

Grade 1 Language

Oral Communication
Reading

Aboriginal Teaching Strategy

Respect

Students develop an understanding of the Aboriginal belief in the importance of respecting oneself, others, and all things.

Related Curriculum Policy

- *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 2006*

Specific Expectations

Speaking to Communicate

- 2.4 choose appropriate words to communicate their meaning accurately and engage the interest of their audience (e.g., choose words relevant to the topic from the full range of their vocabulary, including new words used regularly in the classroom; use descriptive adjectives to clarify and add interest to a narrative; use inclusive language that conveys respect for all people)

Reading for Meaning

- 1.1 read a few different types of literary texts (e.g., pattern books, rhymes, books from home, simple fiction stories), graphic texts (e.g., calendars, environmental print, signs), and informational texts (e.g., morning messages, strategy charts, instructions, simple non-fiction books, labels)
- 1.6 extend understanding of texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experience, to other familiar texts, and to the world around them (e.g., identify personally significant events in stories, such as losing a tooth or getting a pet; relate information in a text to previous experiences, other familiar texts, movies, or trips)

Aboriginal Context

Aboriginal people value and respect creation, knowledge, wisdom, the dignity and freedom of others, and the quality of life and spirit in all things, including both animate and inanimate objects. Reverence for objects is common. For example, the eagle feather is held to be sacred and may be used by speakers to lead a talking circle or ceremonies, such as a smudging ceremony. Other sacred objects include the drum, rattles, regalia, traditional medicines, and the smudge pot. No one may touch these objects unless they are invited to do so by the person leading the ceremony or by the person who has brought the objects to the ceremony.

Teaching Strategies

- Explain what a talking circle is by telling the students that an object is passed among the participants, who take turns discussing an issue or story, and that the holder of the object is the speaker. Also explain that participants demonstrate their equal status by sitting in a non-hierarchical circle and show respect for each other by listening to each speaker.
 - Read aloud a story that shows Aboriginal people demonstrating respect for animate and/or inanimate objects.
 - Discuss the importance of respect in the story and how it is shown.
 - Invite students to make a personal connection with the story by reflecting on how they demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and all things.
 - Have the class form a talking circle. If possible, use the object from the story as the “talking stick”.
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- Invite students to bring an object from home that is significant to them and tell the class why it is important to them.

Resources

Bushey, Jeanne. *The Polar Bear's Gift*. Red Deer: Red Deer Press, 2000. ISBN: 0-889952-20-5. This picture book teaches respect for other people and animals.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ach/lr/ks/index-eng.asp>. A variety of resources focused on traditions, culture, events, and achievements.

Plain, Ferguson. *Eagle Feather*. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 2006. An Ojibway boy learns from the teachings of his grandfather.

Silvey, Diane. *Little Bear's Vision Quest*. Victoria: First Nations Publications, 1995. This picture book tells a story that teaches the value of respecting others.

Making Community Connections

- Invite a local Aboriginal person to talk to the class about the importance of respect.
- Invite an Elder or other Aboriginal person to talk about the traditional use of the eagle feather and how to show respect for this important symbol.

ABOUT THE TEACHER'S TOOLKIT

This teaching strategy is one component of *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit*, a collection of resources designed to help Ontario educators bring Aboriginal perspectives into the classroom. Based on the revised Ontario curriculum, the collection includes resources for educators at both the elementary and secondary levels. Other resources in this series can be found on the ministry website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca.

