

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

CLASSROOM

PRINCIPLE	PERSPECTIVE & WORLDVIEW	WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN THE CLASSROOM?
<p><i>Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors</i></p> <p>Core Competencies C – connect and engage with others; collaborate to plan, carry out and review activities T – generate ideas; question and investigate PS – relationship and cultural contexts; contributing to community and caring for environment; personal values and choice; well-being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is relevant when its purpose is personal balance and the well-being of self and others • Learning occurs in the context of one’s lived experience • Spirits and ancestors are also our teachers and must be respected • This principle of learning is supported by the worldview that “we are all related” – what affects one person affects all others • The natural environment is regarded as a “classroom” • People do not “own” the land, they “belong” to the land • We owe our lives to those who have come before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create learning opportunities for students to make deeper connections between information/knowledge and the world outside classroom • Create learning opportunities for students to “make a difference” in the well-being of others and the environment • Use teaching strategies that allow for choice and personalization and build a sense of belonging • Seek understanding of a worldview that does not separate the physical and spiritual worlds • Value the uniqueness and strengths of each individual learner • Provide multiple access points for students to learn and multiple ways to represent learning • Begin with looking at local contexts when teaching and then move outward
<p><i>Learning is holistic, reflexive,</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is active (experiential), not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create learning opportunities for

<p><i>reflective, experiential, and relational with a focus on connectedness and a sense of place</i></p> <p>Core Competencies CT – question and investigate; generate ideas C – connect and engage with others; recount and reflect on experiences; collaborate to plan, carry out, and review activities PS – relationship and cultural contexts; valuing diversity</p>	<p>passive - understanding happens as learner and subject interact and shape each other (reflexive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning process is circular rather than linear – it builds upon itself as learners develop new knowledge and deeper understandings • Learning occurs in the context of relationship – understanding and meaning are created as students, teacher and subject join together • Sources of knowledge include land, people, stories and experiences • Learning occurs in particular place and is shaped by place (environment, seasons...) • Pedagogies are found in cultural practices that involve observation and modelling 	<p>“interdisciplinary” learning that help students “connect the dots” to understand relationship of various pieces of information and form bigger picture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop healthy relationships with and among students – build trust • Provide choice and flexibility in learning activities so that different aspects of the whole self are attended to • Use circles for group discussion – ensure equity in student voice • Provide opportunities for students to mentor others • Use inquiry and project-based learning to give students opportunity to learn from each other, and for teacher to learn from students • Teacher decision making and practice is responsive to relevant evidence • Use scaffolding strategies to build deeper understanding • Use teaching strategies that promote student engagement • Provide lots of opportunity for student talk, building of peer relationship, and sharing of learning • Use local resources and contexts to support learning
<p><i>Learning involves recognizing the consequence of one’s actions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One’s actions and words have an impact on others in the circle of life • An individual must always take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish high expectations and processes for behavior, effort and achievement

<p>Core Competencies PS – self regulation; self-determination; personal values and choices</p>	<p>responsibility for words and actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive words and actions will come back to you, as will negative words and actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When students fall below expected achievement, have support and process to achieve at expected level • Provide opportunity for students to take risks and learn from mistakes • Interact with students in ways that promote self-regulation and empowerment • Provide learners with appropriate amount of autonomy and choice in their learning
<p><i>Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities</i></p> <p>Core Competencies PS – relationship and cultural contexts; building relationships C – connect and engage with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and community members (aunties/uncles, grandparents, elders...) have particular roles and responsibilities in teaching children and youth • Teaching and learning is the responsibility of all members of the community • The responsibility for learning also lies with the learner – they must determine what is to be learned from any given situation • Elders are knowledgeable people who understand things that need to be learned by the younger generation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunity for Elders, family and local resource people to be in your classroom and in your school • Promote personal responsibility and leadership opportunities for students • Explicitly model learning processes for students • Provide necessary scaffolding and gradual release as the learner develops mastery
<p><i>Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge comes from experience with the land, water, animals, ancestors and spirits • Knowledge is dynamic (not static) and changes over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate Indigenous knowledge by placing it alongside “western” knowledge as an equal and complimentary knowledge (eg. Traditional Ecological Knowledge and

<p>Core Competencies T – generating ideas; question and investigate; analyze and critique PS – relationship and cultural contexts; valuing diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For thousands of years Indigenous peoples have expressed a sophisticated understanding of the world around them and hold an extensive wealth of knowledge Indigenous knowledge contributes to the non-Indigenous understandings of the world 	<p>science)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validate Indigenous knowledge by presenting it as current and contemporary, not as an artifact from the past As a teacher, see yourself as a learner along with students Ensure meaningful inclusion of Indigenous perspectives and content in curricular areas Create cross-curricular learning experiences that will allow for more holistic inclusion of Indigenous content and perspective
<p><i>Learning is embedded in memory, history and story</i></p> <p>Core Competencies C – acquire, interpret, and present information; explain and reflect on experiences T – novelty and value; question and investigate; analyze and critique PS – personal values and choice; relationship and cultural contexts; valuing diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wisdom is gained through listening, observation, asking questions and testing understanding The oral tradition is used to transmit stories, values, skills and histories. This tradition (both content and process) helps to create the learner’s concept of the world. Story is about meaning – each person derives their own meaning from story; gaining wisdom is a process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use story, narrative and metaphor in all subject areas. Sometimes story will connect directly to curriculum – sometimes curriculum will provide opportunity for story to increase student understanding of history and culture Seek to know the history and stories of local territories Provide opportunity for learners to listen to and connect with the stories of others Teach Aboriginal history across subject areas as a way to understand and respond to current realities
<p><i>Learning involves patience and time</i></p> <p>Core Competencies C – collaborate to plan, carry out, and review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning is a circular and relational process, not to be rushed Teaching and learning is a lifelong process that needs to be nurtured Understanding requires concepts and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use strategies that honour process and mastery, not only product Revisit concepts multiple times, scaffolding learning to deepen understanding

<p>constructions and activities T – develop and design; generating ideas PS – personal strengths and abilities; self-determination</p>	<p>information to be explored from multiple perspectives over time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be flexible with curriculum - adapt curriculum to meet needs of student • Provide flexible scheduling in schools and classrooms to allow learners the time they need to know and understand
<p><i>Learning requires exploration of one's identity</i></p> <p>Core Competencies T – question and investigate PS – relationship and cultural context; well-being; building relationships; self-determination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language, history, community, ancestors, ceremony, culture are all part of one's identity • Identity is physical, mental, emotional and spiritual • Culture counts – learner's experience and perspective form the basis of their identity and learning • Identity is situated in relation to family, kinship, community and land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create good relationship with students so there is safety to explore and express their identity • Avoid generalizing about learners based on cultural stereotypes • “Culturally located relationships” – validate student identity by showing interest in their family, Nation etc • Provide choice in learning opportunity for individual expression • Recognize that racism in the larger society can make formation of positive personal and cultural identity more complex
<p><i>Learning recognizes that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacred knowledge is connected to particular members of the community and particular practices • Sacred knowledge is embedded in story, ceremony, or particular teachings and practices • Some knowledge is shared freely, while 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach Aboriginal history, current realities and perspectives • Use credible resources, including local Aboriginal elders, knowledge keepers, and academics • Do not teach about ceremony or sacred practices

<p>Core Competencies C – acquire, interpret and present information T – question and investigate; analyze and critique; novelty and value PS – personal values and choice; relationship and cultural contexts</p>	<p>other knowledge is not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many First Nations have teachings that happen in traditional ways and are not shared with people who are not part of the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sensitive in directing questions at students that pertain to ceremony (eg. their experience in Big House) • Be comfortable asking questions if you are unsure
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This document represents the thoughts, experience and research of various First Nations and Metis elders, teachers, students and academics. It was produced by the Aboriginal Nations Education Division (ANED), Greater Victoria School District #61 (2017). It is intended to be a guide to conversation and to exploring new perspectives and practices. As such, it will grow and change, as knowledge always does.



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