



GRADE 12 CURRENT TOPICS
IN FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS,
AND INUIT STUDIES

Appendix E:
Glossary

APPENDIX E: GLOSSARY

Aboriginal

A descendant of the original inhabitants of North America. The Constitution of Canada recognizes three primary groups as Aboriginal peoples: Indians, Inuit, and Métis.

Aboriginal Common Law

Aboriginal common law, based on customs derived from the Creator and traditions, has evolved and adapted over generations. It differs from European or Canadian common law in significant, fundamental ways (e.g., Canadian common law views property rights in terms of land ownership whereas Aboriginal common law views the relationship to land as a sacred trust. The land must be protected for future generations). See **Common Law**.

Aboriginal Identity

Identification with an Indigenous nation. In Canada, Indigenous peoples include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

Aboriginal Peoples

The *Constitution Act* (1982) recognizes three groups as Aboriginal people: Indians (First Nations), Métis, and Inuit.

Aboriginal Rights

These are rights that some Aboriginal peoples of Canada hold as a result of their ancestors' long-standing use and occupancy of the land. The rights of certain Aboriginal peoples to hunt, trap, and fish on ancestral lands are examples of Aboriginal rights. Aboriginal rights vary from group to group, depending on the customs, practices, and traditions of their particular cultures.

Aboriginal Self-Government

This is government that is designed, established, and administered by Aboriginal peoples under the Canadian Constitution through a process of negotiation with Canada and, where applicable, with the provincial government.

Aboriginal Title

An inalienable and collective right to exclusive use and occupancy of traditional lands based on long-term and continuous occupancy and use. See **Alienation**.

Adhesion

For varying reasons, some First Nations were not included in the original Numbered Treaty negotiations. These First Nations later became part of the Treaty agreement through adhesion.

Adversarial

The Canadian legal system is based on an "adversarial" approach. The two sides in a trial are opposed to each other.

Alienation (legal definition)

Transfer of land title. See **Aboriginal Title**.

Assimilation

The process whereby one cultural group is absorbed into the culture of another, usually the majority culture.

Autonomy

Self-determination, independence.

Band

This is a group of First Nations whose collective use and benefit lands have been set apart or money is held by the Crown, or declared to be a band for the purposes of the *Indian Act*. Today, the preferred term for "Band" is "First Nations."

Band Council

First Nations choose a chief or chiefs and several councillors to govern/administer the Band's affairs.

Bi-Cultural

Based on elements of both Western (European) and traditional (Indigenous) cultures.

British North America Act

The Dominion of Canada was created by the *British North America Act* in 1867. Section 91:24 of the Act assigns jurisdiction over “Indians, and lands reserved for Indians” to the federal government.

Building Capacity

Developing the means for effective accomplishment.

Circle Justice

This begins when an offender pleads guilty in court and agrees to accept a sentence imposed by the community. Beginning with a prayer for the common good, the victim, the offender, supporters, and other interested parties gather in a circle and discuss the impact of the crime. Together, they agree on a sentence, and continue to monitor, and mentor, the offender to make sure the sentence is carried out.

Citizenship

For First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, this term may have dual applications. Indigenous peoples are citizens both of their Nations as well as of Canada.

Civilize

Through the *Indian Act*, the federal government sought to “civilize” (impose Eurocentric values and customs upon) First Nations. One of the primary means to do this was through residential schools. There, First Nations children were taught Christianity. Their languages, customs and dress were forbidden, and they were kept isolated from their families and communities in their formative years.

Collective Rights

Aboriginal rights are collective not individual.

Colonialism

On Turtle Island, colonialism is European domination over and subjugation of the Indigenous Nations. Colonialism of Indigenous peoples by European powers occurred the world over.

Colonization

Control and exploitation of a territory through settlement.

Common Law

In Canada, common law describes the body of laws, developed over time, that are based on court rulings as well as usage and custom. See **Aboriginal Common Law**.

Community of Interest

This is a model of government for populations that are dispersed, such as urban Aboriginal populations.

Comprehensive Land Claim

Based on Aboriginal rights and title, this is the assertion to title of lands that have never come under treaty.

Constitution

These are the written or unwritten set of principles and institutions by which a nation governs itself.

Constitution Act of 1982

Section 35 of the *Constitution Act* recognizes the existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. The Aboriginal peoples of Canada include Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.

Contact:

The history of First Nations and Inuit peoples on Turtle Island can be divided into pre-contact and post-contact eras. Contact refers to the arrival of Europeans on Turtle Island (i.e., when First Nations and Inuit peoples came into contact with Europeans). The earliest record of contact between Europeans and Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island indicates the arrival and settlement of Vikings in *L’Anse aux Meadows*, Newfoundland in the 10th century. This colony was short-lived. Permanent settlement occurred after the arrival of the French in the 16th century.

Country Born

English-speaking Métis descended from British fur traders of the Hudson’s Bay Company and their First Nations wives.

Covenant

A sacred agreement between individuals or nations and the Creator.

Crown

Canada's head of state is the British monarch. Government actions are carried out in the name of the Crown (the monarch).

Crown Land

When Canada was colonized, land was claimed on behalf of the monarch. Crown land is controlled by federal or provincial governments.

Cultural Bias

This is a viewpoint favouring one's own culture.

Cultural Genocide

This is the intentional obliteration of a culture.

Cultural Tourism

This is an industry derived from people coming to a community to explore its historical, artistic, scientific, or cultural offerings.

Culture

This is a combination of the values, history, customs, and language that make up the heritage of a person or people, and contribute to that person's or people's identity.

Cultural Transmission (Cultural Continuity):

This is the process by which the standard behaviour patterns and values of the surrounding culture are passed on to and adopted by individuals as their own attitudes and beliefs.

Decolonization

This is the freedom from the control and exploitation of a colonial power.

Demonization

This is when someone or something is characterized as being evil or devilish.

Devolution

This is the transfer of powers from a central to a local government or authority.

Dis-ease

This is a state characterized by a lack of health, comfort, or balance.

Displacement

This is the forcible removal of a people from their homeland.

Diversity

This is a state or quality of being different. Ethnic groups are diverse and each member is unique. There are differences in age, gender, skills, physical characteristics, education, knowledge, etc. ideally, a diverse environment would include representation from all of these various groups.

Doctrine of Discovery

This was articulated by (U.S.) Chief Justice Marshall in *Johnson vs M'Intosh*. It provides that upon "discovery," the so-called discovering nation acquires the exclusive right, as against all other European powers, to purchase or otherwise acquire Indigenous lands from the Indigenous occupants.

Economic Marginalization

This involves the relegation of an individual or group to an unimportant or powerless economic position within a larger society or group.

Elder

This definition varies, but it is generally agreed to be any person who is considered by an Aboriginal nation to be the keeper and teacher of its oral tradition and knowledge. Each Elder has her or his own unique strengths and talents. While it is rare to find a young person who is considered an Elder, it is possible.

Enfranchisement

This was another means used by the federal government to carry out the policy of assimilating First Nations. By enfranchising, Status Indians took on the legal status of ordinary citizens (i.e., they could vote, hold a business license, and send their children to public schools). By enfranchising, First Nations people gave up their Status.

Ethnocentrism

This is the belief that the standards of one's own culture may be used to evaluate other cultures.

Euro-centrism

This is the belief that the standards of European culture may be used to evaluate other cultures.

Experiential Learning

Traditionally First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children learned by observing and emulating the actions of community members

Fee Simple

Absolute (outright) ownership of land by an individual

Fiduciary

The Supreme Court of Canada describes a fiduciary relationship between the federal government and First Nations. The federal government has rights and powers over First Nations including First Nations land. In dealing with First Nations lands and rights, the government is obligated to act for the benefit of First Nations. The fiduciary relationship is one of trust. The Supreme Court of Canada (*R vs Sparrow*, 1990) has stated that the "honour of the Crown is at stake in dealings with aboriginal peoples."

First Nation(s)

"A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word "Indian," which many people found offensive. Although the term First Nation is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Among its uses, the term "First Nations peoples" refers to the Indian peoples in Canada, both Status and Non-Status. Many Indian peoples have also adopted the term "First Nation" to replace the word "band" in the name of their community." (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)

First Peoples

A collective term used to describe the inhabitants of the land now known as Canada prior to European contact

Fourth World

Stateless, marginalized nations that are without international recognition

Free-trade

The Hudson's Bay Company tried to enforce their monopoly on the fur trade in Rupert's Land. Many Métis traders ignored the Hudson's Bay claim to monopoly. In 1849, the Hudson's Bay Company brought to trial the Métis trader named Guillaume Sayer. Sayer was found guilty of trading goods illegally. However, the presence of armed Métis protestors convinced the court to release the accused. The trial demonstrated the inability of the Hudson's Bay Company to enforce its monopoly. With shouts of: "*Le commerce est libre!*", the Métis proclaimed the birth of de facto free-trade in Rupert's Land.

Gaming

"Gambling, especially casino gambling." (thefreedictionary.com)

Genocide

The systemic, planned annihilation of a people

Globalization

The growing world-wide social and economic interdependence of people

Holistic

Emphasizing wholeness and the interdependency of component parts. For an illustration of this principle see "Medicine Wheel".

Imperialism

Policy of economic and political domination by one nation over other nations by establishing colonial empires

Inalienable

Non-transferable

Indian

“Collectively describes all the Indigenous People in Canada who are not Inuit or Métis. Indian Peoples are one of three peoples recognized as Aboriginal in the *Constitution Act, 1982* along with Inuit and Métis. Three categories apply to Indians in Canada: Status Indians, Non-Status Indians and Treaty Indians.” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)

Indian Agent

Under the Indian Act, authority for reserves rested ultimately with the federal government. As the government’s representative on the reserve, the Indian Agent wielded almost absolute power over First Nations reserve residents.

Indian Register

“Registered Indian” is another term for Status Indian. Status benefits are based on the inclusion of an individual in the Indian register kept by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Indian Title

Beginning with the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Crown recognized that Aboriginal peoples held title to their territories by reason of their ancient occupation of the land. Before settlement on these traditional territories could begin, the Crown sought to extinguish Aboriginal title through means such as treaties and scrip.

Indigenous

Original peoples of a country

Indigenous Knowledge (IK)

This is an understanding of a particular bio-physical environment (and the process of change that occurs within it) unique to the Indigenous people who inhabit the environment

Indigenous Rights

United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes a broad range of Indigenous rights including: culture, education, equality, land, language, nationality, resources, security, self-determination and spirituality.

Industrial Schools

A category of residential schools generally located far away from First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, intended for fourteen to eighteen year-olds, but which were also attended by younger children. Girls were trained in domestic duties, sewing, laundry, cleaning, and cooking; boys learned agriculture, carpentry, shoemaking, and blacksmithing. (Adapted from “Where are the Children?” http://www.lesenfantsdevenus.ca/en/edu_materials3.html)

Inherent Rights

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in Canada have inherent rights (rights that existed prior to colonization) as Indigenous peoples. Inherent rights exist independently of constitutional, government or legal authority.

Institutional/Systemic Racism

A form of societal racism that is expressed in the discrimination of public or corporate institutions against certain groups of people

Intergenerational Impact

The effects of abuse passed on to the children of residential school survivors and subsequent generations

Inuit

“An Aboriginal people in northern Canada who live above the tree line in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Labrador. The word means ‘people’ in the Inuit language – Inuktitut. The singular of Inuit is Inuk.” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)

Inuvialuit

Inuit people of the western Arctic.

Inuvialuktun

Language spoken by the Inuvialuit people.

Land Claim

Assertion of title to or rights in respect of certain lands

Laws of Relationship

“Aboriginal cultures share a belief that people must live in respectful, harmonious relationships with nature, with one another and with themselves. The relationships are governed by what are understood as laws, which are gifts from the Creator. The laws are fundamentally spiritual, imbuing all aspects of life. As fundamental as this perspective may be, each Aboriginal culture expresses it in unique ways, with its own practices, products and knowledge.

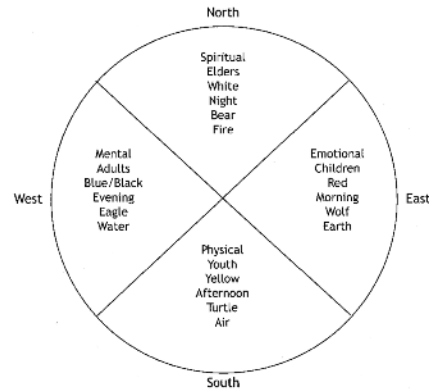
As real life circumstances shift over time, the challenge for Aboriginal people has been to interpret the laws to enable their continuing survival, not just physically but as a spiritually strong people. This challenge extends to Aboriginal education as well.” (The Common Curriculum Framework – Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs – Kindergarten to Grade 12 – Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education, June 2000)

Medicine Wheel

“Traditionally, Aboriginal peoples have seen the connected and interdependent nature of the many aspects of the world around them. The medicine wheel is an ancient symbol that reflects values, world views and practices, and is used by many Aboriginal peoples today. (Bopp et al).

“In Cree, the medicine wheel is referred to by the word *pimatisiwin*, which means life. The medicine wheel is based upon a circle and the number four, both of which are of special significance to many Aboriginal peoples. The medicine wheel is used to represent the interconnected relationships among aspects of life and to provide direction and meaning to an individual.

“The medicine wheel that is presented here is an example. While there are commonalities to all medicine wheels, each person’s is unique to the teachings he or she has received, his or her personal experiences, and his or her understandings of the interconnectedness of the aspects of life he or she represents with the medicine wheel.



“The medicine wheel is divided into four parts or quadrants, each representing one of the four directions. One of the lessons that can be learned from the medicine wheel is balance. For example, on the medicine wheel the four aspects of an individual (spiritual, emotional, physical, mental) are represented. In order for an individual to be healthy, he or she must have a balance of the four aspects within him or herself. If one of these aspects or areas is suffering, then the other three will also some ill effects. For example, if a person is suffering from an illness such as a bad cold (physical), he or she may be more short-tempered than usual (emotional), be less able to think clearly (mental), and may also feel less well spiritually.” (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education and Youth, 2003)

Métis

the people who the Federal government defines as having “mixed First Nations and European ancestry who identify themselves as Métis people, as distinct from First Nations people, Inuit, or non-Aboriginal people” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)

The “National Definition of Métis” is a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, and is accepted by the Métis nation www.Métisnation.ca/DEFINITION/home.html, 2002 (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education and Youth, 2003)

Métis Nation

The homeland of the historic Métis Nation is the territory now known as Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. It also includes parts of Ontario, the North West Territories, the north-central United States and British Columbia. The Métis Nation shares a distinct history and culture, its own language – Michif, wide-spread kinship connections and a collective consciousness.

Mixed Economy

“An economic system that allows for the simultaneous operation of publicly and privately owned enterprises.”
(Answers.com)

Nation

People inhabiting a particular territory with a shared language, culture and history
“Although it is not easy to list definitively all the essential attributes of peoplehood or nationhood, they certainly include social cohesiveness, collective self-consciousness, cultural distinctiveness and effective political organization.” (RCAP – Volume 4 – Perspectives and Realities – 5 – Métis Perspectives
<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/pubs/sg/sg-eng.asp>)

Nation Model (of Aboriginal Government)

As proposed by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, characteristics of an Aboriginal nation would include:

- Identifiable territorial base
- Citizenship criteria based among other things on community acceptance
- Comprehensive range of powers
- Internal procedures based on traditions
- Possibility of urban or extra-territorial jurisdiction
- Possibility of inter-(Aboriginal) nation associations such as confederacies

Native

Indigenous inhabitant of a country, distinct from the settler population

Non-Status Indians

Non-Status Indians “are those people of Aboriginal descent who do not meet the criteria of the Indian Act or who, despite meeting the criteria, have not been registered as Status Indians. (Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)

Northern Flood Agreement

1977 compensation agreement between Canada, Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba First Nations affected by hydro-electric projects affecting Lake Winnipeg and the Nelson and Churchill Rivers

Numbered Treaties

Between 1871 and 1921 eleven treaties, numbered one to eleven, were negotiated between Canada and western First Nations. In return for sharing their traditional lands with the settler society, First Nations were “granted” certain rights including reserves.

Oral Tradition

“Knowledge that is passed from one generation to the next by way of the spoken word” (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)

Outside Promises

Agreements for certain provisions in the Numbered Treaties that were not included in the written text but that were recorded and preserved as part of First Nations oral traditions

Paternalism

The relationship between First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and the Canadian government was and, to some extent, still is paternalistic. Aboriginal peoples are treated as children; the government acts as a stereotypical parent by providing for them without according to them rights and responsibilities.

Pipe Ceremony

The inclusion of the pipe ceremony in negotiations signaled the seriousness and sacred nature of the agreement being made. In the presence of the pipe stem, only truth could be spoken. In this way, the use of the pipe may be compared to the use of the Christian bible in western tradition when testifying or making an oath.

Post-Contact

See **Contact**.

Pre-Contact

See **Contact**.

Protection

One of the ostensible purposes of the Indian Act was to protect reserve land. The Indian Act incorporated features of previous legislation making it an offense for individuals other than an authorized representative of the Crown to deal with First Nations on matters of reserve lands.

Protocol

The conventions of ceremony and etiquette observed in formal interactions between nations

Reconcile

To bring a relationship into harmony

Racism

Discrimination based on the belief of the superiority of one's own race

Residential Schools

"Schools funded by the Federal government and run primarily by churches, partially for the purpose of assimilating Aboriginal children into mainstream society"
(Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)

Resistance

In 1870 at Red River and again in 1885 at Batoche, the Métis organized a resistance to the colonization of their territory by Canada. In both instances, the Métis were prepared to join the Canadian federation but wanted protection of their rights.

Restitution

A legal action serving to cause restoration of a previous state (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary)

Restoration

The act of restoring or bringing back to a former place, station, or condition (Brainy Quote – <http://www.brainyquote.com/words/re/restoration212700.html>)

Road-Allowance People

Some displaced Métis people in western Canada became squatters living on public lands. Having no legal title, they lived in fear of displacement as occurred to the community of Ste. Madeleine, Manitoba from 1938–1941. These people were known as road-allowance people.

Romanticization

Occurs when Aboriginal peoples are portrayed in a romantic or sentimental fashion. Romantic stereotypes include the Noble Savage and the Indian Princess.

Royal Proclamation 1763

Restricted the sale of Indian lands to the British Crown

Scrip

To extinguish the Aboriginal title of Métis people in Manitoba and the North West Territories, the government used a process known as scrip. Individuals were given certificates entitling them to land or money. This was in contrast to the treaty process by which the Canadian government extinguished First Nations' title to land through the creation of reserves, not on an individual but a collective basis.

Self-Determination

The ability of a people to determine their own political, economic and cultural futures independent of external interference.

Self-Government

Inherent right of Aboriginal nations to govern their own lives, affairs, lands, and resources with all the duties and responsibilities of a governing organization (*Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4) A Teacher's Resource Book*, Manitoba Education and Training)

Sentencing Circle

A sentencing opportunity at which an accused hopes to favourably influence the court passing sentence, by convening a conciliatory pre-sentence meeting between offender and victim. (Duhaime.org – <http://www.duhaime.org/LegalDictionary/S/SentencingCircle.aspx>)

Social Darwinism

Theory that certain individuals or groups achieve advantage over others as the result of genetic or biological superiority. (Answers.com, <http://www.answers.com/topic/social-darwinism>)

Sovereignty

Right of a nation to govern itself independent of outside control or interference

Sovereignty (First Nations perspective)

“The Creator gave First Nations:

- The land on the island of North America (the Peoples’ Island).
- A way to communicate with him for guidance and to give thanks.
- Laws, values, and principles that described the relationships and responsibilities they possessed to and for the lands given to them.
- An interconnectedness among the sacred ceremonies, teachings, and beliefs among First Nations.
- Spiritual philosophies, teachings, laws, and traditions that provided a framework for the political, social, educational, and cultural institutions and laws that allowed them to survive as nations from the beginning of time to the present.

- The “gifts” they needed to survive both spiritually and materially given to them through their special relationship with the Creator. These gifts are the life-sustaining and life-giving forces represented by the sun, water, grass, animals, fire, or Mother Earth.
 - Relationships that symbolize and represent the existence of a living sovereign First Nations circle (humans, plants, animals, land, etc.)”.
- (Teaching Treaties in the Classroom)

Specific Land Claim

Assertion to title of lands or other compensation because of unfulfilled treaty or other obligations

Status Indian

Status Indians “are those Aboriginal peoples who meet the requirement of the Indian Act and who are registered under the Act.” (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)

Stereotyping by Omission

This occurs when Aboriginal peoples are absent in the portrayals of contemporary society

Sustainable

Capable of being continued with minimal long-term effect on the environment. (thefreedictionary.com)

Third Order Government

In this model, Aboriginal governments would have powers similar to provincial governments and form a third order in Canadian federalism, together with provincial and federal governments

Traditional Pedagogy

Traditionally, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students learned by listening and observing, by doing and by dreaming. There were no classrooms, any community member could be a teacher.

Treaty

This is “an agreement made between specific groups of Aboriginal peoples and the Federal government that clarifies Aboriginal rights to land and resources. Treaties were written as a means to have the government recognize their responsibilities towards Aboriginal peoples in the areas of social, educational, and economic concerns.” (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)

- in Canadian law, treaties with First Nations are not simple contracts, they are described as *sui generis* (one of a kind)

Treaty Indian

“A Status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown” (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)

Treaty Land Entitlement

An assertion to title of land or other compensation based on unfulfilled obligations arising from historic treaties

Treaty Rights

These “are rights accruing to First Nations as a result of treaties negotiated between themselves as sovereign nations and the British Crown in right of Canada.” (Manitoba Education and Training, 1998)

Trickster

In Native tradition, the trickster figure is a powerful, clownish spirit. This complex, often contradictory being embodies paradoxical elements. One moment, he/she may be compassionate or heroic, the next, foolish and self-serving. The trickster is known in Native cultures by various names: to the Anishinabek (Ojibway), he/she is Nanabush or Nanabozo, to the Mi'kmaq, Glooscap, and to the Haida, Raven.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

This was established in 2008 to help heal Aboriginal people and communities affected by the residential school experience and to bring about a reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

Turtle Island

The English translation of the term used by many Indigenous Nations to refer to North America

Urban Reserve

Land within or adjacent to an urban municipality that has been set apart by the federal Crown for the use and benefit of a First Nation (INAC) <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ai/scr/mb/ops/urs-eng.asp>

Usufructuary Right

In law, the right to use or benefit from land without ownership

Values

“Beliefs and qualities based on the world view of an individual or culture that are considered to be important as guiding principles or ideals of that particular culture.” (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)

Whole Health

“... comes from shared prosperity, a clean and safe environment, a sense of control over life circumstances – as well as high quality illness care and healthy lifestyle choices.” (RCAP)

Worldview

“A philosophy of life or conception of the world” (Pearsall, 2001) (*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula*, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth)