim wholeness.

-- Dr. Terry Tafoya
Traditional Teaching Techniques

Traditionally, the peoples of Aboriginal cultures were holistic because they saw themselves as part of nature. Every animal, every plant, every place and every person had a spirit. They recognized that their continued existence depended not only on an abundant supply of healthy animals but also on the environment in which these lived. They used only what they needed. The people had a respect for creation. Up to the present time, some indigenous cultures like the Cree view themselves within a web. Inside this web is the Creator, the earth, the animals of the earth, and humans. All the life forces on the earth are respected because they are interconnected.

“likawaato’slyyaw” (“They have power.”) Blackfoot speakers said of animals to indicate that they were sacred. The dog and the horse were especially given this regard. “litapissko” (“It is occupied.”) was used to indicate that a place was sacred because there was a spirit resident inside. “Ikstahpikiw” (“There is a strong presence.”) meant that the spirit in a place was very strong. The people were spiritual in their regard for nature.

How they taught their young reflected this worldview. In this section we describe specific instructional techniques to create an understanding of what they are. However, these strategies and approaches do not stand alone and should be integrated into the whole program. The Aboriginal peoples education process was holistic and everything was taught in context.

Language learning was facilitated through listening and actual use of the language. Science was learned as a matter of fact through observation and participation in clan or tribal activities. Social studies was learned through the strong family ties and social structure of a particular Aboriginal people. Large national gatherings expanded this knowledge. Specialization was limited to a few. This was when elders chose certain young people to become apprentices as historians, medicine people, herbalists and ceremonialists.

STORYTELLING

“lyisstsii!” The old Kainai man said quietly to his chattering grandchildren. They were sitting around him on the linoleum floor. The old kerosene lamp sitting on the kitchen table threw flickering beams of fumy light around the large room. Omakhina sat on the worn wooden chair. His audience included not only his grandchildren but also the two sets of parents of these children. They were his two sons and their wives.

As he made ready to begin the storytelling, he lit his pipe. Momentarily, the air around him was acrid with the smell of sulfur. This came from the big wooden Eddy match which he had struck on the under surface of the table. This smell contrasted with the taste of the tobacco in his pipe. It was mild because it was mixed with the leaves of the kakaksiin. Kakaksiin was a plant which grew in the mountains.

He took a long drag on the pipe. Through the small cloud of smoke he created he began his story. The details of the story included the conversations of the characters of his story and their songs as well. Whenever he came to a song he drummed softly with the tips of his leathery fingers and accompanied his singing in this manner.

The characters in the story included warriors like Osaokho or Piinakoyimmm who were famous for their war exploits. If this had been a Cree household, no doubt the stories would have been about characters like Poundmaker or Big Bear. The Mètis might have told stories either about a Métis ancestor, Gabriel Dumont, or maybe about Louis Riel himself. Or, they might have recounted how the first members of their family moved from the Red River area to Alberta or Saskatchewan. In this particular instance, this
was how storytelling was used up to the 1950s on the Blood Reserve. No doubt on more isolated Indian reserves within the province, the practice might have been used longer.

Traditional storytelling is part of the oral tradition where, because of the lack of an extensive orthography, knowledge was passed on orally. Not only did this technique pass on knowledge from old to young, it made sure that knowledge was accurate in the adult listener because of frequent repetition. This was a form of lifelong learning for members of a tribe. Storytelling is still practiced by many Aboriginal people.

Traditional storytelling provided entertainment. Members of the storyteller’s audience were entertained especially if the storyteller was good. “That one is an excellent storyteller because he knows the songs that go with his stories and he sings them”. This is how people rated a storyteller’s expertise.

For both the adult and the child listening to the stories, they were instructive as well as entertaining. Historical knowledge was passed on. Bravery, honesty, loyalty, respect for the environment and other tribal values were illustrated by events in the stories. Indirectly, they too were passed on. Some knowledge about the origin of sacred ceremonies was passed on in this fashion too.

In sessions, which sometimes lasted for two days and nights, Dene parents or grandparents got together to trade stories. Among the stories they shared were Raven Head stories. Raven Head was the traditional Dene trickster. Raven Head, who went by another name in other Aboriginal cultures, was common to many North American Aboriginal peoples. These were exciting storytelling sessions full of entertainment. The story traders would also tell ghost stories or stories of how they outsmarted their traditional enemies. Sometimes, they would get involved in friendly arguments where each one called the other a liar. The children who were there would pick up details about their history and culture. They would also strengthen their language skills through listening and repeating.

There is storytelling protocol to be followed too. As a story unfolded and at strategic moments, the listener was expected to show that he was listening. This was done verbally by using the equivalent of “yes” in an Aboriginal language. This response not only meant that listening was taking place but also that there was comprehension. If one did not understand, he only had to ask for clarification. If the listener was a young child and he was listening appropriately and responding to the story, he was given positive reinforcement. “You listen well” he was told.

Another benefit of storytelling was that it was easily facilitated. Its practice took place in someone’s home whether it was the tipi or later, in a wooden structure. It was part of a child’s home routine. Especially for the Cree and Métis, storytelling occurred only during the winter months. This was no doubt to take into consideration that there were life-effecting activities to be done such as hunting, trapping and fishing. Hunting especially was an activity most naturally done during the summer months. Stores of food needed to be set up during these months for consumption later on when it was not so easy to secure the food because of winter.

Ideas tips, suggestions for use of this technique:

- Select a “Trickster” story from any of the various Aboriginal peoples who live in Alberta. The story that you select should explain, for example, why something is the way that it is according to the story. Or, it could be a “lesson” or moral story. Read this to the students and discuss what they learned from it. The Trickster in Cree is Wesakechuk. The traditional Dene call him Raven Head. To the Niitsitapi, the Trickster’s name is Naapi.

- Add two or more “trickster” stories for the students to listen to whether firsthand or written/recorded. Have them decide on the common features of these stories. From this they should be able to figure out what a trickster is, whether the name is Naapi, Wesakechuk, Raven Head or some other name. Following this activity, bring in another storyteller who will be able to discuss with the students what a trickster is.
On the recommendation of a reliable person such as an employee of a Friendship Center, invite a First Nations storyteller to your class and have him/her tell one or two traditional stories.

The “Beringia Theory” says that the First Nations’ people of North America came over from Asia on the Bering Strait. This was when that body of water was frozen over. Invite a First Nation’s elder to your class and ask him/her to tell the “Genesis” story of his/her tribe.

From an anthology of First Nations stories, have the students determine what other types of stories there are and why these stories were considered worth saving and repeating.

HANDS-ON/EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Hands-on/experiential learning was probably the most natural way for the traditional Nakoda, Cree, Dene, Métis or any traditional Aboriginal child to learn. Participating in the construction of a canoe using the birch tree was an invaluable lesson for the Dene child. The same could be said for the Nakoda youth participating in a bear-hunting expedition with his uncle or older cousin. This method of teaching was absolutely necessary for the First Nations’ people.

Under the tutorship of older, more experienced members of a nation, novices were taught life-saving lessons essential for survival in a particular environment. The various traditional First Nations were nomadic people who moved around particular territories which they claimed as their own. Inside a particular territory, members of a First Nation moved with the seasons.

Those who depended on the bison had to move with the herds over the summer and autumn months. It was during these months that most of the food required for the whole year was acquired and prepared for storage for use later on. The bison hunters were firstly pedestrian. Later they were equestrian. It was particularly in the latter that they were able to secure more food. This allowed them the luxury of developing their societies beyond that which was the most basic.

More northern people practiced trapping and fishing in addition to hunting. The people here depended less on the bison and more on the moose, deer and beaver for survival. Fishing was also practiced and the young fisherman had to know the best time to fish certain of the species. Building canoes, snowshoes and toboggans were life-saving activities. Weapons such as the spear and bow and arrow were also necessary in this environment. Young men apprenticing to become mature warriors and hunters needed also to know how to construct these weapons as well as how to use them.

Young hunters were tested on their skills in some societies. For example, in Dene society young hunters were sent out alone after they had been learning for a while. During this time they had to prove that they could survive alone. Whether it was in summer or winter, these young men had to prove that they were equal to the task. This time alone also extended their skills and their experiences. If they came back successful, they were considered mature.

Experiential learning was not limited to the male gender. Girls also gained much of their knowledge through this method of teaching. From the time they were able to do minor housekeeping chores, they were depended on to do more and more. Women did the very important job of obstetrics (midwifery). All young girls watched and learned about childbirth and unlike most other societies this still holds true in some Aboriginal cultures. By puberty, girls knew most of the skills they needed to know to contribute to their society.

Girls had to learn not only how to cook food, but they had to learn how to preserve it once it was secured. This essential skill was so important because food was not always available fresh. It was only during the period between early summer and late fall that most of the food was available this way. The various berries such as currants, saskatoons, chokecherries and bullberries only became available when they ripened from late June to late October. If it was to be preserved, the chokecherry had to be crushed first and then dried. The others were dried under the hot summer sun.
Meat also had to be dried for later consumption after it was brought home by the hunter. What was not cooked immediately was cut up into strips, hung over triangular frames, and dried. In the summer, this drying took place outside. If it happened that fresh meat was secured during the winter, this was done inside the enclosure of the tipi. A lot of the meat was crushed and mixed with the saskatoon berries. This became the pemmican which was a staple in the diet of the First Nations.

Nature dictated that survival techniques needed to be passed on in a practical manner. This was why the hands-on/experiential learning method was so beneficial to the First Nations. A large part of the reason for doing this may have been that the past First Nations peoples were nomadic people. Even though they may have occupied a particular territory for a long period of time, they were always on the move within this territory.

The various First Nations peoples could not remain stationary for very long. For the Plains Cree, Siksika, Tsuu T’ina and other plains tribes, the movement of the bison herds did not allow them a sedentary mode of life. For the Dene, Woodland Cree and other tribes who did not live on the plains, they also moved around within their territories following the animals which provided the food they required and the skins they used for their clothing. The movements of all the tribes were dictated not only by the presence of the animals that they killed but also by the seasons.

**Ideas, tips, suggestions for use of this technique:**

- Invite a First Nation craftsperson to come in and show the students some of her/his work. By pre-arrangement and planning, secure the necessary supplies to allow this resource person to instruct and help each of the students to make a simple beaded necklace or wristband.

- Have the students research the ingredients of traditional pemmican to determine its food value. Compare this with a diet which includes white bread, fried potatoes, fried meat and pop. How has this change in the diet of many First Nations’ peoples effected their health?

- From a reliable source such as Friendship Center personnel, secure the services of an elder or First Nations person who knows how to make pemmican. Have him/her make some pemmican with the students. Determine with your students how meat could be dried today so that it could be made into pemmican or eaten as it is. Pemmican is a Cree word, it is pronounced as (pĭmēcan) it is a mix of dried meat and berries.

- Invite a dancer from an Aboriginal community and have him or her show the students two or three social dances. These dances could include the owl dance, the rabbit dance or the old time women’s dance. Have the students research the traditional dances of different Aboriginal peoples and determine how intertribal contact has enriched modern Aboriginal powwows.

- Have the students listen to various Aboriginal singers like Susan Aglukark, Buffy Saint Marie, Walela, Jack Gladstone and Kashtin among others. Have them analyze the lyrics for the messages of meanings behind these. Encourage the students to learn a song from one of these.

**MODELLING**

A female elder a few years ago revealed how she gained the right to cook bison tongue for ceremonial occasions. She and her late husband had been invited to a Lodge where this tongue was to be used in an all-night smoke ceremony. According to her story, she was not the type of person who sat around and had things done for her. Especially when she saw older people doing this, she felt compelled to help. She did not have to be asked. This was how her mother had taught her from when she had been a little girl. “Kookona” her mother used to say to her, “If you are ever in a situation where you feel that the
people there need to be helped, don’t hesitate to do so. They will appreciate you for doing this.”

The old Kainai woman who was the host in charge of the cooking at this lodge was busy doing this and doing that as she prepared the meal for those invited and assembled. One of the pots on the stove contained boiling water and the buffalo tongue. She would stir and leave the pot every few minutes to attend to some other detail. Believing that she could help, this invited guest got up from where she was seated and stirred the meat in the pot. On the second or third time that she did this the old lady “caught” her at the task. There was quiet and no noise. Nothing was said until after the final stir which the old lady herself administered in the preparation of the food. She removed the pot from the stove because the tongue was cooked properly.

She then motioned for the younger woman to sit beside her. “I will have to transfer to you the right to prepare sacred tongue the right way. You have been stirring this pot a little too much.” The eager young woman had done something wrong when she thought she was helping!

The old Kainai lady took out her a’saan and painted the younger woman’s face. Then she prayed. In her prayer she called on the Giver of Life and the Ancestors to help the younger woman now that she was being given the right to prepare tongue the right way. She took out her stirring stick and four times she stirred the pot of tongue clockwise (the same way that the sun travels). It could not be stirred otherwise. This was how this woman was given the right to prepare sacred tongue.

This is one example of modelling which was another teaching technique employed by traditional First Nations. In this case, the student was the younger woman who required oral instruction and observation skills in order to follow the modelling that was displayed by the older woman. Modelling was also practiced in this instance by the old woman by the way that she reacted when she saw the uninitiated touching and stirring the sacred pot of food. The younger woman realized that there was genuine belief on the part of the older woman in the sacredness of the ceremony. She was shown that there was consideration for the sacred and deviation from established practice was not taken lightly.

Modelling was very similar to experiential learning and differed only in that observation was more intense in this technique. A young girl learning how to prepare ceremonial food observed how an older woman did this. Then she imitated it later when it was her turn. “Correct” behaviour was modelled by elders.

Another example of this technique is from Niitsitapi (Kainai, Piikani and Siksika collectively). It was and it is still believed that when a person becomes an elder, she or he leaves the pettiness of youth behind. No longer should this person be involved in gossip or talking badly about another. Love and compassion are to be shown to all. As a person becomes more and more involved in the sacred ceremonies of the people, “badness” is to be left behind. Now all the members of the nation become like the children of that person. If this person follows and lives by these rules, then esteem, respect and honour is shown not only for that person but also for the spiritual beliefs. If he or she does not model the correct behaviour, not only is that person disdained by the other members of the nation, but the beliefs become subject to question. Bad luck and misfortune are blamed on people who fit into this category. They have not modelled the correct behaviour.

In the home of the holders of sacred ceremonial articles, the children observed that respect and honour was given to these. Loud noise was avoided and there was little intrusion into the area close to where these articles were. Through the modelling of their parents and other older people, the children realized that they too should also show respect.

A final example to illustrate how modelling was so important in traditional First Nation society was in the way familial ties were treated. There was a very strong taboo against any kind of romantic or sexual involvement with a cousin. It did not matter how distant a cousin was, there were no exceptions to this rule.
A 95-year old elder in 1985 talked about the importance of family ties in traditional First Nations society. In talking about this, she mentioned that she had been married at age 16. Her marriage was arranged. "The young people were still good children" she said. "They listened to their elders and they followed the prescribed behaviour expected of them especially with regard to how they behaved with their relatives." In this behaviour, the children knew who their relatives were. They could not help but know because they were constantly reminded whenever the occasion arose for the reminder to take place. In addition to grandparents, parents and siblings, the extended family included uncles, aunts, cousins and great uncles and great aunts. Children were told who their parents’ cousins were. "He is your relative" or "She is your relative" a young boy or girl was told. Among the Cree, relationship terms clearly taught children how they were related to one another. From a very young age, members of a tribe are told who their uncles, aunts and cousins are. It is not only parents and grandparents who inform their children and grandchildren about their relatives. Cousins, no matter how distant, also claim relatives. For example, someone might approach a young person and say to him or her "I am related to you." This person then explains how this relation came to be.

Even to the present time, this still occurs. Recently a Kainaipittaakii (old Kainai lady) told a cousin "I take you as a relative not only because of the fact that your mother’s father and my husband’s father were brothers. In addition to that, we are related through your mother’s grandmother. She came from the Ni’laitsskakisii clan and she was a half-sister to my grandfather. In fact, when your grandparents were going to marry, it was my grandfather who approved it. You probably never knew that. That is another reason why you and I are related. That is another reason why I consider our kinship strong.” The cousin’s parents had never informed him about this. Now he knew that this lady and the children of her siblings were also his cousins because she had claimed him as a relative.

In some cases, it might have seemed that all the young men or women of the tribe were cousins according to some parents or in the perception of some youth. Where was one to find a boy or girl to fall in love with or even marry! Family ties were very strong. As they got older, these same individuals passed on this practice to their offspring. In fact, the practice of claiming relatives was still strong in the 1950s. Some students who attended Indian Residential schools discovered that they had relatives whom they had never known about before.

**Ideas, tips, suggestions for use of this technique:**

- There are instances where modelling occurs in today’s society. For example, young children learn from their parents the behaviour expected when attending a funeral. With your students, brainstorm and establish examples of modelling which occur today in the major society. Provide some positive and some negative examples. Following this brainstorming session, divide your students into cooperative groups of four and have each group develop one instance of modelling. Each group will report back to the class on their work.

- Brainstorm with your students why family ties were considered so important in traditional First Nations society. With your students, brainstorm why traditional Aboriginal peoples placed so much emphasis on claiming relatives. Invite an Aboriginal elder to discuss this subject with your students.

- Invite an elder who has participated in traditional ceremonies or who follows the rules of a sacred society. Prepare a set number of questions with your students regarding the influence which this has had on this person, i.e., What was he/she like in his/her younger days? How did he/she become interested and later involved in this? Was he/she influenced by his/her parents or his/her friends to join these? How has this affected his/her life?

- In contemporary Aboriginal society, the old ways of survival have changed for most of the people. The last of the great buffalo hunts occurred prior to the 1960s. Other wild game since then has also been reduced in number not only by hunting but also by the encroachment of settlers to the land and the establishment of towns and cities. Brainstorm with your students to determine how Aboriginal peoples have changed to maintain survival in today’s society. Whereas young boys learned from older and experienced hunters and warriors in the past, who are the models for young Aboriginal males? Who are the models for young Aboriginal women?
In traditional Aboriginal society, the woman's role revolved around the home much more so than the man's role. Is this still the same situation today? Assign your students to research this on the Internet or through interviewing and talking with members of an Aboriginal community. As a follow-up activity, invite some working Aboriginal women to discuss why they are working and away from their homes. Encourage the students to determine how this is different or the same as it is for other women in general.

**CREATIVE PLAY**

Very close to modelling was creative play when a child was allowed to play creatively either by himself or with siblings or other children. Parents subtly guided their children. For example, a young male child would be given a set of bones to play with and told that these represented horses. Through creative individual play, the young boy was encouraged to think about the future where he would acquire many horses for himself. Owning many horses was a sign of prestige and influence. Or, the bones might represent himself and the bison he would kill in a hunt. As he got older, he might be given crude replicas of the bows and arrows which he would use in the future as an adult.

This kind of play was called *aiksimsta* ("thinking") by the Kainai. It meant that the child was imagining and thinking about the future when he might, for example, be the hunter providing meat for his family and tribe. Just as a boy was given these, a young girl was given dolls and miniature versions of a lodge and its furnishings. She would ponder her future as a woman and wife and mother within the tribe.

**Ideas, tips, suggestions for use of this technique:**

- To give students a third dimensional feel for a traditional tipi village, have them research the layout of a traditional First Nation village. If the students are within the traditional territory of the Cree, have them make a model of a traditional Woodland or Plains Cree village. If they are in traditional Siksika or Tsuu T’ina territory, have them create a Plains tipi village. In doing this, they will be participating in creative play. They will understand the effectiveness of the creative play technique. Depending on their preferences, they should have a choice on what they will create for this village. To help them evaluate the authenticity of the village, invite an elder who has knowledge about this to evaluate the project.

- In a contemporary Aboriginal society, there are places and institutions which are occupied by members of the community, i.e., police at the police station, teachers at the school, chief and council at the tribal administration office, etc. In cooperative groups of four, assign your students to pick one of these institutions and determine what the roles of the people inside are. Are these people fulfilling their roles and duties? What would be the ideal? Report back to the class after the assignment is complete.

- Teen pregnancy, planned single-motherhood, family breakdown and death are four reasons for the occurrence of single-parent homes. With your students working in cooperative groups of four, compare the traditional extended family with the nuclear two-parent family and the single-parent family. Some questions which could be asked in doing this would be: What is the role of the mother and father? What role do grandparents, aunts and uncles have? Who teaches the values of the society to the children? Would it be practical to re-establish the extended family system? Would it help in solving some of the problems which exist today?

- More and more, the influence of media violence on student behaviour is being expressed by concerned individuals in society. The belief by some is that young people today are made immune to realizing violence by what is portrayed in movies and electronic games. Can this be said about Aboriginal youth? Assign an equal number of cooperative groups to prepare an affirmative response to the question and a negative response to the question. Reporters for each group will report to the class on their findings. Determine with your class if media violence does affect youth.
The various levels of government are pushing for economic development on First Nation reserves as a way to combat the poverty which exists on many reserves. Have your students research the various programs being established. Are they working? Why are some programs working better than others? Invite some First Nation entrepreneurs and have them explain why they are being successful.

SPIRITUALITY/CEREMONIES

As it was noted at the beginning of this chapter, the different First Nations people were very spiritual. In the prayers they said each morning, they called on The Giver of Life, the Sun, and the spirits of the Ancestors for help. They prayed for their elders and for their sick so that they would be well again. They prayed that the land, the water and the animals which they used for food would remain healthy and strong. They prayed for survival, long life and good health for their offspring.

The children of the nation witnessed the spirituality of their parents and other adult members of their community. From a very young age, they observed the respect that was given to all life forms in their realm. For those children whose parents were involved in the holy ceremonies of their people they received further indoctrination in this manner.

Whenever there was to be a special ceremony or meeting in their lodge, these children were required to leave. Just because they were the children of keepers of pipes or sacred bundles, they were not given automatic right to knowledge about these. From this they realized that they had to earn the right to be a keeper of a sacred article or membership in a sacred society.

Articles which are designated as “holy” or “sacred” such as a pipe or a medicine bundle are believed to belong communally to a tribe or First Nation. No one person owns these. “Keepers” of these have earned the privilege to hold these sacred articles for a period of time. A keeper must learn all the rituals associated with a sacred article. Knowledgeable elders who themselves have been previous keepers, teach these to the new keeper.

The right to be a keeper of a sacred pipe or bundle or to be a member of a sacred society was available to all members of Niitsitpi nation. There were no restrictions except those which a person made for himself. This freedom of accessibility to these articles and to membership helped not only to keep the nation strong but it ensured that there was support and respect for their spirituality. This lesson was not lost on the young.

The Dene male youth having to go into the wilderness by himself after it was thought he was ready for it is an example of a rite of passage ceremony. In going through this trial, he had to call on not only the survival skills he had learned but he also had to rely on his emotional and spiritual strength. In this same event, he might also have sought a spirit helper. The term vision quest has been used by some people to describe this, but in this chapter, searching for a spirit helper seems more appropriate.

Tsuu T'ina girls when they reached menses had also to go through a special ceremony as a rite of passage. The Cree also had a ceremony for their young women which they called nohtikwew apowin. At this time, they were gathered together in a separate lodge removed from the rest of the camp. From the older women who acted as their guides, they were told about the changes taking place in their bodies. They were made aware of their power now because they could give life to new members of the nation. For the warriors who guarded their camp on the outside, it was considered an honour for them to be doing this service. They were guarding the future of their nation by keeping these young women safe from animals who might have been attracted by the smell and presence of fresh human blood.

Because of the honour accorded them, these young women were able to rejoin their families with calm. They went through a process which might otherwise have been traumatic. Instead, they were ready to face the future as mature adults.

Among the Cree, certain children were chosen at an early age to become apprentices or oskapes to become the Keepers of stories and the repositories of traditional information. Members of both genders were selected in similar fashion to become herbalists. Children also were selected by a knowledgeable
elder to train to become spiritual ceremonialists. One of the reasons for this process was that the Cree were more individualistic in their approach to ceremonies. They, however, also relied heavily on their “medicine” and on their spirit helpers. Many First Nations sought the acquisition of a spirit helper. Men who wanted outstanding success in war and other pursuits went to holy places to pray and to sleep. They wanted to attract a spirit who would come to them in their dreams to bestow special powers. As early as puberty, a young man sought this helper.

Among the Blackfoot-speaking tribes, an annual sundance is held during the summer. This gathering, in the past, took place after the Saskatoon berries were ripe. The berry soup made from these is a key ingredient in most ceremonies. A ceremony which was often performed at the sundance was the O’kaan or Chaste Woman Ceremony. In order to qualify to do this ceremony, a woman had to be chaste. Either she was a virgin who had never had relations with a man, or, she was a married woman or widow who had only known her husband. There is much ritual associated with this ceremony.

There is also much respect accorded to the woman who sponsors the O’kaan ceremony because she has to prove herself worthy of the honour. As it is with many traditional Blackfoot ceremonies, this one too came from the animal world. In this case it was the elk or ponoka. A male elk had taken his mate and their offspring away from the rest of the herd. When they had been gone for awhile, the female asked her mate why they were away. The male then accused her of being unfaithful, that he believed that he was not her only partner. She loudly denied this charge but as much as she did, he would not believe her. Finally, she challenged him. “Who can topple that tree over there is the one speaking the truth” she said and pointed to a large poplar tree. He agreed to the challenge but could only shake the tree after he charged at it. When it was her turn, the tree went down. She was the one telling the truth. Just as the female elk proved her trustworthiness, the O’kaan woman proves the same to her tribe.

Once the sponsor indicated her intentions, the whole tribe in the past participated in the ritual of preparing the site for this ceremony. Children were included. That was how important it was. As a child in traditional culture matured, she or he understood the meaning of O’kaan.

There are also the sacred societies which hold their annual ceremonies at the sundance. For the men this is the Ititskinayiski or Horn Society. For the women, this is the Mao’to’kii or Buffalo Women’s Society. Much preparation and training is required of people who want to join. The decision to become a member is not an easy one to make.

This was different for the Cree who could have a number of sundances over a summer because different individuals could be able to sponsor these. These sundances were sponsored by the spiritual guides who had been trained from childhood for this purpose. It was considered a sign of good luck if a certain group of masked men danced at one of these sundances. These men were members of a “contrary” group type whose masked faces observers were not supposed to look at when they were performing their dance. Observers were to turn away and not look at them as they were dancing.

Some of the songs sung at ceremonies could be sung by any member of the nation. For the sacred ceremonies such as those of bundle owners and the ceremonies of sacred societies, only those who had earned the right to sing these songs could sing them. These were usually current or past members of these societies. The songs had come with the ceremonies when they were given to the people originally.

There was much for the Aboriginal youth to learn the ceremonial aspects of his nation. Some of these ceremonies involved coming-of-age rites of passage. Later, they became more mystical and more complex. There was much to learn in becoming eligible to participate in ceremonies. Most of the learning which the young had to go through was facilitated through observation, through hearing the instruction of elders and through eventual participation.

**Ideas, tips, suggestions for use of this technique:**

- In this chapter, the rites of passage ceremonies of Dene males and Tsuu T’ina females are mentioned. Assign your students to research if other First Nations peoples had these rites of
passage as they went from childhood into adulthood. What were/are the rites of passage of other peoples of Canada?

- This chapter talks about sacred societies whose activities and knowledge are accessible only to members. How is this similar or different from religious institutions in Canada?
- Invite a member of a sacred society to your classroom and ask him/her to speak in general terms about the society that he/she belongs to. Beforehand, discuss with your students what questions would be appropriate to ask of this person, i.e., How does a member of the Horn Society help other people who are not members? Is being a member of the Horn Society like joining a church?
- Invite a Spiritual leader from a neighbouring Aboriginal community to come and share some information about beliefs.

**THE CIRCLE/CYCLE**

When discussing First Nations’ peoples, there is always a tendency to talk about the “circle.” Whether a person is knowledgeable or otherwise, he or she will talk about the “circle.” Much of this is due to the medicine wheel. This graphic representation of how a person should maintain equilibrium in his or her life is a modern development to illustrate an ancient philosophy about life. It shows how a person must be balanced in all aspects in order to be healthy. The four realms—physical, emotional, spiritual and mental—must all be healthy for the whole to be strong. The four realms together can be thought to form a circle.

This is the basis for the Aboriginal peoples’ approach to life. It is holistic. Not one of the four is treated separately from the rest. To use another example, a person begins life as a child. He or she is dependent on parents or other caregivers who will look after the basic needs for him or her. After childhood, there is puberty, adulthood and old age. As a person enters old age, he or she begins to enter childhood again. This old person will re-enter childhood again because he or she will need the help of others in order to live.

In their seasonal round, the ancestors experienced spring, summer, fall and winter. The seasons represented birth, growth, maturity and death. Different sources of food became available at different times in this seasonal round. Each one led to the next. This was the cycle or circle of life. There was always hope because there was always new life out of the old.

The sun as Man and moon as Woman are always chasing each other, day after day after day. For a whole year, for a whole decade, for a whole century, this phenomena is repeated over and over again. There is a belief in Aboriginal societies that things go around in a circle. This is why it is important to treat children well because their spirit is so strong. If you love and give respect to a child, the circle will treat you well and it will bring back the goodness that you gave in the first place.

The use of the circle/cycle was not a traditional teaching technique. It was a way of life for the traditional Aboriginal peoples. Modern Aboriginal peoples who practice their traditional cultures still follow this ancient philosophy.