

# Indigenous Ways of Knowing Strategies



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## Storytelling

Sharing oral stories to teach lessons, culture, ceremonies and spiritualities to the younger generation.

- Orally transmitted stories
- Sharing stories that honour Indigenous people and pass on Indigenous knowledge and worldviews
- Stories told collectively (in a group setting)
- Teaches a moral or life lesson
- Personal connections made
- Honouring the seasons of stories being told when telling traditional stories (during certain moon phases, six seasons of the Plains Cree, etc.)

## Elders

Important members in Indigenous communities. Elders provide life long learning and teachings.

- Knowing how to follow proper protocol for inviting an Elder.
- Elders can be invited in to speak on certain topics, please check what topics they would like to speak on. If they cannot provide a teaching for your topic, ask them if they would know an Elder they would recommend.
- Prior to the Elder speaking, let them know the time frame they have. Always allow them to finish their story or teaching.
- Elders can be a presence in the room to add a sense of belonging and welcoming.

## Language

Infusing Indigenous language into your lesson. There are 8 Indigenous language groups in Saskatchewan.

- Introduce an Indigenous language app. Most Indigenous languages such as Cree, Northern Michif and Dene have apps to help learn the language.
- Ways to implement Indigenous language:
  - Word of the Week
  - Switch English word with an Indigenous language word
  - Read books that have Indigenous words in them
- Invite a language speaker into the classroom

## **Observation-Modelling & Demonstration**

Students learn from the teacher or presenter modelling a lesson or demonstrating a skill. Students use observation to acquire the new learning.

- Includes hands on or physically showing something in the moment that students can try themselves following the demonstration
- Students are engaged, asking questions and are interacting with the teacher or presenter.
- Using Indigenous languages at appropriate times
- Real world connections are being made
- Outdoors when possible
- Following protocols involved
- Elders and other community members
- Virtual or video to accommodate and involve as many as possible

# Experiential

Students learn by being hands on, by doing.

- Students leading the learning
- Teacher is a facilitator, learning alongside the students during the experience
- It's about communication and peers learning from peers Inquiry based, attached to student interests
- Re-enacting the history (Blanket exercise, Treaty and Metis simulations) Feeling uncomfortable and choosing to do it anyway (learn with students)
- Accepting you don't know and working through it with your students
- Learning by doing
- Time for reflection

# Land-Based Learning

Learning from the land.

- Land-based learning is pedagogy Cross curricular teaching that focuses on Land, Language, Relationship and Culture.
- Connecting with Mother Earth and the importance of relationship with the land
- Students develop their own relationships with the land Students interact with their environment and community
- Students engage in authentic experiences
- Students develop an understanding and appreciation of different relationships with the land
- View the land from a holistic, interconnected perspective
- Hands on sharing of learning values for self, others and the environment Stewardship
- Increased engagement from students and community
- Learning enhances the curriculum
- Mother Earth as life giver

## **Community Based**

Learning from community members.

- Knowing the community and its history, especially the history of Indigenous peoples of the area
- Being mindful of what your community members/Elders are knowledgeable in (what's their area of expertise?)
- Being respectful of protocols
- Accommodating of their time
- Engaging families to share their knowledge or to participate
- Building relationships and authentic connections



## Sharing Circles

Students sit in a circle as they take turns speaking and listening to each other.

- Each participant has an opportunity to share towards the topic
- Their time is valued when they have the object (object should be relevant to the place)
- Participants can pass if they do not want to contribute
- Judgment free environment
- No questions asked
- Safe space (nothing leaves the circle)
- Everyone is equal
- All knowledge is valued
- Listening is important and a skill to be practiced
- Finding a space where a circle can be formed
- Speaking should go in a clockwise order
- Teacher facilitated- role to help guide group (more applicable to early years)

## **Culturally Relevant Content**

Authentically infusing indigenous content into the lessons.

- Materials have been reviewed/shared by experts in the area (Elders/Knowledge Keepers)
- Work hard to ensure accuracy
- Builds on knowledge the students already have
- Represents different worldviews and perspectives
- Engaging age-appropriate students with timely and current issues and content that they can connect with
- Cross curricular
- Authentic and not forced
- Connects too current events, not just historic connections
- Reflects
- Indigenous achievement in all areas of the curriculum