

Resource Recommendations to Build Aboriginal Understandings

Collective Ownership can be defined simply as every person in our district embracing and taking responsibility for the success of our Aboriginal students. We need Aboriginal Education to transcend the boundaries of departments, of job descriptions, of formal roles and responsibilities. We need to question our beliefs, attitudes, assumptions, and comfort levels around all things Aboriginal. Therefore we want to shift our thinking away from “Aboriginal Education for Aboriginal students” to “what’s good for Aboriginal students is good for all students”.

Here are some resources to help with that shift. These are professional learning around the understanding of Aboriginal people, history, and culture:

Web:

- First Peoples Principles of Learning: <https://firstpeoplesprinciplesoflearning.wordpress.com/>
- Aboriginal World Views and Perspectives in the Classroom: https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/awp_moving_forward.pdf
- Page 9-16 of this resource provides some great info about **authentic** texts: <http://www.fnesc.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/PUB-LFP-K-3-In-our-Own-Words-for-Web.pdf>
- Our Words Our Way: <https://fner.wordpress.com/2012/03/09/our-words-our-ways-teaching-first-nations-metis-and-inuit-learners/>
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Books/Literature:

- An Inconvenient Indian by Thomas King
- First Nations 101 by Lynda Gray
- Peace Pipe Dreams by Darrell Dennis
- Decolonizing Education by Marie Battiste
- The Orenda by Joseph Boyden
- Indian Horse by Richard Wagamese
- Legacy by Waubgeshig Rice
- The Reason You Walk by Wab Kinew
- Our Story: Aboriginal Voices on Canada’s Past
- The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book by Gord Hill
- Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- The Winter We Danced: Voices from the Past, the Future and Idle No More Movement by The Kino-nda-niimi Collective
- A is for Assimilation: The ABC's of Canada’s Aboriginal People and Residential Schools by Len Fortune
- Aboriginal Rights Are Not Human Rights: In Defense of Indigenous Struggles by Peter Kulchyski

Reports/Documents:

- https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/pdf/aboriginal_education_bc.pdf
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Calls to Action (particularly the items listed under “Education for Reconciliation”): http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
- There is a difference between teaching about Aboriginal curriculum/content and appropriating culture. Here is a recent article from TEACH Magazine: http://issuu.com/teachmag/docs/teach_novdec2015/10?e=2372208/31632654 (Open in Chrome)
- <http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb9924-e.htm>

DVD/Documentaries:

- The 8th Fire, CBC series
- The spirit has no colour: Changing Police/Aboriginal Relationships

Other:

Publishing companies/distributors where you can find a wealth of Aboriginal resources

- Strong Nations <http://www.strongnations.com/>
- Theytus Books <http://www.theytus.com/>

Integrating Aboriginal Content - Why is it Important and Where do we Start?

Many teachers may ask why Aboriginal content, and not the perspectives of other cultural groups? Jo-Anne Chrona Spokeswoman for First Nations Education Steering Committee asks “if not here, then where?” Chrona is referring to Aboriginal understandings as being the understandings of THIS place. The other cultures and languages are still thriving and being taught and practiced in other parts of the world, the same must be done here. Aboriginal language, knowledge, and perspectives are indigenous to THIS place. Aboriginal content and perspectives can be interwoven anywhere. The inclusion of Aboriginal perspectives should go beyond what it stated in the curriculum. Teachers could challenge themselves to interweave Aboriginal content in places where it doesn’t seem obvious, here are some resources to continue your journey.

When considering Aboriginal content in your classroom ask yourself:

Is this Authentic?

Is Aboriginal content explicit?

Are Aboriginal values evident in the learning progression?

Are there learning opportunities that make connections to land and or languages?

Is it local (Coast Salish)? If not Local, is it Metis, or Inuit, or from another First Nation (identify to avoid generalizations)?

Are both historical and contemporary content and resources included?

Resources to Start the Journey

Picture Books:

A Coyote Columbus Story by Thomas King
 A Promise Is A Promise by Michael Kusugak*
 Cloudwalker by Roy Henry Vickers, Robert Budd
 Encounter by Jane Yolen*
 Everybody Needs A Rock by Byrd Baylor
 Fiddle Dancer by Wilfred Burton, Anne Patton
 I like who I am by Tara White
 Lessons From Mother Earth by Elaine McLeod

Novels:

7 Generations: A Plains Cree Saga by David Alexander Robertson*
 A Short History of Indians in Canada: Stories by Thomas King
 A Stranger at Home by Christy Jordan-Fenton, Margaret Pokiak-Fenton*
 As Long as the Rivers Flow by Larry Loyie*

Non-Fiction:

It's All About Thinking: Collaborating to Support All Learners by Faye Brownlie, Leyton Schnellert Ch.8
 Food plants of coastal First Peoples by Nancy J Turner
 Colour of Resistance by Connie Fife

My Elders Tell Me by Marion Wright
 Red Parka Mary by Peter Eyvindson
 Secret of the Dance by Alfred Scow, Andrea Spalding
 Seven Sacred Teachings by David Bouchard, Joseph Martin*
 Shi-shi-etko by Nicola I. Campbell*
 The Little Hummingbird by Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas*
 The Moccasins by Earl Einarson

Fatty Legs: A True Story by Christy Jordan-Fenton, Margaret Pokiak-Fenton*
 Goodbye Buffalo Bay by Larry Loyie
 My Name is Seepeetza by Shirley Sterling
 No Time to Say Goodbye by Sylvia Olsen, Rita Morris and Ann Sam
 Code Talker by Joseph Bruchac

Keepers of Life: Discovering Plants through Native American Stories and Earth Activities for Children
 Nowhere Else on Earth: Standing Tall for the Great Bear Rainforest by Caitlyn Vernon

*Available in French