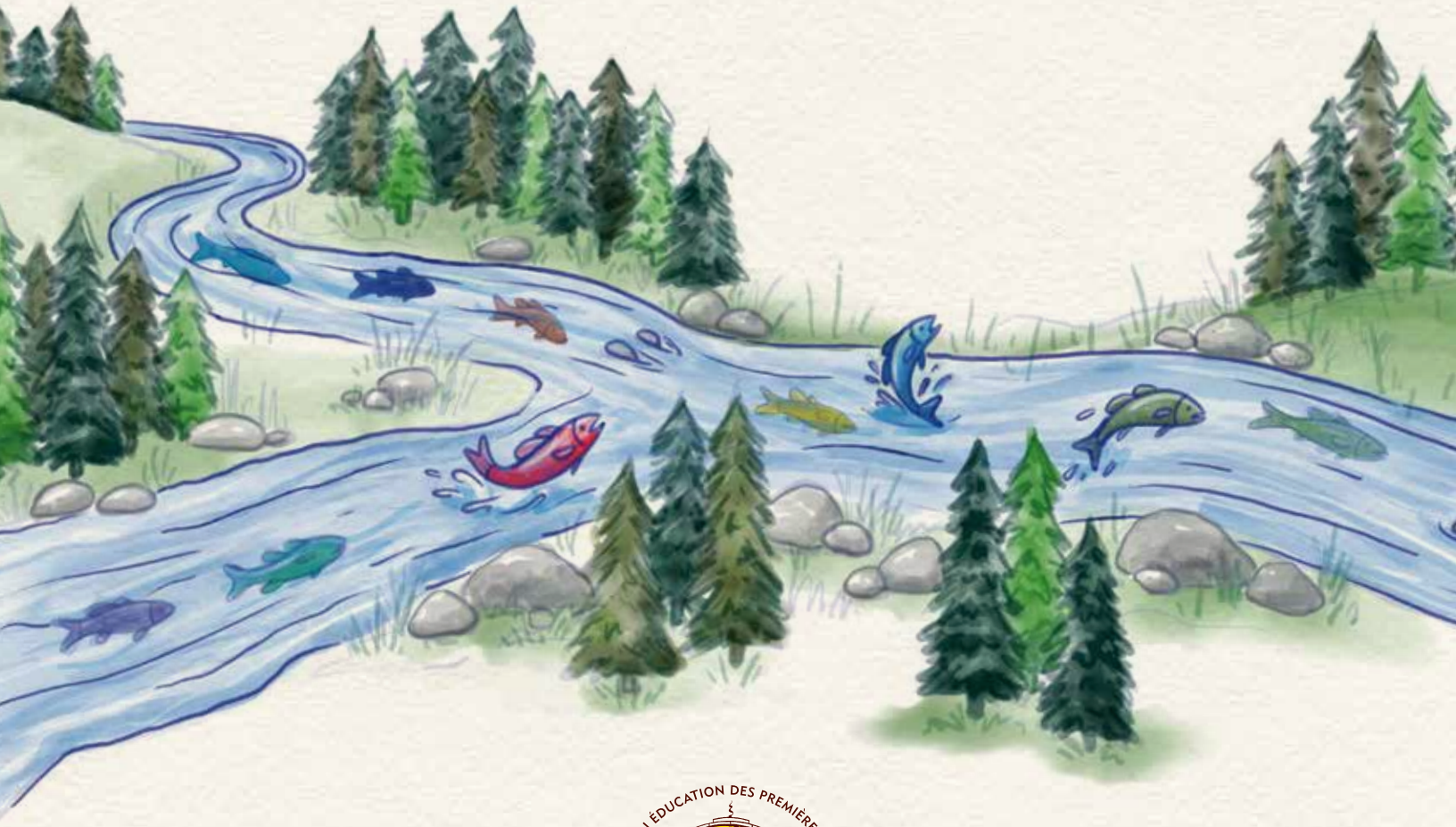
Competency 15 Guide

Value and promote Indigenous knowledge, worldviews, cultures and history



CONSEIL EN ÉDUCATION DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS
FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION COUNCIL

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Glossary

This glossary is not intended to redefine terms that are already defined in publications, reference frameworks or specialized glossaries. Many concepts related to Indigenous realities, reconciliation and education have been rigorously defined by organizations, communities and various authorities. In addition, the Voices from the Land portal also offers glossaries and resources from authentic sources that can help deepen your understanding of these concepts. This work builds on previous research: it does not seek to replace existing studies, but rather to provide a contextualized perspective on Competency 15 and its application in educational settings.

The terms were selected based on specific criteria: their cultural relevance and alignment with community realities; their contribution to the promotion of First Nations and Inuit knowledge, worldviews, cultures and history; their ability to support learners' well-being; their concrete contribution to professional conduct, relationships and educational practices; their direct connection to cultural safety and humility; and their potential for implementation.

The glossary thus covers various complementary areas, including cultural foundations, professional conduct, community relations, teaching practice and social objectives, particularly with regard to self-determination and reconciliation. It is intended to be a support tool that promotes a shared understanding and a thoughtful commitment to the implementation of Competency 15.

> The term "First Nations and Inuit" is used here in an inclusive manner. We remain generalists in our approach, but we recognize that each Nation and each First People remain the experts on their own reality.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a process that requires:

1. the acknowledgement of historical truth;
2. restoration through intentional and collaborative action;
3. *authentic relationships* characterized by respect, reciprocity, fairness and trust.

Our definition is based on the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, specifically calls to action 6 to 17 and 62 to 65.

In an educational context, reconciliation involves training teachers on colonial violence, integrating Indigenous perspectives into curricula and school activities, and creating opportunities for students to interact with other stakeholders in both non-Indigenous and Indigenous learning environments.

Community

This term refers to a group of people who share a territory, a history, a culture and a language, as well as human, family and cultural ties. It includes all members of a Nation, regardless of where they live, and recognizes cultural and social continuity. As the term "reserve" designates the geographical location to which the government has confined the various Nations under the *Indian Act*, as well as to the mechanisms of land dispossession, the term "community" is preferable to "reserve." It should be noted that among the Inuit, the term "village" is generally used in everyday language, rather than "community" or "reserve."

Holistic learning

In an Indigenous context, this learning model is based on the idea that people learn throughout their lives and should be recognized as whole, complex beings who are intimately connected to the world around them — their family, community, history and culture.

In an educational setting, this approach calls for providing balanced support for the learner's emotional, mental, spiritual and physical spheres, in addition to cognitive development. It aims to promote the development of knowledge, skills and ways of being, while taking into account the influence of the cultural and social context in which the learner operates.

Indigenous peoples

Globally, this term is used to refer to populations that have inhabited an ancestral territory since time immemorial.

In the Canadian context, "Indigenous" is more of a generic term that encompasses the three groups recognized by the 1982 Constitution: First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Since this is an umbrella term, it is preferable, whenever possible, to name the specific Nation in question in order to acknowledge the distinct identity of the people and communities. However, it is essential to verify the accuracy of this identification before using it. To that end, we invite you to visit the following links: Interactive Map – AFNQL (Indigenous point of view) and the 11 Indigenous Nations of Quebec – Government of Quebec (provincial government's point of view).

The term "Indigenous peoples" is retained when it appears in official wording or a quotation, particularly in the wording of Competency 15. Elsewhere in this guide, we prefer to use "First Nations and Inuit" to more accurately identify the peoples we are referring to.

First Nations and Inuit

This is the preferred term used in this guide to refer to Indigenous Nations. The 10 First Nations (Anishinabeg, Atikamekw, Cree, Innu/Ilnu, Kanien'kehá:ka, Mi'gmaq, Naskapi, W8banaki, Wendat, Wolastoqiyik) and the Inuit inhabit the territory now known as Quebec.

The use of the term "Kebec," derived from Algonquian languages, is intended to acknowledge the presence and knowledge of the First Peoples in this region long before it was given its current name. This word refers to the idea of "where the river narrows." Different forms exist across languages and Nations, reflecting the richness and diversity of Indigenous languages. Their use in this guide reflects a commitment to promoting these languages and highlighting their deep roots in the region.



Introduction

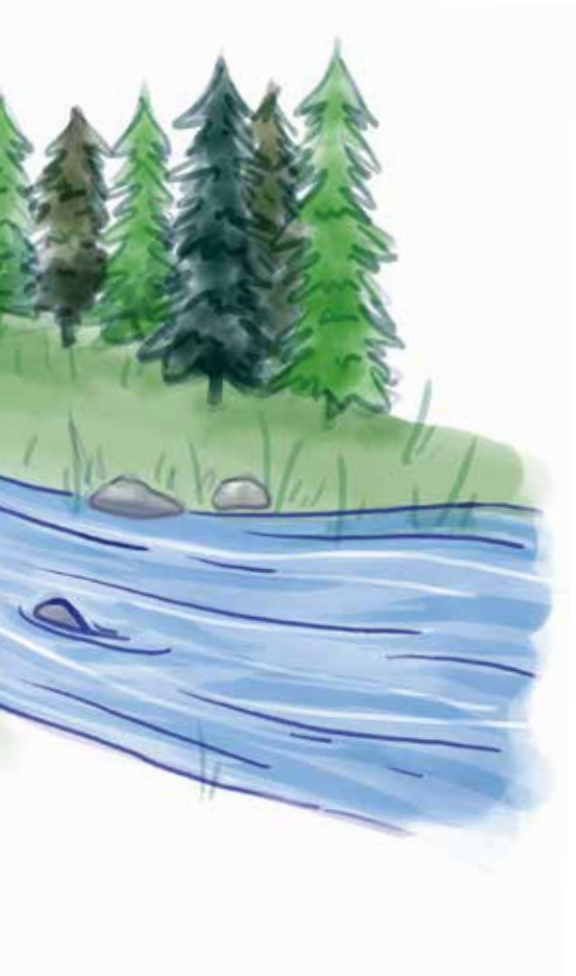
The image of the two rivers in the introduction to this guide symbolizes two worldviews on learning, knowledge and education. One represents Indigenous ways of knowledge; the other, westernized ways of knowledge production. Although there are certain similarities, each of these rivers represents a distinct approach to learning, shaped by its own logic, function and pace. Each carries its vision of what it means to acquire and transmit knowledge and to support personal growth.

This guide aims to create a meeting place between these two rivers. It urges us to look beyond a narrow view of academic success, limited to classrooms, standardized curricula and test results, to adopt a more global, holistic and relational approach to education. The meeting of these two visions depends on a respectful dialogue that recognizes orality as a foundational method of knowledge transmission and a vital means of fostering mutual understanding.



The development of this guide is explicitly rooted in a commitment to responding to call for action 62 in *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, published in December 2015. The Commission was created in 2009 with the mandate to examine the impacts of the residential school system in Canada and to gather testimonials from survivors and other people affected by this system. Call for action 62 invites governments and educators, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples and survivors, to integrate Indigenous knowledge, teaching methods and realities into education systems, ensure teachers have the proper training and reinforce intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect.

This is the context for this *Competency 15 Guide*, proposed by the First Nations Education Council (FNEC). As an organization made up of 22 member communities from eight Nations, the FNEC recognizes the diversity of the educational realities and worldviews that coexist within its communities. The guide reflects this diversity and does not purport to be universal or exhaustive. This proposal is rooted in the expertise of the FNEC and the diversity of its members, resulting from a process based in reflection, dialogue and knowledge-sharing.



The purpose of this guide is to present what competency 15 represents overall and holistically, by providing conceptual frameworks and exploratory avenues to support its integration and its development in education. The approach adopted is based on a vision of lifelong learning that respects each individual's pace, personal journey and the order in which learning becomes meaningful.

This guide is primarily intended for individuals in teacher training, regardless of the path they take to become teachers. It also serves as a reference tool for all educators seeking to reflect on and evolve their practices in a spirit of reconciliation, respect and recognition of Indigenous knowledge.

As an evolving document, the goal is to transform and enhance this guide over time. It is a starting point to stimulate reflection, support action and encourage engagement. Readers are invited to adapt the proposals presented to their own context and add their own knowledge, voices and experiences to benefit all students in the educational network.

Foundations and reference sources

This guide is based on the original competency 15 documents, as developed jointly by the First Nations Education Council (FNEC), Institut Tshakapesh and Onywawenda', Patrimoine, Éducation et Développement de la main-d'œuvre (formerly known as the "Centre de développement de la formation et de la main-d'œuvre huron-wendat"). Competency 15 is the result of a concerted reflection, writing and structuring process carried out by these organizations. It has received the unanimous support of the members of the Provincial Round Table on the Educational Success of Indigenous Students.

This guide does not aim to redefine competency 15, but rather to propose an accessible, structured and contextualized reading in order to support understanding and its implementation in educational environments. It is part of a respectful continuation of the founding work and fully recognizes the expertise, leadership and contribution of the organizations and authorities that have developed and shaped competency 15.

Our reflective process

The dialogical approach considers dialogue as an essential lever to understand, learn and act together. It values the diversity of voices, the co-construction of meaning and the recognition of others as active partners.

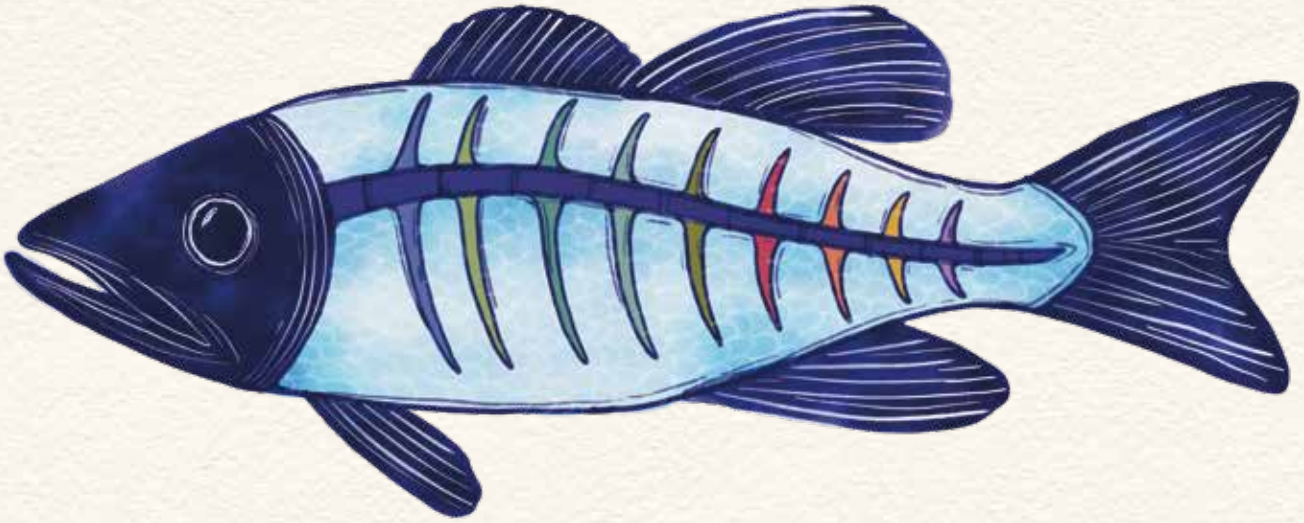
The reflective process that led to the development of this guide is based on a dialogical, experiential and exploratory approach, voluntarily rooted in the realities lived in Indigenous educational environments. It is a collaborative and evolving process, founded on discussion, pooling of experiences and the respectful confrontation of varying points of view. There were disagreements among the work team along the way. These tensions were recognized as legitimate and necessary, since they helped to deepen the reflections, refine the guide's positions and make it more consistent.

We recognized the complementarity and interdependence of the different dimensions of competency 15 from the outset. Rather than treating them as distinct components or ranking them in an hierarchy, we chose to view them as a cohesive whole, in constant interaction. This holistic mindset is part of an experiential understanding of learning, where knowledge develops through dialogue, action, observation and reflection, rather than in a strictly linear or prescriptive framework.

Among these dimensions, encouraging participants to engage in a process of continuous learning as learners—rather than as experts—is at the heart of the approach. We have retained it as a transversal dimension, since it supports and intersects with other dimensions of competency 15. Throughout the development process, a mindset of openness, intellectual humility and active curiosity prevailed, rather than a fixed expertise mindset. Like the students called upon to develop this competency, the team members adopted this mindset throughout the process.

It is this same mindset that the guide aims to foster in future teachers, not only in the development of Competency 15, but throughout their entire professional careers.

Competency 15 dimensions



- Learning environment
- Valuing culture
- Respectful relations
- Lifelong Learning
- Authentic content
- Cultural safety
- Teaching practices
- Ways of learning
- Creating connections
- Learner's Mindset – Transversal Dimension

Creation process

The process for developing the *Competency 15 Guide* took place in several structuring steps, under the responsibility of the First Nations Education Council (FNEC) "Competency 15" committee. This work is grounded in a rigorous, collaborative development approach and rooted in the realities of various educational environments.

The team began its work with an in-depth examination of the original document describing competency 15, in order to understand the fundamentals, scope and intentions. In this initial phase, each dimension of Competency 15 was deliberately isolated, which allowed for a more focused and detailed analysis of their respective components. We also identified and explored the existing resources likely to support the development of each dimension.

Secondly, small work teams were created to propose a first draft and clarify the dimensions. These proposals were then presented to the committee for in-depth discussions, revisions and adjustments. The discussions served to define the meaning and scope of the different dimensions, in addition to bringing clarity to the committee's mission. They also allowed the committee to examine the ideal format to support the development of the competency 15 guide, training or other support mechanism.

A crucial step in the process was an intensive two-day meeting. This meeting led to the collaborative drafting of a first version of the guide, by creating a dialogue between the committee members' different perspectives, expertise and experiences.

The entire process, simultaneously structured and evolving, is driven by a specific commitment to co-construction and constant rooting in the realities lived in the educational environments supported by the FNEC. It reflects an approach consistent with the spirit of competency 15, founded on lifelong learning, collective reflection and adjustment to different contexts.



How to use the guide

The different dimensions of competency 15 are viewed as a coherent and interdependent whole, rather than distinct or hierarchical elements. This holistic perspective is part of an experiential learning approach, where knowledge is built through dialogue, action, observation and reflection, rather than according to a linear or prescriptive approach.

However, the dimension focused on lifelong learning viewed from a learner's mindset – rather than from an expert's – plays a central and transversal role. It supports all other dimensions and invites you to adopt an open attitude of reflection and active curiosity in the understanding, integration and implementation of competency 15 throughout the process.

In this logic, it is recommended that you approach the guide in a non-linear manner. For example, it is perfectly possible, even desirable, to skip from one dimension to another in an order determined by your interests, training needs and professional path.

Historical context

It is important to understand that, within a colonial framework, government and educational institutions have historically been used as cultural assimilation tools against Indigenous peoples. Starting in the middle of the 19th century, the federal government implemented a series of assimilation mechanisms, including the residential school system funded by the government and administered in collaboration with churches. The official goal of this system was to educate Indigenous children and make them more "civilized" by separating them from their families, their languages and their cultures. More than 150,000 First Nations, Inuit and Métis children attended these schools between the 19th century and the closure of the last residential schools in the 1990s. In Quebec, the last residential school for Indigenous children, located in Mashteuiatsh, closed its doors in 1991. Like other establishments in the network, it was used as a "cultural assimilation" tool that aimed to have students abandon their traditions and their first languages.

The impacts of these policies have persisted: generations experienced the severing of family and cultural ties, and many students were treated poorly, leaving deep psychological and social scars. The effects of these experiences span generations and can still be seen today in certain attitudes, trust in educational institutions and in interpersonal relationships.

Even though these events are in the past, it is essential to acknowledge them without blaming present-day individuals, to understand Indigenous students and families' perceptions, concerns and specific needs with respect to education. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, active from 2008 to 2015, documented these stories from survivors' testimonials and underlined the importance of this recognition as an essential step to support the development of respectful relationships and culturally sensitive educational practices.

DIMENSION

Learning environment



Create a learning environment where the learner feels respected and welcomed, and which takes into account the holistic vision of a lifelong education

Description

Although some Indigenous learners live outside their communities, they do not renounce their identity, culture or language. They may experience culture shock, since they find themselves placed in a cultural and linguistic environment that is completely different from their reality.

And yet, the current education system does not fully meet the educational and cultural needs of Indigenous learners. This inadequacy negatively influences their perseverance and their educational success (Auditor General of Quebec, 2024, ch. 4).

In this context, is important to develop an Indigenous student's sense of belonging, regardless of their educational environment (within or outside the community). For students to recognize themselves in the education system, it is essential that the content be culturally significant, and that their culture and their first language be recognized and valued. This requires raising awareness among the entire school community—including students, teachers, professionals and support staff, as well as school leadership—to foster a better understanding of the realities, cultures and knowledge of Indigenous students.

Furthermore, to take into account Indigenous students' learning styles and holistic approach to education, it is important to give their culture a central role in teaching and learning activities and to draw inspiration from Indigenous pedagogical approaches.

The dimension in action

- Ensure that the student welcome process meets Indigenous learners' needs.
- Provide a space and a time to have a conversation with the student, their support network and the school service centre's Indigenous liaison agent.
- Recognize the realities of Indigenous students, and value Indigenous perspectives, knowledge and cultures in training programs.
- Provide direct and sustained support in a lifelong learning framework for students, both children and adults.

The dimension in action

(CONTINUED)

- Adopt an approach based on the student's strengths. The process of reflecting on the competencies developed by the student outside the Québec Education Program, as well as on the first and second languages learned, allows for a holistic view of the approach.
  - Implement the necessary mechanisms to prevent the assessment, diagnoses and classification of Indigenous students from being influenced by cultural and linguistic biases, a lack of knowledge of Indigenous realities by education professionals, or the use of inadequate assessment tools, and regularly update their approaches to correct this type of shortcoming.
  - Improve collaboration among the different stakeholders involved in students' learning paths – particularly when classifying new students –, in the development and application of individualized education plans, and in determining the tools offered, to ensure alignment with students' realities and needs.
- Adopt educational practices inspired by Indigenous pedagogies, such as Land-based learning, experiential and inquiry-based learning, integrated learning, community involvement, mentoring, etc.
- Develop professionally by following cultural safety training sessions.

Takeaways

- Teachers are not always familiar with the cultural identities of the students in their environment. It is therefore important to put this dimension into perspective, whether we are teaching Indigenous or non-Indigenous students. Ensuring an accurate and authentic representation of First Nations and Inuit peoples remains essential, whether or not there are Indigenous students in the educational environment, since the way they are represented will influence them throughout their life.
- If a teacher knows that they have an Indigenous student in their environment, they can learn more about the individual's Nation, community and First Nations language. Teachers must seek information from sources other than the learners in their community: they must not require learners to teach them about their community or their Nation.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Guide to Welcoming and Including Indigenous Students (Document)	A practical guide for school staff to support the welcoming, inclusion and success of Indigenous students. It offers guidelines and recommendations for fostering inclusive and culturally safe learning environments.	Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec. (2026). *Guide to Welcoming and Including Indigenous Students.* https://www.rcaaq.ca/en/tool-and-resource/guide-to-welcoming-and-indigenous-students/
Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement (Book)	A guide providing theoretical and practical guidelines for integrating First Nations and Inuit perspectives into teaching practices. In particular, it addresses decolonization, the promotion of Indigenous knowledge and the adaptation of teaching practices.	Deschênes, É. (2024b). *Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement*. Fides éducation. [Available in French only]
Perspectives des Premiers Peuples dans l'éducation au Québec (Site)	An educational portal featuring teaching kits, resources and tools designed to integrate the perspectives and knowledge of First Nations peoples into Quebec classrooms.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (2022a). *Perspectives des Premiers Peuples dans l'éducation au Québec.* https://3peq.com/ [Available in French only]
Hanging Out (Site)	A virtual educational space that promotes dialogue and intercultural understanding through personal accounts, stories and resources focusing on the realities and perspectives of First Nations peoples.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (2020). *Hanging Out*. https://www.lieuxderencontres.ca/
History and perspectives (Site)	A digital toolkit offering resources, videos and concrete action steps to respectfully highlight Indigenous cultures, stories and perspectives in educational settings.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (2021a). History and perspectives. https://histoires-perspectives.com/

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Voix, visages, paysages : Les Premiers Peuples et le XXIe siècle (Document)	A visual and narrative educational resource that explores the contemporary realities of Indigenous Peoples through personal accounts, portraits and landscapes. It can serve as a tool for developing a more nuanced understanding of Indigenous realities.	Kaine, É. (dir.). (2016). *Voix, visages, paysages : Les Premiers Peuples et le XXIe siècle* [Extract]. Presses de l'Université Laval. https://www.laboiterougevif.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Extrait_VVP.pdf [Available in French only]
Nations Portraits (Site)	A platform featuring fact sheets and profiles of the various Indigenous nations and communities in Quebec. It offers an opportunity to discover their cultural, historical, geographical and identity-related diversity.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (n.d.-b). *Nations Portraits.* Indigenous constellation. https://constellationautochtone.com/portraits/
Indian Time (Documentary)	A documentary offering a contemporary portrait of Quebec's 11 Indigenous Nations through the testimonials of approximately 40 people interviewed in 18 communities. Produced over a five-year period, the documentary highlights the voices, realities and perspectives of these individuals.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (n.d.-a). *Indian Time.* Indigenous constellation. https://constellationautochtone.com/indiantime/home-2/



DIMENSION

Cultural safety



Actively contribute to establishing cultural safety by leveraging cultural awareness, sensitivity and competencies

Description

Obstacles to creating culturally safe learning environments are caused by various factors, including racism, discrimination and stigmatization experienced in educational institutions. Moreover, despite the finding of a gap in success rates among Indigenous students nearly 20 years ago, the Auditor General of Quebec states in her report published in 2024 that "the Ministère is doing little to provide Indigenous students with a safe and culturally relevant learning environment" (Auditor General of Quebec, 2024, chap. 4, p. 3). In particular, the report highlights the importance of building trusting relationships with school staff and recognizing students' cultural backgrounds as key factors in their success. In this context, ensuring that Indigenous learners feel safe, that their identities are respected, and that they are able to thrive requires a commitment to cultural safety, which develops gradually through three steps:

1. Cultural awareness: recognize the existence of cultural differences and become aware of one's own reference points, biases or prejudices.
2. Cultural sensitivity: demonstrate an openness and willingness to adapt one's attitudes and behaviours to avoid reproducing colonial or discriminatory dynamics.
3. Cultural competency: be able to implement concrete, adapted and respectful practices, by creating welcoming and safe environments and by adopting attitudes founded on reciprocity.

This is an ongoing process of learning, critical reflection and action, which contributes to establishing cultural safety and promoting respectful and equitable relationships with First Nations and Inuit peoples.

Cultural safety is not limited to people's attitudes and interactions. It is also important to take a critical look at the texts and teaching materials used in schools. Texts are never neutral: they are constructed from specific perspectives and can convey certain views of the world (Janks, 2009). Texts that are deeply rooted in a culture other than the student's, which discuss sensitive topics without context or contain stereotypes, can affect the student's capacity for understanding and their feeling of safety.

The dimension in action

- Perfect one's knowledge in the application of the two-eyed seeing approach.
- Adopt a critical mindset in reading the teaching materials used: power dynamics, implicit bias, cultural bias, etc.
- Reframe the discourse around the following subjects: systemic racism, racism, microaggressions, discrimination, racial and cultural profiling, inequality and injustice.
- Exercise critical judgement in the representation of First Nations and Inuit in the curriculum, pedagogical activities and teaching materials adopted.
- Empower students to develop their own critical look at the sources behind the discourse they are exposed to.
- Call on educational leaders to support cultural safety actions and refer to them in cases of discriminatory or unsafe remarks or behaviours.
- Differentiate between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation and adjust practices as needed.

Takeaways

- It is important to recognize differences in order to better understand the strengths and challenges associated with them. For example, saying that we "don't see skin colour" may seem well intentioned, but this often results in overlooking the concrete realities experienced by some people, rather than recognizing them.
- Not all inadequate material needs to be removed. The material can be used as a talking point to bring up perspectives that have been ignored and the lack of knowledge on different subjects and use them as a driver for action. For example, a textbook that uses the term "Amerindians" could give rise to a conversation on this outdated transitional term and lead to an action such as sending a letter to the publishing house responsible for the mistake.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
The Decolonial Toolbox: Educational Pathway (Site)	A self-guided educational program developed by Mikana that provides a better understanding of Indigenous realities, the effects of colonialism and decolonization efforts. It offers a progression from initial awareness to more in-depth reflection.	Mikana. (n.d.-a). *The Decolonial Toolbox: Educational Pathway*. https://mikana.ca/en/decolonial-toolbox-educational-pathway/
Guide in support of a doing-together in Etuaptmumk/ two-eyed seeing (Document)	A guide introducing the "two-eyed seeing" approach (Etuaptmumk) and offering guidelines for taking into account, in a complementary manner, different ways of seeing, knowing and understanding. It promotes dialogue between Indigenous and Western knowledge in learning processes.	Working group – *Doing-together in Etuaptmumk/two-eyed seeing.* (2023). *Guide in support of a doing-together in Etuaptmumk/ two-eyed seeing.* ASPQ/RÉFIPS Amériques. Digital publication. https://aspq.org/app/uploads/2026/04/double-regard-en-mars-2026-1.pdf

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Report by the Auditor General of Quebec on the Educational Success of Indigenous Students (Document)	Report by the Auditor General of Quebec on the Educational Success of Indigenous Students. It presents findings on existing measures and makes recommendations aimed at improving support for students and their educational experience.	Auditor General of Quebec. (2024). *Educational Success of Indigenous Students* (ch. 4). In *Report of the Auditor General of Quebec to the National Assembly for the 2024–2025 fiscal year.* https://www.vgq.qc.ca/Fichiers/Publications/rapport-annuel/209/VGQ_Nov2024_ch4-Autochtones_ang_web.pdf
Les réalités autochtones (Site)	A thematic collection of information and resources on various historical and contemporary Indigenous realities. It serves as a reference resource to help education professionals better understand Indigenous issues.	Fédération autonome de l'enseignement (n.d.). *Les réalités autochtones*. https://www.lafae.qc.ca/dossiers/les-realites-autochtones [Available in French only]
Réalités et perspectives autochtones (Site)	A repository of teaching resources and learning scenarios designed to provide practical ways to address Indigenous realities and perspectives in various disciplines and educational settings.	Centre de services scolaire des Découvreurs. (2026, February 17). *Réalités et perspectives autochtones*. https://sites.google.com/cssdd.gouv.qc.ca/ccq/matériel-didactique-et-situations-dapprentissage/ressources-didactiques/réalités-et-perspectives-autochtones [Available in French only]
Education of Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Article)	A background article tracing the history and evolution of education for Indigenous peoples in Canada, including the effects of residential schools, historical trauma and contemporary educational issues.	McCue, H. A. (2023, April 17). Education of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. In the Canadian Encylopedia. https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/aboriginal-people-education
Action Plan with and for Indigenous Peoples (Document)	An institutional plan outlining the University of Sherbrooke's strategic commitments and concrete actions aimed at developing relationships with Indigenous peoples, promoting cultural safety and strengthening their inclusion within the institution.	Université de Sherbrooke. (n.d.). *K'wasan8bna (Shedding Light): Highlighting Indigenous realities, knowledge and perspectives.* https://www.usherbrooke.ca/autochtones/fileadmin/sites/autochtones/Plan_action_anglais_final.pdf

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Resources – Mikana (Site)	Mikana's resource directory, which includes tools, posters and awareness-raising materials on Indigenous realities, decolonization and intercultural relations.	Mikana. (n.d.-b). *Resources.* https://mikana.ca/en/resources/
Literacy and Power (Book)	A theoretical work exploring the connections between literacy, language, education and power relations. It provides a relevant framework for analyzing educational practices and their potential to transform or reproduce social relations.	Janks, H. (2009). *Literacy and Power*. Routledge.
Pratiques de sécurisation culturelle (Document)	A report outlining practices, challenges and courses of action related to cultural security. It aims to support the creation of more respectful, inclusive and safe environments for Indigenous people.	Couture, C., Aurousseau, E., Kaine, E., Rock, J., Pinette, S., Blanchet Garneau, A., Baron, M.-P., Cook, M., Dion, J., Duquette, C., Jacob, E., Marchand, A., Pulido, L., Tremblay, M.-L., and Vachon, J.-F. (2024). *Étude de pratiques de sécurisation culturelle développées sur la Côte-Nord pour soutenir la persévérance scolaire et la réussite éducative des jeunes et des adultes innus : rapport de recherche – Action concertée en sécurisation culturelle*. Université du Québec à Chicoutimi. https://securisationculturelle.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/RAPPORT-ACPSC-0824.pdf [Available in French only]
Soutenir le mieux-être (Mino-Pimatisiwin) (Document)	Research report on overall well-being and the concept of Mino-Pimatisiwin ("good life"). It explores the conditions and approaches that can promote young people's well-being in educational and community settings.	Myriagone, Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec, Fondation Nouveaux Sentiers, Cercle en santé publique autochtone and LaLouve Consulting. (2025). *Soutenir le mieux-être (Mino-Pimatisiwin) : Créer des relations et des environnements favorisant le mieux-être des élèves autochtones dans les écoles du Québec*. MYRIAGONE, Chaire McConnell-Université de Montréal en partenariat jeunesse. https://www.myriagone.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Rapport-recherche_compresse.pdf [Available in French only]

DIMENSION

Valuing culture



Value Indigenous culture, language, Land and knowledge in an academic environment, as well as relations with the family and community

Description

It is essential to develop one's knowledge of the eleven First Nations and Inuit Nations that occupy the territory that today we call the province of Quebec. Each Nation has its own language and culture and has developed very strong ties with the territory that it occupies.

Indigenous cultural knowledge encompasses the relational and practical skills associated with First Nations and Inuit lifestyles and traditions. Elders and knowledge keepers ensure their oral transmission to the generations that follow. These individuals are a cultural and intellectual reference in their communities. It is therefore important to respect their knowledge and expertise.

Valuing Indigenous culture, language, Land and knowledge cannot be limited to the academic setting. It also involves developing respectful and sustainable links with families and communities by adopting a receptive mindset that respects the worldviews that structure their daily lives. This includes recognizing that the reference points linked to time, responsibilities, realities and the role of the school can differ from those in the Western academic environment. Recognizing these differences and demonstrating openness encourage family and community engagement in the academic environment, a condition that fosters students' success.

The dimension in action

- Learn to write and say the names of Nations using different First Nations languages mobile apps.
- Locate the ancestral and current territories of different Nations and understand the notions of treaties, unceded territories and occupation of territory (rather than ownership of territory).
- Learn basic words in First Nations languages.
- Include youth literary works written by First Nations and Inuit authors in their activities, by presenting these writers, locating the communities they belong to, providing visual support and garnering interest for their messages.
- Invite an Elder or knowledge keeper to school, ensuring that the welcome protocol is respected.

Takeaways

- Each Nation, and each of the communities they are composed of, has distinct realities. It is essential to recognize this diversity and discuss practices, realities, worldviews and languages without generalizing. Deepening one's understanding of Indigenous groups' resistance to pan-Indigenous approaches is a key lever to supporting this differentiation process.
- Indigenous cultures are dynamic and contemporary. They express themselves in the present and evolve over time. It is therefore essential to present them in a contextualized manner, by clearly situating the items discussed to avoid representations that are static, caricatured or deeply rooted in the past, particularly in terms of the teaching provided to learners.
- Demonstrate openness and curiosity for different worldviews. Concepts of time, ways of managing priorities, school and community responsibilities, among other things, may differ from those that prevail in your environment. Placing equal value on Indigenous and Western worldviews helps foster sustainable relationships with families and communities.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Voices from the Land (Site)	A platform developed in collaboration with the FNEC presenting videos, podcasts, educational guides and activities focused on First Nations perspectives. The resources are organized by Nation, subject area and grade level, among other categories, to make them easier to use in an educational setting.	First Nations Education Council. (n.d.-a). *Voices from the Land*. https://lesvoixduterritoire.ca/en/resources/
Relations autochtones (Site)	A portal presenting resources, trainings and awareness-raising tools to help people better understand the contemporary realities of First Nations and Inuit peoples and to develop respectful and culturally safe relationships.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (n.d.-c). *Relations autochtones*. https://relations-autochtones.ca/ [Available in French only]

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Natural Curiosity, 2nd edition: A Resource for Educators (Book)	A guide presenting an approach to nature-based inquiry learning that incorporates Indigenous perspectives. It emphasizes observation, curiosity a connection to the local Land and experiential learning.	Anderson, D., Comay, J., and Chiarotto, L. (2019). *Natural Curiosity, 2nd edition: A Resource for Educators: The Importance of Indigenous Perspectives in Children's Environmental Inquiry.* The Laboratory School at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
Restoring Musicality to Objects (Site)	An educational resource offering creative activities centered on traditional Indigenous objects. It allows students to explore materials, sounds and artistic expression and can serve as a starting point for interdisciplinary projects.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (2021b). *Restoring Musicality to Objects*. https://musicalite-objets.com/
Le conte chez les premiers peuples au Québec : Une tradition orale qui perdure (Document)	A document on the role of oral tradition in the cultures of Indigenous Peoples. It highlights the importance of storytelling and oral tradition in sharing knowledge, values, stories and our connection to the Land.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (2023). *Le conte chez les premiers peuples au Québec : Une tradition orale qui perdure*. https://3peq.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Le-contre-chez-les-premiers-peuples-au-Quebec.pdf [Available in French only]
Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement (Book)	A guide providing theoretical and practical guidelines for integrating First Nations and Inuit perspectives into teaching practices. In particular, it addresses decolonization, cultural safety and the promotion of Indigenous knowledge.	Deschênes, É. (2024b). *Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement*. Fides éducation. [Available in French only]
Knowledge Space (Site)	An interactive platform presenting educational resources and knowledge to explore different Indigenous perspectives, realities and practices. In particular, it promotes traditional and local knowledge developed by and for communities.	Indigenous Education: The National Centre for Collaboration. (2019). *Knowledge Space*. https://www.nccie.ca/knowledge-space/

DIMENSION

Teaching practices



Use teaching practices and assessment methods adapted to the Indigenous learning approach

Description

It is essential to adopt an inclusive and holistic approach to teaching practices and learning assessment to promote the success of all students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. This approach takes into consideration and emphasizes the diversity of learners by adapting teaching and assessment methods to each person's needs, style and learning pace. The inclusive and holistic approach recognizes that, in addition to acquiring knowledge, learning also encompasses socio-emotional, cognitive and cultural aspects. It encourages students to develop transversal competencies, essential to allowing them to contribute fully to modern society. It also offers better support for students with special needs. It fosters engagement and motivation among all students.

To do this, it is essential to prioritize modelling, experiential practices and Land-based learning (Campeau, 2016; Institut national des mines [INMQ], 2023). Use images, diagrams and symbols rather than a written text. Orality is a central feature of Indigenous knowledge transmission systems, where knowledge is primarily shared through spoken communication. To this end, practice should include a variety of participatory and communication approaches, such as dialogue, participant observation and meditation (Campeau, 2016).

The dimension in action

- Adopt an inclusive approach using authentic teaching materials to teach and promote Indigenous languages and cultures.
- Allow students to be assessed in their first language in all school subjects, except when inappropriate (for example, in a French language of instruction course).
- Promote learning through observation and experimentation.
- Promote teaching methods that allow for a tangible interaction with the concepts being studied (gripping and lifting tools, practical examples of scientific procedures, such as lighting a fire outdoors to discuss combustion, etc.).
- Encourage personal connections with the concepts being studied (for example, call on memories, individual stories or emotions when discussing a text).
- Organize out-of-school activities (for example, walking in the school's immediate surroundings to connect with the local geographic environment).
- Equip students with tools they need to improve their vocabulary in the language of instruction (for example, create a lexicon in the First Nations language).
- Encourage closer ties between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by creating mixed work groups.
- Recognize the essential role of knowledge keepers in the transmission of Indigenous knowledge and have them intervene in certain learning situations.

The dimension in action

(CONTINUED)

- Enable learners to participate in upgrading activities adapted to their reality (for example, plan upgrading meetings in a place chosen by the student and their family, according to a flexible schedule; offer remedial camps during the summer; or provide academic support directly in the Friendship Centre that the Indigenous students regularly visit).
- Propose different assessment methods (projects, oral presentations, portfolios and self-assessments) and collect evidence of learning (conversations, observations and assignments).
- Prioritize translingual approaches when teaching learning strategies and when providing feedback.
- Call upon surrounding communities through Indigenous liaison agents to enter into contact with Elders and knowledge keepers. These individuals could come to tell local stories and narratives, or participate in community social events, including rituals and ceremonies when appropriate. When a direct link cannot be obtained with a community, consult the Voices from the Land website, which offers a support service.

Takeaways

- Varying teaching and assessment practices is beneficial for all students, not just Indigenous students.
- When reading this guide, a teacher may feel a burst of enthusiasm that makes them feel like making rapid, radical and energy-intensive changes. Teachers must aim for consistency and sustainability in their actions. By changing one practice at a time, and by giving themselves the time to properly integrate and adjust their teaching and assessment practices, teachers can sustain their actions and make a long-term commitment, without getting burnt out or discouraged.
- These changes must be supported by an effort involving the school team, school leaders and parents. It is important to ensure that certain efforts remain constant throughout students' educational paths, and therefore work on changes in academic culture.
- There is a fine line between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation/information. Non-Indigenous people should not be leading ceremonies, rituals and cultural practices. For example, it is not appropriate to make dream catchers in art class, purify sage or name totem animals without an Indigenous craftsperson present.
- When approaching a practice, it is essential to learn about the related teachings by referring to authentic sources of knowledge, without interpreting them. For example, when raising the concept of traditional houses, one must develop an understanding of these structures from both a broad and detailed perspective: know the practices of different Nations, the names used according to the First Nations language, the uses determined by the geographic location, cultural significance, etc.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Walking in Two Worlds (Book)	A young adult novel that explores identity, belonging and resilience through the journey of a teenage girl navigating life between her community and a virtual world. The novel explores certain contemporary realities experienced by Indigenous youth.	Kinew, W. (2021). *Walking in Two Worlds.* Penguin Teen Canada.
Redefining how success is measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning (Document)	A document presenting holistic models of lifelong learning developed by the Canadian Council on Learning. It proposes a broader conception of educational success that takes into account various dimensions of learning and challenges exclusively Eurocentric conceptions of success.	Canadian Council on Learning. (2007). *Redefining how success is measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning.* https://toolkit.education.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/5._2007_redefining_how_success_is_measured_en.pdf
Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Book)	A book by Paulo Freire exploring the relationships between education, power, dialogue and emancipation. Although it does not specifically address First Nations, its concepts serve as important points of reference for reflecting on critical and decolonial approaches to education.	Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Penguin Group.
Mental Health Needs of Indigenous Learners: A Documentary Analysis (Document)	A research summary on the key issues related to the mental health of Indigenous students. It outlines the conditions that can promote their well-being, perseverance and academic success	Bunting, J. (2024). *Mental Health Needs of Indigenous Learners: A Documentary Analysis.* Indspire. https://indspire.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Indigenous-Learners-Mental-Health-Needs-LR_EN.pdf
L'approche de sécurisation culturelle pour soutenir la PRS éducative des élèves autochtones (Video)	A presentation of the results of an action research study on cultural safety in schools. It offers findings, examples and best practices that can help create more inclusive and supportive learning environments.	Fonds de recherche du Québec. (2024, May 8). *L'approche de sécurisation culturelle pour soutenir la PRS éducative des élèves autochtones* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ES-bWXtHmio [Available in French only]

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement (Document)	A guide for higher education staff that offers strategies for showcasing and actively incorporating First Nations and Inuit perspectives into courses and teaching practices.	Deschênes, É. (2024a). *Accompagner pour valoriser et inclure les perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement supérieur.* Pôle à l'enseignement supérieur des Laurentides. https://peslau.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Accompagner_inclure_perspectives_PNI_Ens_superieur.pdf [Available in French only]
Voices from the Land (Site)	A platform developed in collaboration with the FNEC presenting videos, podcasts, educational guides and activities focused on First Nations perspectives. The resources are organized by Nation, subject area and grade level, among other categories, to make them easier to use in an educational setting.	First Nations Education Council. (n.d.-a). *Voices from the Land.* https://lesvoixduterritoire.ca/en/resources/



DIMENSION

Respectful relations



Take an active role in respectful, professional relationships with Indigenous learners, parents and communities

Description

Even though the second competency of the *Reference Framework for Professional Competencies for Teachers* covers the relationships between the teacher and the community, the sociohistorical context of First Nations and Inuit, presented at the beginning of this guide, requires special attention.

Each community has its own language and its own culture. It is therefore important to gain a sufficient understanding of their cultural, linguistic and historical characteristics, as these factors influence the behaviour of community members as well as the ways in which they socialize.

The collaborative approach provides a guide to strengthen the partnership between schools, parents, communities and other stakeholders that work together to improve the academic results of First Nations and Inuit members. It is essential to explore methods that encourage greater participation by families, parents and communities in schools, since this support plays a key role in the student's growth and helps to cultivate pride in their educational experience.

The dimension in action

- Seek information and training on colonial violence and past and current assimilation practices to gain a clear understanding of how certain people perceive their role.
- Seek information and training on trauma, particularly intergenerational trauma, as well as on its neurological and socio-emotional effects, and effects on family. Demonstrate openness and sensitivity, be attentive to the needs that are expressed and respect each person's limits in terms of subjects discussed. Call upon available resources or professionals as needed.
- Seek training on the trauma-informed approach in order to support students, parents and the community in their interactions, based on their role and the resulting intervention methods.
- Implement different methods for meeting with families. Propose meetings over coffee, informal discussions around a shared meal, positive calls or opportunities to support group classroom or academic activities.

Takeaways

- The liaison agent can provide valuable help in the relationship between the teacher and the Indigenous student, their parents and the community.
- When discussing difficult subjects such as colonial violence, it is important to be well prepared, to refer to authentic sources and to communicate with academic leaders, parents and professionals in the psychosocial field. In cases of discomfort, call upon specialized resources and plan for more adequate preparation to maintain a consistent engagement in the future.
- It is important for teachers to be able to rely on a safety net (colleagues, professional resources, support services or institutional mechanisms) in order to recognize and respect their limits and protect their mental health, particularly when they are called upon to discuss sensitive topics.
- With respect to trauma and its impacts, it is important that teachers not bring up events and their consequences with their Indigenous students by linking them to their personal and family experiences. Remain mindful and vigilant while letting trust build over time, providing support without overstepping, and working strictly within the scope of your role.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Voices from the Land (Site)	A platform developed in collaboration with the FNEC presenting videos, podcasts, educational guides and activities focused on First Nations perspectives. The resources are organized by Nation, subject area and grade level, among other categories, to make them easier to use in an educational setting.	First Nations Education Council. (n.d.-a). Voices from the Land. https://lesvoixduterritoire.ca/en/resources/
The Decolonial Toolbox: Educational Pathway (Site)	A self-guided educational program developed by Mikana that provides a better understanding of Indigenous realities, the effects of colonialism and decolonization efforts. It offers a progression from initial awareness to more in-depth reflection.	Mikana. (n.d.-a). *The Decolonial Toolbox: Educational Pathway*. https://mikana.ca/en/decolonial-toolbox-educational-pathway/

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Voices and Knowledge (Site)	A collection of guides, reports and studies on various issues affecting Indigenous peoples, including education, health, youth and the realities of Indigenous life in urban areas.	Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec. (n.d.). *Voices and Knowledge.* https://www.rcaaq.ca/en/our-publications/
Harmonisation (Site)	A portal presenting tools designed to foster closer ties between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and to develop the intercultural skills necessary for more respectful relationships.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (2024). *Harmonisation*. https://outils-harmonisation.com/en/welcome/
Guide d'accueil des personnes aînées ou porteuses de savoirs autochtones et de reconnaissances territoriales (Document)	A practical guide offering recommendations for planning and promoting the participation of Elders and knowledge keepers in educational institutions. In particular, it addresses welcoming protocols, relationships with knowledge keepers and land recognition.	Millaire, K., and Pullen Sansfaçon, A. (2024). *Guide d'accueil des personnes aînées ou porteuses de savoirs autochtones et de reconnaissances territoriales* Centre de recherche interdisciplinaire sur la justice intersectionnelle, la décolonisation et l'équité. https://crijade.com/mL4eP8sA/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Guide-daccueil-des-aine.e.s-de-porteur.seuse_.s-de-savoir-autochtones-et-de-reconnaissances-territoriales-Version-11.03.24-2.pdf [Available in French only]
National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (Site)	A resource centre that preserves the archives of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and provides access to numerous educational resources on the history of residential schools, their consequences and the reconciliation process.	National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. (n.d.) *National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation*. https://nctr.ca/
Aboriginal Peoples and Historical Trauma: The processes of intergenerational transmission (Document)	Report on the historical trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples and the mechanisms behind its intergenerational transmission. It provides a better understanding of certain historical and contemporary realities that may influence communities and educational pathways.	Aguiar, W., and Halseth, R. (2015). *Aboriginal Peoples and Historical Trauma: The processes of intergenerational transmission* National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health. http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/142/2015-04-28-AguiarHalseth-RPT-IntergenTraumaHistory-EN-Web.pdf

DIMENSION

Ways of learning



Integrate culturally significant ways of learning in the classroom and on the Land

Description

First Nations learning principles reflect their cultures. Learning is a holistic, voluntary, lifelong process, which affects all aspects of the being (mind, body, heart and spirit). Students are shaped by their relationships with others and their life experience. There is no hierarchy of knowledge and individuals: all disciplines are equally important. In this respect, rather than being considered knowledge keepers, teachers play the role of guides who expand students' knowledge (Campeau, 2016; INMQ, 2023). Culture, language and Land are the foundations of learning in a First Nations context. Educational success is not individual, but collective: learning takes place in a reciprocal relationship based on knowledge-sharing and targets the individual's overall well-being while contributing to that of their family and community (INMQ, 2023). As a result, the educational model implemented and valued in educational institutions contradicts several principles of the First Nations vision of learning, which is challenging for students.

First Nations pedagogy emphasizes a holistic rather than sequential approach. According to this approach, students understand more when they are exposed to diagrams and images rather than a written text. Learning is easier when students can manipulate real, tangible objects, observe and imitate, and when they are given the time to reflect, in order to better process information and assimilate a new concept that has been taught (Ledoux, 2006, quoted in Campeau, 2016) (particularly in a second language context). This approach also focuses on demonstrating how concepts being studied apply in real-world contexts to actively engage students in the learning process.

Even though this way of teaching is deeply rooted in First Nations pedagogy, it can benefit all students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

The dimension in action

- Promote learning modes in which students are active and where the teacher-student relationship is one of collaboration and a co-constructed learning process rather than one rooted in authority over knowledge. This establishes a collaborative working environment rather than a lecture-based teaching method. For example, you can discuss the collective interpretation of a First Nations and Inuit Peoples' literary work rather than make yours the sole and absolute interpretation.

- Learn through practical experience and by actively observing and interacting in a demonstration by a teacher, in conjunction with authentic and culturally significant learning activities. For example, practice fractions by making Bannock.

- Provide options to promote students' self-determination and autonomy in their educational path. For example, for an assessment, allow them to choose the type of assignment (interview, text, video, etc.) to explore a given topic.

The dimension in action

(CONTINUED)

- Have clear expectations about the competencies to develop, their real-world applications, the criteria that will be used to evaluate them and be transparent in the process that will lead students to develop their competencies. For example, present a graphic organizer to organize ideas before writing a text, and clearly explain the link between this task and the competency to develop.
- Integrate culturally significant elements to help students with their understanding. This involves considering that their reality and cultural experience influence how they interpret the proposed concepts and situations and adapt your teaching interventions accordingly.
- Give students the necessary time to reflect, understand and integrate the concepts taught and create meaningful learning opportunities.

Takeaways

In the integration of culturally significant learning modes, it is important to avoid singling out the First Nations student, whether it be by publicly highlighting their successes or asking them to talk about themselves, their culture or their community in front of the group. This could create uneasiness or undue pressure. Promote inclusive learning opportunities for the entire group, without designating the student as representative or spokesperson for their culture.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Vers une reconnaissance des réalités et une valorisation des perspectives, des savoirs et des cultures autochtones dans les programmes de formation – Perspectives des Premiers Peuples dans l'éducation au Québec (3PEQ) (Site)	An educational portal offering activities, guides, and resources to help integrate First Nations perspectives into various subjects and learning situations.	La Boîte Rouge VIF. (2022b). *Vers une reconnaissance des réalités et une valorisation des perspectives, des savoirs et des cultures autochtones dans les programmes de formation. Perspectives des Premiers Peuples dans l'éducation au Québec.* https://3peq.com/perspectives/valorisation-des-perspectives/ [Available in French only]
Repères et pistes d'action : Guide réflexif pour l'inclusion des perspectives, des savoirs et des réalités des Premiers Peuples dans la formation à l'enseignement (Document)	A guide for teachers and trainers that offers a reflective approach to more effectively integrating the knowledge, realities and perspectives of the First Peoples into teaching practices.	Pilote, A., Audy, N., Blanchet, P.-A., Borri-Anadon, C., Hébert-Houle, É., Hirsch, S., Gélinas, K., Gros-Louis, N., Joncas, J.-A., Kanga, M., Lavoie, C., Maltais-Landry, A., Moisan, S., O'Bomsawin, S., Ouellet, S., Petiquay, L., Pinette, S., Renaud, F., and Vachon-Savary, M.-È. (2021). *Repères et pistes d'action : Guide réflexif pour l'inclusion des perspectives, des savoirs et des réalités des Premiers Peuples dans la formation à l'enseignement.* Faculté des sciences de l'éducation, Université Laval. https://oraprdnt.uqtr.uquebec.ca/portail/docs/GSC282/O00005416222_Reperes_Pistes.pdf [Available in French only]
Redefining how success is measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning (Document)	A document presenting holistic models of learning and success among First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. It calls for broadening the concept of success beyond traditional approaches that focus primarily on academic performance.	Canadian Council on Learning. (2007). *Redefining how success is measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning*. https://toolkit.education.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/5._2007_redefining_how_success_is_measured_en.pdf

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Sharing – Voices from the Land (Site)	This page features short videos in which Indigenous people share inspiring practices related to education, culture, language and the promotion of First Nations and Inuit knowledge. These testimonials offer insights for promoting reconciliation and the integration of Indigenous perspectives in education.	First Nations Education Council. (n.d.-b). *Sharing. Voices from the Land.* https://lesvoixduterritoire.ca/en/sharing-inspiring-pratices-with-first-nations-and-inuit-perspectives/
Natural Curiosity, 2nd edition: A Resource for Educators (Book)	A guide presenting an approach to nature-based inquiry learning that incorporates Indigenous perspectives. It emphasizes observation, curiosity a connection to the local Land and experiential learning.	Anderson, D., Comay, J., and Chiarotto, L. (2019). *Natural Curiosity, 2nd edition: A Resource for Educators: The Importance of Indigenous Perspectives in Children's Environmental Inquiry.* The Laboratory School at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement (Document)	A guide for higher education staff that offers strategies for showcasing and actively incorporating First Nations and Inuit perspectives into courses and teaching practices.	Deschênes, É. (2024a). *Accompagner pour valoriser et inclure les perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement supérieur.* Pôle à l'enseignement supérieur des Laurentides. https://peslau.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Accompagner_inclure_perspectives_PNI_Ens_superieur.pdf [Available in French only]



DIMENSION

Lifelong Learning



Recognize that each student is part of an extended family and community that contribute to their lifelong learning path.

Description

Recognizing that every learner is part of an extended family and a community means understanding the fundamental role they play in their educational journey. In Indigenous contexts, beyond the immediate core family, the extended family can include Elders, grandparents, other relatives and any other significant people from the community that contribute to the child's education, support and development.

Learning is not limited to formal schooling or a specific period of life. It is part of an intergenerational continuity and takes place in a variety of contexts, including at school, within the family, in the community and on the Land. The transmission of traditional teachings, languages and cultural values throughout the educational path reinforces the student's sense of belonging and supports the development of a positive sense of identity.

Lifelong learning also develops through shared relationships between students, families, communities and the school. From this perspective, teachers are not only people who share knowledge, but they are also learners who continue to acquire knowledge through contact with others, by demonstrating openness, humility and reflection throughout their career. This position helps to create safe and meaningful educational environments conducive to group success and well-being.

The dimension in action

- Include students' extended families. It is not uncommon for students to consider aunts, uncles and cousins as members of their immediate family. We must therefore make room for this family in our discussions and our invitations. This extended family is important in students' lives and reflects real responsibilities toward learners. Including them helps illuminate the broader network of relationships that surrounds and contributes to students' well-being.

- Adapt our expectations to the family and community realities of Indigenous students. These realities affect learning conditions, particularly when several people share the same home or when young people are expected to participate in family, cultural or traditional activities. It is important to recognize the value of these learning experiences and that, for some families, they will take precedence over academic learning (school attendance, homework and lessons).

Takeaways

It is important to have a flexible teaching plan by taking into account cultural and community realities which could influence students' attendance or availability. For example, certain meaningful periods, such as the hunting season or other traditional activities, play a major role in family and community life. Adapt deadlines, plan for remediation measures or adjust the pace of learning to respect these realities and support educational success at the same time.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Voices and Knowledge (Site)	A collection of guides, reports and studies on various issues affecting Indigenous peoples, including education, health, youth and the realities of Indigenous life in urban areas.	Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec. (n.d.). *Voices and Knowledge.* https://www.rcaaq.ca/en/our-publications/
Customary adoption and tutorship (Site)	An informational resource explaining the concepts of customary adoption and tutorship and providing a better understanding of how they work, their legal recognition and their significance in certain Indigenous contexts.	First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (n.d.). *Customary adoption and tutorship.* https://cssspnql.com/en/customary-adoption-and-tutorship



DIMENSION

Creating connections



Participate in opportunities that involve establishing connections with students, colleagues, parents, the community and its members as well as connections to place

Description

Respectful and equitable relationships are essential in the teacher's professional setting, but in an Indigenous context, it is important to understand that the separation between the academic world and community life is not as rigid as in Canadian/European society. Teachers in communities, or in close proximity to a First Nations community, must understand that their involvement in the community's social life outside of school (evenings and weekends, for instance) could influence their relationship with their students and the parents. This aspect differs in many respects from the Quebec professional competencies reference framework, since it guides the teacher's behaviour outside of their professional life.

The dimension in action

- Implement intercultural exchange initiatives between the classroom's students and a neighbouring Indigenous community, in a spirit of reciprocity and collaboration, to promote a better understanding of Indigenous realities, cultures and knowledge, to the benefit of all.
- Take the time to learn about the First Nations and Inuit by visiting communities near you or by speaking with their members in a culturally respectful manner. This will help the student to interact properly with the people of the community. For example, attend intercultural events such as powwows and community activities that are open to everyone.
- For contacts between non-Indigenous students and members of First Nations communities, it is essential to prepare your students by giving them the appropriate vocabulary to use, deconstructing stereotypes and addressing and sharing any other teaching that reflects cultural diversity.
- Make sure that your commitment to the community provides positive outcomes, both for the community and the person who engages in it. A genuine respectful relationship must be reciprocal. It is essential that you listen to community members to understand how you can contribute. This reflects an ongoing learning process, rooted in the community.

Takeaways

- Humour is an integral part of First Nations and Inuit social interactions. That said, humour is framed by social norms, which vary from one society to another. Openness, patience and listening are essential.
- Taking an interest in others, being open to what they represent and what is important to them, and learning about their culture are excellent ways to enter into a relationship and create significant links with them, their family and their community.
- Take the time to observe and consult someone you trust about events that you are invited to, before entering into a relationship with a member of the community to avoid any blunders or find yourself in a problematic or embarrassing situation. This same caution is essential in your social media interactions.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Aide-mémoire – Mikana (Document)	A quick-reference tool developed by Mikana that provides definitions, guidelines and practical advice to help users better understand Indigenous realities and adopt a respectful approach when interacting with Indigenous peoples.	Cimon, N. (n.d.). *Aide-mémoire.* Mikana. https://mikana.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Aide-Memoire_Mikana.pdf [Available in French only]
Clés d'analyse d'œuvres de littérature jeunesse traitant de savoirs, réalités et cultures autochtones (Document)	An analytical tool for educators to evaluate children's literature that addresses Indigenous knowledge, cultures and realities. It helps foster a critical perspective on the quality, authenticity, relevance and representation of Indigenous Peoples.	M8wwa Lˌ Jˌ mamu Committee (with Edward, K., Blanchet, P.-A., Lavoie, C., Grey, W., Vinet-Béland, M., Dezutter, O., and Desrochers, M.-È.). (2023). *Clés d'analyse d'œuvres de littérature jeunesse traitant de savoirs, réalités et cultures autochtones.* Faculty of Education, Université de Sherbrooke. https://www.usherbrooke.ca/education/fileadmin/sites/education/documents/Cles_analyse_litt_autochtone.pdf [Available in French only]

DIMENSION

Authentic content



Know how to select authentic content about First Nations culture and history

Description

When we explore a reality that is unknown to us, it is essential to adopt a mindset of cautious professionals in the choice of resources used. Realities linked to First Nations' identity vary according to Nations, territories and contexts. To guide their choices, teachers can draw on concrete reference points, such as the origin of the sources, their validation by the communities concerned and the timeliness of the content.

To promote respectful and relevant teaching practices, it is essential to prioritize authentic sources and references by developing collaborative relationships with the Indigenous persons and communities concerned. Through this approach, rooted in exchange and dialogue, learning progresses *with* communities rather than *about* them, while making careful and responsible use of teaching resources. Taking the time to authenticate the sources and references used requires professional vigilance that contributes to a better understanding of Indigenous realities and the recognition of authentic knowledge and practices, in a spirit of recognition and continuous learning.

The dimension in action

- Consult trustworthy sources that are respected and recognized by First Nations and Inuit organizations, such as Voices From the Land.

Takeaways

- In oral traditions, content is preserved and transmitted by people. That is why we place great importance in listening to our Elders, bearers of valuable knowledge. Working with this knowledge calls for a respectful and mindful approach, which recognizes that transmission of this knowledge takes place in contexts, protocols and relationships specific to communities. When knowledge is shared, it is essential to honour the trust granted by the people who transmit it and to respect the conditions established to use and disseminate this knowledge.
- Keep in mind that Indigenous identity is primarily shaped by living relationships with a community, a culture, a language and a territory, and does not rely solely on the presence of an ancestor in a family tree.
- Be especially careful when selecting material on sales platforms for teaching materials, and always check the validity of the sources provided to support the content, the author's credibility and/or the presence of cultural appropriation.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Clés d'analyse d'œuvres de littérature jeunesse traitant de savoirs, réalités et cultures autochtones (Document)	An analytical tool for educators to evaluate children's literature that addresses Indigenous knowledge, cultures and realities. It helps foster a critical perspective on the quality, authenticity, relevance and representation of Indigenous Peoples.	M8wwa L ⅃ mamu Committee (with Edward, K., Blanchet, P.-A., Lavoie, C., Grey, W., Vinet-Béland, M., Dezutter, O., and Desrochers, M.-È.). (2023). *Clés d'analyse d'œuvres de littérature jeunesse traitant de savoirs, réalités et cultures autochtones.* Faculty of Education, Université de Sherbrooke. https://www.usherbrooke.ca/education/fileadmin/sites/education/documents/Cles_analyse_litt_autochtone.pdf [Available in French only]
Identification First Nations (ID1N) (Site)	A tool to help better identify First Nations and learn about their diversity, names and realities In particular, it contributes to the recognition and visibility of different Nations in commercial and cultural contexts.	Identification First Nations. (n.d.). *Identification First Nations (ID1N).* https://id1n.org/en/
Appropriation ou appréciation culturelle? (Video)	A short journalistic video segment exploring the distinction between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation. It encourages reflection on respectful ways to represent, use or engage with Indigenous cultures in various contexts.	Radio-Canada. (n.d.). *Appropriation ou appréciation culturelle?* [Video]. ICI Espaces autochtones. https://ici.radio-canada.ca/info/videos/1-10589585/appropriation-ou-appreciation-culturelle [Available in French only]



TRANSVERSAL DIMENSION

Learner's Mindset



Engage in a lifelong learning process as a student rather than as an expert

Description

For First Nations and Inuit, learning is a holistic, experiential and lifelong process.

For a teacher who engages in exploring and discovering Indigenous peoples, it is important to adopt the learner's mindset. Competency 15 starts from the premise that the teachers themselves are learners.

This paradigm encourages teachers to commit to a lifelong learning process, both inside and outside the classroom, by sharing the same path as the students in their community. This involves acknowledging that they do not have all the answers, and that they must also take the time to listen. It involves learning gradually through relationships and experience, by focusing on learning *with* people and communities, while honouring their knowledge and their ways of transmitting it. In this respect, the teacher's role consists less in transmitting content than guiding reflection, formulating questions and supporting the exploration and integration of new knowledge related to First Nations and Inuit realities.

This mindset, which involves a certain amount of vulnerability, promotes openness and creates conditions conducive to more in-depth and meaningful learning. It also involves taking the time to reflect personally on your own culture, your exposure to Indigenous realities, as well as on the biases and privileges shaped by your life experiences, to better acknowledge them and to use them consciously and responsibly.

This reality also applies to Indigenous teaching staff. Although people may have personal, lived experience of their own culture, it is still rare for anyone to consider themselves a specialist in that culture, let alone an expert on the realities of the various First Nations and Inuit peoples who inhabit the territory now known as *Kebec.*

In conclusion, an openness to learning and a benevolent attitude will always prevail over prior knowledge.

The dimension in action

- Start a preliminary reflection process on the changes in practices by asking certain questions:
  - What motivates my actions?
  - What is my culture and how does it influence my vision of First Nations and Inuit cultures?
  - What emotions arise in me when I develop knowledge about these subjects, and how can I approach them?
- Facilitate conversations with students using language and examples adapted to them on topics related to diversity and intercultural relationships.
- Focus on authentic resources to better understand Indigenous cultures and realities.
- Prioritize learning that results from dialogue and relationships with local Indigenous communities or those that the students belong to.
- Introduce a collaborative team in the school so that you can talk to your colleagues about winning practices to adopt, successes and ideas surrounding the richness of cultural differences.

Takeaways

There are as many ways to be Indigenous as there are First Nations or Inuit members. It is therefore important that students are not asked to position themselves as experts on their identity in an academic context.

In the path towards reconciliation, it is inevitable to experience uncomfortable emotions, including anger or helplessness in the face of events from the past and their lingering impacts on First Nations and Inuit. Teachers are not responsible for these situations or their origin, but they still hold a real power of action today. Through their choices and practices, teachers can help to create a welcoming and safe environment for all and make an authentic contribution to the truth and reconciliation process.

To have a sustainable impact, it is preferable to take small-scale actions throughout the year, both in your professional development and in the classroom with students. A consistent and authentic approach promotes a gradual integration of learning and emotions, and reflects a more sincere commitment than sporadic or limited interventions in an activity or a focus week.

The journey towards reconciliation is neither solitary nor isolated. Working with colleagues, resources and school leadership to create a welcoming and culturally safe environment is an essential approach.

The truth and reconciliation process is complicated and constantly evolving. Throughout this process, it is possible to unintentionally use inappropriate terminology, rely on inaccurate information or take an action that requires adjustment. Learning to recognize these situations and redirect your actions with humility takes time and patience. Cultivating curiosity and openness is essential to establishing sustainable and positive relationships.

Further reading

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement (Book)	A guide providing theoretical and practical guidelines for integrating First Nations and Inuit perspectives into teaching practices, particularly with regard to decolonization, the promotion of traditional knowledge and cultural safety.	Deschênes, É. (2024b). *Valorisation et inclusion des perspectives des Premières Nations et Inuit en enseignement*. Fides éducation. [Available in French only]
Resources – Voices from the Land (Site)	A resource library on the Voices from the Land platform that brings together a variety of educational content, including videos, podcasts, guides and activities, to explore First Nations perspectives, knowledge and cultures.	First Nations Education Council. (n.d.). *Resources.* Voices from the Land. https://lesvoixduterritoire.ca/en/resources/

Resource name (Type of resource)	Description	Reference
Guide pédagogique : à la découverte des cultures autochtones! (Document)	An educational guide offering activities and content designed to help students discover Indigenous cultures and foster a more accurate and respectful understanding of their realities, knowledge and perspectives.	Verriest, S. (2025). *Guide pédagogique : à la découverte des cultures autochtones!* Reconnaitre, Pôle d'enseignement supérieur-Montérégie. https://www.reconnaitre.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/GUIDE-PEDAGOGIQUE-COMPLET-2.pdf [Available in French only]
Indigenous Engagement Handbook (Document)	A guide designed to develop the historical knowledge and cultural competencies needed to better understand Indigenous realities and interact appropriately with Indigenous individuals, employees or partners.	pipikwan pêhtâkwan. (2023). *Indigenous Engagement Handbook.* Tourism HR Canada. https://tourismhr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Indigenous_Engagement_Handbook.pdf
The Decolonial Toolbox: Educational Pathway (Site)	A self-guided educational program developed by Mikana that provides a better understanding of Indigenous realities, the effects of colonialism and decolonization efforts. It offers a progression from initial awareness to more in-depth reflection.	Mikana. (n.d.-a). *The Decolonial Toolbox: Educational Pathway.* https://mikana.ca/en/decolonial-toolbox-educational-pathway/
Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Document)	Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Historic document related to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation (Vol. 6). McGill-Queen's University Press. https://nctr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Volume_6_Reconciliation_English_Web.pdf



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