

Cluster 3: Towards a New Relationship in Canada

Learning Experience 3.1: Respecting History

Lesson Plan 3.1.1: Assembly of First Nations Declaration of First Nations and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Rationale

Despite section 35 of the Constitution, which recognizes Aboriginal rights, and section 25 of the Charter, which states that nothing in the Charter shall abrogate or derogate from Aboriginal rights, First Nations peoples have faced many struggles on the road to political recognition. The years of being excluded from Canada's formal political process have left First Nations peoples with an incredible void to fill just in order to attain a level of political, social, and legal equity that is on par with other groups in Canadian society.

In this learning experience, students will gain insights and understandings of the ideas, concepts, and forces that are the foundation of the integrity and power of First Nations peoples, obtain awareness and appreciation of the role of First Nations in the shared history of Canada, and become aware of the Assembly of First Nations Declaration of First Nations and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks*: Plain Talk 15: Official Documents
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide*: Plain Talk 15: Official Documents

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Ask students: "What does the term *original peoples* mean? What does it mean when First Nations say that they are "nations"? Explore what criteria are required for a nation to express itself as an autonomous, self-governing community. Keep track of these on a large piece of white paper.

Ask students: "Who can help nations when they are under attack by other nations? What kind of help might this entail? Then ask: "Are there any forums in the world that protect nations from being exploited and that encourage global policies on issues affecting all human lives?" Record responses.

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Set up the room into two activity centres with equal groups of 3–4 students at each table. At the centre of each table, place either a copy of the Assembly of First Nations Declaration of First Nations or a copy of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Each group is to review the materials. Complete the activity at the centre.

- Half of the students will receive the AFN Declaration of First Nations, which was adopted on November 18, 1981, by AFN Chiefs in Assembly. The declaration is a simple and powerful expression of the reality of the First Peoples and their expressed right to govern themselves and the right to self-determination. Have students read the document and complete the following questions together:
 - How does the declaration express a sense of independence?
 - How does the declaration imagine “nations”?
 - What does it mean to live in harmony with nature? Do you think we live in harmony with nature in Canada? Please explain.
 - Who in the declaration is considered the highest authority and what rights do First Nations possess?
 - Why do you think this declaration is important for non-First Nations people to read?

- The other half of the class will receive the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). It is important that everybody knows that over centuries Indigenous peoples have been marginalized. Their lands have been seized, their rights have been trampled on, and their cultures and languages have been exterminated. The rights of Indigenous peoples have been violated all over the world. The declaration is a powerful, informative, concise document that opens the door to discussing issues of importance to Indigenous people worldwide: diversity, human rights, and justice. It allows students to understand differences, injustices, and basic standards of well-being that should be universal for all human beings. While not legally binding, UNDRIP establishes a set of universal standards for the survival, dignity, well-being, and rights of the world’s 370 million Indigenous people. Canada’s endorsement of the Declaration on November 12, 2010, was a historic commitment to abide by and respect those standards. Place a copy of the UNDRIP on the table for the students to read. If you have access to a laptop computer, have the students watch the YouTube video “What is The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” produced by the Native American Voter Alliance at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Erk9JgJLCC0>. This video provides a very simple explanation about UNDRIP. After viewing it, have students read the document and discuss the following questions:

- How important is the international community in recognizing that Indigenous peoples across the world have had their rights ignored?
- Can the international community influence countries of the world to agree on a set of principles when it comes to the treatment of Indigenous peoples? How?
- Why is it important for Indigenous peoples that the rights to culture, identity, language, employment, and education are protected?
- Do you think UNDRIP provides countries with a guide to improve relationships with First Nations people in Canada?

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Adapt the AFN Declaration of First Nations into a presentation piece, a play, a script, or a radio play. When might this be said and why? Come up with a set of clear characters, a setting, a conflict, and an ending to your show. Present student shows to the community.

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for learning*)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

Learning Experience 3.1: Respecting History

Lesson Plan 3.1.2: Reconciling Residential Schools

Rationale

Most residential schools closed in the 1970s as the Department of Indian Affairs began to hand responsibility for schooling back to the provinces and First Nations and Inuit communities. Criminal and civil suits against the government and the churches began in the late 1980s, and in the 1990s many churches that ran the residential schools began to issue formal apologies. After long periods of discussion and litigation, the three parties involved in residential schools (the Government of Canada, the churches, and the students—now called “survivors”) forged the Residential School Settlement Agreement. As a part of the agreement, the Canadian government offered an apology on the issue of residential schools. The apology was made on June 11, 2008, by the federal government to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada on the issue of residential schools. This document is official, current, and authentic. It is history. The era of residential schools has been acknowledged to be a regrettable and unfortunate event, a sad chapter in our history. It was hoped that this apology would acknowledge that generations of Indigenous people have been affected and states that there is no place in Canada for the attitudes that inspired the residential schools system to ever again prevail—committing all Canadians to a journey of healing and reconciliation.

Another part of the agreement was the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools. Alongside survivors and the churches that ran the schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was tasked to document the history and legacies of the schools in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities—all of Canada. What the TRC uncovered about the legacies of residential schools cannot be understated. These findings have been well documented in the TRC’s report at www.trc.ca. During the TRC’s work, tens of thousands of former students, affected family members and Canadians, and those who worked in the schools—including clergy, teachers, and administrators—testified. In the end, the TRC offered 94 recommendations to address the continuing legacy of the residential school system, to improve the plight of Indigenous peoples, and to restore relations between them and other Canadians.

In this learning experience, students will gain insights and understandings of the ideas, concepts, and forces that are the foundation of the integrity and power of First Nations peoples; obtain awareness and appreciation of the role of First Nations in the shared history of Canada; and get exposed to the Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools and AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine’s response to the Statement of Apology.

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks: Plain Talk 15: Official Documents*
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide: Plain Talk 15: Official Documents*
- *Canada apologizes for residential schools system* by the Parliament of Canada

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment as learning)

Ask students if they have ever apologized to someone and, if so, what the circumstances were. Ask them:

- What makes an apology meaningful?
- Is an apology enough to fix a conflict?
- What else is needed?
- How have you resolved or reconciled a conflict in the past?

As a class, use a dictionary to define the following terms. Have students complete the definitions on note cards and tape them up throughout the room. The words are:

- assimilate
- prohibit
- consequence
- responsibility
- legacy
- resolution
- commission
- heal

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Have students read through the Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools. Also have students watch the apology at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ryC74bbrEE>. After students either read or view the apology, have them discuss the following questions in groups:

- The apology talks about “forging a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians . . . with a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us.” What does this mean? How can it work? What can you do as an individual, a school, or a community to further these ideas?
- Ask: What specific actions or initiatives can you take as an individual, as a school, or as a community to move forward on reconciliation? Are all Canadians survivors of the schools? How?

Have students pick out interesting and provocative quotations from each speech. In each case, have students put these quotations on note cards and, as they present them to the class and talk about their meaning, place them throughout the classroom. The following are some applicable ones:

- “We are sorry.”
- “In the 1870s, the federal government, partly in order to meet its obligation to educate Aboriginal children, began to play a role in the development and administration of these schools.”
- “. . . to kill the Indian in the child . . .”
- “The legacy of Indian residential schools has contributed to the social problems that continue to exist in many communities today.”
- “The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long.”

Then, have students do the same with AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine’s response to the Statement of Apology. Some of these quotes may include the following:

- “What happened today signifies a new dawn in the relationship between us and the rest of Canada.”
- “The attempts to erase our identities hurt us deeply, but it also hurt all Canadians and impoverished the character of this nation.”

Have students examine the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and its 94 recommendations at www.trc.ca. Have students work in groups on each section of the recommendations.

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as* learning)

While all of their note cards are up on the wall, students invite another class and tour fellow students through their class gallery, explaining what the apology and acceptance by Fontaine and other Indigenous leaders mean, what words and quotes they learned, and end by writing a note card with their partner on what they think needs to happen for First Nations and Canadians to reconcile the history of residential schools. Place these “Reconciliation Cards” in a display in the hallway called “Reconciling Canada after Residential Schools.” Then students create short videos on what the apology means to them. Videos may include poetry, songs, and stories. Mail these videos collectively to the following address for survivors and the public to view:

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
Chancellor’s Hall, 177 Dysart Road
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB
R3T 2N2

Have students adopt a section of the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and hold community or class debates (with question and answer periods) on the viability of each. Invite media to participate.

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for* learning)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

Learning Experience 3.2: Leadership

Lesson Plan 3.2.1: Indspire

Rationale

Post-secondary school today is crucial to find the kind of job that provides opportunities for the future. Pursuing post-secondary education plans for college or university may require financial assistance. Potential applicants for such help should be aware of what is available and how to go about taking advantage of programs, awards, and scholarships.

In this learning experience, students will learn about the various bursaries and scholarship programs that are available to them.

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks: Plain Talk 16: Scholarships: Heroes of Our Time (HOOT) and Indspire*
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide: Plain Talk 16: Scholarships: Heroes of Our Time (HOOT) and Indspire*

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Have students flip through periodicals (like *SAY* magazine) and find jobs they wish to have. Have them do quick research on the qualifications and training necessary for these positions.

Have students study all of the post-secondary schools in their area. Have them specifically assess the cost of a basic program in their interest area, what programs are offered, and figure out a budget and cost of living while going to school (including such things as rent, food, entertainment, tuition, and car payments).

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Have students complete a career research project where they identify three potential career options they wish to explore after graduation. For the project, have students:

- Go to the Government of Canada *Services for Youth* website.
www.youth.gc.ca/eng/topics/jobs/lmi.shtml
- Click under Regional Labour Markets for their location.
- Click on Labour Market Information.
- Click on LMI Publications.

- e. Click on Prospects and Career Planning Guide. This lists several different careers and the potential earnings in each field. While the salaries will range in each province, this guide provides a comprehensive list of potential careers.
- f. Have students select three careers from the guide. Then, have them
 - i. name the career
 - ii. outline the educational requirements
 - iii. identify the salary range within their chosen field

Have students interview someone in their chosen profession and perform a one-day placement at their place of employment.

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as* learning)

Have students read through the bursary and scholarship guidelines on the Indspire website at <https://indspire.ca/for-students/bursaries-scholarships/>. Then, have them complete their own resumé in preparation for completing an online application.

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for* learning)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

Learning Experience 3.2: Leadership

Lesson Plan 3.2.2: Role Models

Rationale

It is motivating and uplifting to honour and celebrate First Nations men and women who have made, and are continuing to make, contributions to their communities, their nation, and, in many cases, the world. These role models come from different regions of the country. Their personal journeys tell of dedication, effort, leadership, excellence, wisdom, survival, commitment, discipline, and a whole lot more. There are lessons for all of us in their stories. These are examples of lives well lived.

In this learning experience, students will become able to identify role models who have had an impact on their lives and to understand common characteristics of people who are role models.

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks: Plain Talk 17: Role Models*
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide: Plain Talk 17: Role Models*
- BLM 5: First Nations Role Models
- "Live a Life of Integrity: Teachings and Lessons from Indigenous Role Models" (video) by the Assembly of First Nations

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Read the definition of a role model provided in your pre-reading. After you have read the definition, have the students as a whole class brainstorm attributes related to being a role model. Go over some potential First Nations role models in BLM 5: First Nations Role Models (found in Appendix IV at the end of this document).

Have students create a list of all of their role models throughout their life and break them into the following lists. Once completed, ask them what characteristics their role models share across the categories and which characteristics are specific to that area. Use the following categories:

- Personal
- Professional
- Spiritual
- Celebrities and Leaders

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Play the video “Live a Life of Integrity” by the AFN, which highlights First Nations male role models at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9-jc27eLsg>.

After the video is complete, ask the students the following questions:

- What specific qualities did the individuals in the video possess that made them positive role models?
- What did you learn from the role models featured in the video?
- What are some characteristics common to the role models?

Have students choose a role model featured in the classroom presentation and video or choose their own role model who has been an inspiration. Have students place a photo of this person on the “Honour Your Role Models” poster and complete a one-page description that

- provides background about the role model’s life (family and personal history, educational history, professional achievements)
- explains why the student chose that specific role model
- lists specific qualities that makes him or her a role model

Then, have a “Role Model of the Day” event where one new role model is featured every day. Students will be expected to make a brief presentation about their role model in front of the class on that day.

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Create a Powerpoint or other media presentation of role models using section 17 of the *Tool Kit National User’s Guide*, highlighting well-known role models in the First Nations community. After your presentation is complete, ask the students if there are other First Nations role models they know of who were not included in the presentation and have them explain why they should be included on the list. Organize an “Honour Our Role Models Celebration.” Have students discuss role models in their community and generate a list of candidates who deserve to be called role models. The list could include a respected Elder, a remarkable teacher, an active parent, a successful hoop dancer, a skilled trapper, or someone’s auntie. Invite a chosen role model to visit the classroom. Make the occasion a real celebration.

Honour the individual with a plaque, a poem, or a testimonial. Along the way, students build pride and self-esteem, and gain experience brainstorming, decision making, event planning, working as a team, and building community. Students may also wish to write a letter to their role model to say what they admire about him or her. Tell the role models about the discussion the class has been having about them. Google makes it easy to find current addresses. Most people will reply to such a letter.

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for* learning)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

Learning Experience 3.3: First Nations Futures

Lesson Plan 3.3.1: Youth Income Assistance Tool Kit

Rationale

The *AFN Youth Income Assistance Toolkit* has been put together by the Assembly of First Nations and is aimed at First Nations youth. This tool kit emerged from a 2011 National Youth Dialogue on income assistance (welfare). Youth from across the country gathered in Vancouver to speak up about welfare and Employment Insurance, about themselves, about education and choices, and about making a living and making a life.

The *AFN Youth Income Assistance Toolkit* has important information about colleges, universities and trades, entrepreneurship, managing money, debt and credit, and an excellent section on decision making and career planning. There are backgrounders, suggested activities and exercises, and an impressive index of useful resources. Young people face so many difficult decisions. Should they stay in school, leave school, or go back to school? Should they stay in their home community or leave? Should they get a job or go on welfare?

In this learning experience, students will be able to plan financially and professionally for a healthy, interesting, and challenging life.

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks: Plain Talk 13: First Nations Economic Growth and Employment*
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide: Plain Talk 13: First Nations Economic Growth and Employment*
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit: Dollars and Sense* (booklet) by the Aboriginal Financial Officers of Canada (AFOC) and TD Bank
- *AFN Youth Income Assistance Toolkit* by the Assembly of First Nations

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Share with students the information found in Toolkit Tab 1 in the *AFN Youth Income Assistance Toolkit*. Then share the following quote with students by First Nations leader Harold Cardinal, which appeared in *The Unjust Society*:

"Years ago our people were self-reliant . . . our life was hard but we lived like men. Then the government came and offered welfare to our people. It was as if they had cut our throats."

Ask students the following questions:

- Is he correct? Is welfare necessary? Why? What are the purposes of welfare and how does it help people? Does it hinder people? How can people take responsibility for themselves? Should government help out when times are tough?
- Do you think people choose to be on welfare?
- Should income assistance programs provide more money?
- What would life be like if there was no more welfare? What if there was no further need for welfare or social assistance programs? What does that world look like?
- What are the advantages and the disadvantages of income assistance? If you have a choice between doing nothing and getting a small amount of money or doing something and getting more money, what would you choose? Why?
- How can young people gain a stronger voice in their communities? How can young people foster pride and a sense of identity in culture and traditions?

Share with students the information found in the *AFN Youth Income Assistance Toolkit* Tab 2: Decide it, Plan it—Do it! Talk to students about how any goal or idea is not just going to happen on its own. There needs to be planning. Then, ask students the following questions:

- When have you been most committed, passionate, and enthusiastic?
- When have you been most creative?
- When have you been most sure of yourself and your decisions?
- When have you enjoyed your work most?
- What talents were you relying on and using in these situations?
- What activities are you drawn towards?

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Share with students the content from the *AFN Youth Income Assistance Toolkit* Tabs 3–6 on career planning, completing the following step-by-step activities:

- “The Favourite Things Circle” (page 13)
- “Problems and Solutions” (page 18)
- “Finding a Job” (pages 23–26)
- “Getting Trained, Going to School” (pages 27–30)

Have students read Toolkit Tab 7: Creating Your Own Job, and then have them create a business plan that provides a service for their community, completing all steps from “how to write a funding proposal” to “financial projections.”

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as* learning)

Have students read Toolkit Tab 8: Staying Connected: Making Social Media Work for You, and examine their online profiles. Assess whether an employer who has seen your social media page would want to hire you. If not, explain why and say how this can be changed to meet employer interests.

Have students complete a monthly budget via Toolkit Tab 9: Managing Your Money. Discuss with students the value of credit or debt and how this enables and disables your future life and opportunities. *Dollars and Sense*, a publication of the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Canada (AFOA) and the TD Bank Group, might be useful. It helps young people gain an appreciation of the importance of financial literacy in their day-to-day lives now and in the future, and it contains an excellent variety of suggested activities, exercises, tips, hints, quizzes, and exercises, including the following:

- If I Had a Million Dollars Money Quiz
- Aboriginal People and Currency of the Past
- Principles of Effective Money Management
- My Summer Job and \$1,200
- Spending Plan and Savings
- Consumer Awareness, Banking, and Credit
- Types of Financial Institutions in Canada
- Impacts of Sound/Unsound Financial Practices on Individuals, Family, and Community
- Careers in Finance

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for* learning)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

Learning Experience 3.3: First Nations Futures

Lesson Plan 3.3.2: First Nations Accountability

Rationale

There has been a great deal of misinformation and a lot of skewed perspectives in the media and elsewhere regarding accountability among First Nations communities. It is important to set the record straight.

In this learning experience, students will understand what accountability and leadership mean, and they will examine some of the unfair stereotypes about First Nations leaders.

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks:*
Plain Talk 14: First Nations Accountability
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide:*
Plain Talk 14: First Nations Accountability

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Ask the students “What does accountability mean?” and “When are we required to be accountable?” Draw a circle in the middle of the board and write the word “accountability.” Every time a student provides an answer, write the response around the circle. Ask the students what they think the following statement means: “You are accountable for your actions.”

Invite a local First Nations leader into the classroom to talk about his or her roles and responsibilities as a leader. Ask the leader to speak on whom she or he is accountable to, as well as why and how.

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Tell students that effective leaders take responsibility for their actions, as well as for how those actions affect the people around them. Let the students know that there have been many great leaders. One of the great leaders was Chief Sitting Bull. He was considered to be great because all of his actions reflected his sense of accountability to his nation. The following quote has been attributed to him:

“Warriors are not what you think of as warriors. The warrior is not someone who fights, because no one has the right to take another life. The warrior, for us, is one who sacrifices himself for the good of others. His task is to take care of the elderly, the defenseless, those who cannot provide for themselves, and above all, the children, the future of humanity.”

Research the life of Sitting Bull and what he accomplished. Separate the students into groups of five and have them respond to the following questions:

- What is Sitting Bull saying when he describes what it means to be a true warrior?
- What does he mean when he states “The warrior, for us, is one who sacrifices himself for the good of others.”
- Do you think his beliefs about being a warrior reflect accountability in leadership?

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as* learning)

Examine all of the responsibilities of a First Nations government and compare these to the responsibilities of federal, provincial, and municipal governments. Examine the obstacles and limitations that are unique to First Nations governments. Then, do a case study of a First Nations community to determine its specific needs (e.g., housing, water, health, education, etc.). How much money might this cost? Are First Nations governments adequately funded? If not, why? How could this discrepancy be rectified?

Have students write a short reflection that begins with the statement “If I were leader for a day . . .” and explore what they would do, why, how much their decisions would cost (and affect things like budget), and how difficult it is to be a leader of a community.

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for* learning)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

Learning Experience 3.4: Guideposts for a New Relationship

Lesson Plan 3.4.1: First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

Rationale

In 2007, the Canadian Council on Learning collaborated with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis learning professionals and researchers to explore and articulate the recognition that the world of First Nations learners is one of interconnectedness, in which experiences and relationships are circular, cumulative, and holistic. The First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model is a visually appealing tool for revealing the forces that operate through our life cycle. The model identifies the many factors that influence our development and learning, providing many insights into the nature of these influences.

In this learning experience, students will honour a lifetime commitment to learning that includes all beings in a learning community.

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks:*
Plain Talk 18: First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide:*
Plain Talk 18: First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Facilitate a classroom discussion about the circle. Have students sit in a circle and place a cut-out circle in the middle. Ask them to look at the circle silently for one minute and then to share some of their observations about the circle. After the students have finished making their observations, explain to them that a circle has no beginning and no end and that everything is equal, balanced, and interconnected.

Discuss these concepts through active questions and solicit real-life examples for each. How is learning

- holistic?
- a lifelong process?
- experiential in nature?
- rooted in Indigenous languages and cultures?
- spiritually oriented?

- a communal activity, involving family, community, and Elders?
- inclusive of many different types of knowledge and experiences?

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Draw a circle for the students on a large, white piece of paper. Using a black marker, divide the circle into four equal quadrants and talk about the significance of the number four as you teach the First Nations perspective about the interconnectedness of all things. Some examples include the four seasons, directions, sacred medicines, elements, and stages of life. Use the example of the Medicine Wheel found in your pre-reading.

Distribute the model of the First Nation Holistic Lifelong Learning Model in your pre-reading. Explore with your students where the following subjects could be learned, as well as how they could be taught and by whom:

- math
- science
- physical education
- drama
- language arts
- science
- astronomy
- biology
- social studies

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Separate the class into groups of five. To help them understand the significance of the number four, have students use the following list to label the Medicine Wheel's four quadrants. Have students consider where each would sit on the wheel and why:

- the four stages of life (child, youth, adult, elder)
- the four directions (north, west, east, south)
- the four seasons (winter, spring, summer, fall)
- the four sacred medicines (sage, cedar, sweetgrass, tobacco)
- the four sacred elements (wind, water, air, fire)
- the four aspects of self (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual)

Have students examine Plain Talk 18: First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model and create their own lifelong learning model using some image from their life. This could include, for example, a house, a playground, a school, or a sport. Make sure this includes all of the aspects and individuals that influence and teach them today and throughout their lives. Once the students have finished, have them join back together in a circle, present their model, and discuss the concept of balance in their own lives.

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for* learning)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

Learning Experience 3.4: Guideposts for a New Relationship

Lesson Plan 3.4.2: Intelligence

Rationale

The concept of intelligence has always been controversial. For far too long, intelligence has been measured against very narrow standards of culture, language, and numeracy. This approach has utterly failed whole populations, especially First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples—often creating stereotypes and policies that oppress and deny the gifts First Nations people carry and foster in their communities. Intelligence, from an Indigenous or First Nations perspective, is an inclusive concept that embraces all of the talents, abilities, skills, and understandings that distinguish us as a species.

In this learning experience, students will examine intelligence holistically and consider a significant new perspective and approach to the idea that is consistent with First Nations values and principles. They will also examine the notion of multiple intelligences and consider that individuals can be gifted in areas outside of the traditional measurements of intelligence, such as IQ tests.

Pre-Reading and Materials Required

- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National Plain Talks:* Plain Talk 19: Intelligence
- *It's Our Time: First Nations Education Tool Kit National User's Guide:* Plain Talk 19: Intelligence
- "Let's Learn about Multiple Intelligence" (video) by Mr. Thompson

LESSON PLAN

I. Activating Strategies (includes assessment *as learning*)

Ask students: "What is intelligence?" and "Who do we know is smart?" Discuss how being "smart" is often an arbitrary set of terms. Share with students Howard Gardner's Ways of Knowing model in the pre-reading.

Watch the Youtube video *Let's Learn about Multiple Intelligence* by Mr. Thompson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7gJcXtQqKM>

After the students watch the video, ask them:

- What did you learn about intelligence that you didn't know before watching the film?
- Students who do well in math, science, and English are often praised for being intelligent. Why do you think it's also important to recognize other kinds of intelligence?
- Have your views about intelligence changed after watching the film?

II. Acquiring Strategies (includes assessment *as* learning)

Have the students create a collage from magazine pictures that depict skills they possess in each of the intelligence categories identified in the Ways of Knowing model. After they finish their collage, have them write a brief explanation about how each picture represents a specific gift. Hang the completed posters around the classroom.

Have the students choose five people who they feel possess a specific talent in one of the areas identified in the Ways of Knowing model. Students will interview that person and provide a written explanation about that individual's specific gift.

III. Applying Strategies (includes assessment *as* learning)

Have students make a scrapbook of Internet photos or pictures from magazines that demonstrate the different kinds of intelligence. Students then identify their accomplishments in these areas, using the Ways of Knowing model. Students should write a brief explanation of why they chose a specific photo for each page.

Have students create a list of jobs that utilize certain forms of intelligence. Then ask how each job could exist in another list and why this might show something interesting about each job. Have students research the leaders in each job and see if they utilize some of those ways of knowing in innovative ways.

IV. Assessment (includes assessment *as, of, for* learning)

- Hold a talking circle (BLM 1)
- Have students write in their reflection journal (BLM 2)
- Complete teacher reflection (BLM 3)

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