TEACHING IN ASIAN INDIGENOUS SCHOOLS:
A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MANUAL

by

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Abstract

The intent of this project is to create a professional learning manual for Singaporean educators who are considering or preparing to teach within Singapore and in Indigenous or rural schools in developing Southeast Asian countries. The manual may be a resource for non-profit organizations that are planning to or have established schools in this region. Research has shown that Eurocentric educational models or mainstream education approaches are not effective with Aboriginal or Indigenous learners and current literature is replete with calls for teachers to embrace a culturally responsive pedagogy. This professional development manual will help to address these issues by providing Singaporean teachers as well as non-profit organizations with essential knowledge about the Indigenous communities and tools to conduct effective lessons and engage Indigenous students in learning. The manual will encourage ongoing professional inquiry to help teachers and organizations internalize and sustain their learning and adapt promising practices to their local contexts.

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Glossary

Aboriginal People

For the purpose of this project, Aboriginal people or Aboriginal includes "Métis, Inuit and First Nations, regardless of whether they are 'registered' under the *Indian Act* of Canada" (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p.1). In this project, the term "Aboriginal" is capitalized much like other ethnic population and organizations. Not doing this is regarded by Aboriginal people as being 'racist, offensive and belittling, a way of negating [their] identity and nationality" (NSW Department of Community Services, 2007, p.2). The term "Aboriginal" is used interchangeably with "Indigenous" in this project.

Assimilation

A 19th century idea that Indigenous people should be "improved" by being "civilized" and becoming Christians and learning how to work as Europeans did (Australian Museum, 2009, para. 2).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching refers to the use of "cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p.106).

Culture

Culture refers to a system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning (University of Manitoba, n.d., para. 2)

Decolonization

Decolonization "does not mean and has not meant a total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge. Rather, it is about "centring our (Indigenous) concerns and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our perspectives and for our own purposes" (Smith, 1999, p.39).

Developing Countries

Developing countries, according to the World Bank classification, are countries with low or middle levels of Gross National Product per capita. More than 80 percent of the world's population lives in the more than 100 developing countries (The World Bank Group, 2004, para. 17).

Elder(s)

Elders are Aboriginal and Indigenous persons who are respected and consulted by the community due to their experience, wisdom, knowledge, background and insight. The word Elder does not necessarily equate with age (Government of Saskatchewan, 2009, para. 16).

Faith-based Organizations (FBOs)

Faith-based organizations are civil society organizations that are "religious in nature, which distinguishes those organizations from government, public or private sector organizations" (International NGO Training and Research Centre, n.d., para. 1).

First Nations

First Nations is a Canadian term for Aboriginal or Indigenous people. According to Stiffarm (1998), "First denotes primacy, Nations indicates that the people were organized into social, political, and economic groups with distinct cultures and languages and land; and the plural form denotes diversity of these groups" (Stiffarm, 1998, p.viii).

Indian

The term "Indian" is "narrowly defined by the Indian Act. Indian peoples are one of three groups of people recognized as one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples in the Constitution Act, 1982. There are three legal definitions that apply to Indians in Canada: Status Indians, Non-status Indians and Treaty Indians" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2009, para. 21).

Indigenous People

Indigenous people refer to "all inhabitants who are natives to a particular country, including their descendants" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.154). To date, there has been no universal

agreement on the definition of Indigenous people. In different countries, Indigenous people may be referred to as Indigenous ethnic minorities," "Aboriginals," "hill tribes," "minority nationalities," "scheduled tribes," or "tribal groups" (The World Bank, 2005, para. 3). For instance, the Maori are the Indigenous people in New Zealand and the Orang Asli and the Dayaks are the Indigenous people in Malaysia. In Singapore, it is the Malays. Politically however, it is unacceptable to call the Malays, who are regarded as one of the ethnic races in Singapore, Indigenous people. In this project, the term "Indigenous" is also capitalized for the same reasons given for Aboriginals.

Intercultural Inclusive Education

Intercultural inclusive education is defined as "consideration of difference among students, and access to differentiated instruction and support to students to accommodate the cognitive, emotional, physical, developmental and cultural attributes of individual learners" (Webber & Lupart, 2011, p.3).

Mainstream Education

Mainstream education refers to education provided by the schools that are under the purview of the Ministry of Education in Singapore (Chan, Burn, Lim and Thanver, 2008). The Ministry Of Education "directs the formulation and implementation of education policies. It has control of the development and administration of the Government and Government-aided primary schools, secondary schools, junior colleges, and a centralized institute" (Ministry of Education, 2011, para. 1).

Native

Native is a term used to "designate the inhabitants of a colonized country" (Battiste (Ed.), 2009, p.74). It is also a term used to refer generally to Aboriginal peoples. The term "Aboriginal person" is mostly preferred to "native" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2009, para. 18). The term is also used in other Indigenous countries.

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Non-governmental organizations are local, national or international organizations whose members are not employed by the government. Many are charitable organizations that are

concerned with a wide range of social, economic or environmental issues (International NGO Training and Research Centre, n.d., para. 1).

Reflective Practice

Reflective practice is an "inquiry approach to teaching that involves a personal commitment to continuous learning and improvement" (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Montie, 2001, p.3).

South East Asia

South East Asia includes "a mainland area (also called Indochina) and a string of archipelagoes to the south and east and is generally taken to include Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, and the Philippines" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2011, para. 1).

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is defined as growth "that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, 2007, para. 2).

Worldview

The worldview of the Aboriginal cultures is distinct from the worldview of the mainstream culture in any country. This worldview assumes that humans inhabit a universe that has been made by the Creator and who strive to live in respectful relationship with nature, each other and oneself. Each Aboriginal culture expresses this worldview in different ways, with different practices, stories, and cultural products (Alberta Education, 2005, p.156).

Acknowledgement

For helping me to successfully birth this project from a vision that I had, I wish to acknowledge and thank the following:

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CHAPTER ONE: ANSWERING A CALL, GIVING HOPE AND A FUTURE

Once a tiny fishing village situated at the southernmost tip of Peninsula Malaysia, the island nation of Singapore has transformed from a third world nation to a first world nation within an astounding fifty years (Vaish, 2006, p.3). As Singapore is now a first world nation, her people, especially the young Singaporeans, are increasingly "undertaking volunteering work, whether in causes they feel passionately about like protecting the environment, or in humanitarian work around the world" (Lee, 2008, para. 11). Venturing out with them are also retired trained teachers who work for local faith based organizations that have planted schools in *South East Asia*.

The purpose of this project is to create a professional learning manual for Singaporean educators who are considering or preparing to teach within Singapore and in Indigenous or rural schools in South East Asia as well as *non-profit organizations* that are planning to or have set up schools in this region. I propose to enable my fellow Singaporeans as well as myself to become aware of what Indigenous education entails so that we are able to contribute meaningfully to Indigenous communities. In creating this manual, I will draw upon relevant strands of literature, including Indigenous or Aboriginal education, *culturally responsive teaching* (Gay, 2002), and *reflective practice* (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Montie, 2001). The Indigenous or Aboriginal education literature may provide insights into what Indigenous education will entail. For this, I will draw on the literature of the *First Nation* Peoples in Canada because I believe there is much more literature written on the education of Canadian *Aboriginal people* than there is for the Indigenous people of South East Asia. Understanding what Aboriginal or Indigenous education is all about is particularly important because Singapore is a nation where there is minimal discussion concerning

Indigenous people and their education. The literature on culturally responsive teaching will help shed light on how teachers can capitalize on the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of Indigenous students and use them as "conduits for teaching more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p.106). Although Gay's culturally responsive teaching framework has been drawn up primarily for teachers teaching in diverse ethnic classroom setting, it is also applicable to teachers who teach in an Indigenous classroom environment (Egbo, 2009; Kanu, 2011). Thus, drawing upon Gay's framework will enable the Singaporean teachers and I to become culturally sensitive as well as responsive teachers when we teach Indigenous students in the developing countries in South East Asia. A recent definition of *intercultural inclusive education* (Webber & Lupart, 2011) provides an overall conceptual framework for this project and affirms the application of culturally responsive teaching and related concepts to international development. Further, aligning my project to this work provides an opportunity for this study to make a valuable contribution to a relatively new academic area. As for the literature on reflective practice, it will provide insights as to how reflective practice can be a "potentially powerful enhancement" (Blase & Blase, 2004, p.85) for teachers' professional growth and performance. Weaving these strands of literature together will inform my approach for designing this professional learning manual and the workshops that it will support.

Statement of the Problem

According to Gay (2002) and Brown (2007), teachers are inadequately prepared to teach students from diverse backgrounds, an observation that may also be applicable to the Singaporean teachers. Although there are four distinct ethnic groups – the Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians - in our local schools, the National Institute of Education in Singapore

generally prepares our teachers to deliver the mainstream curriculum that is grounded on European or Western educational philosophy, thought, culture, and values. As such, teachers from Singapore, including myself, are not likely to have considered the importance of adopting a culturally responsive teaching approach in our classrooms.

Today, Singapore has a total of 30,000 teachers (MOE Press Release, 2010, para. 4). Fully trained for mainstream education, the Singaporean teachers are reported to be one of the largest groups of Singapore Volunteer Overseas (SVO) volunteers to have left their home shores to share their teaching expertise in English, Mathematics and Science with children who live in Indonesia, Vietnam, Nepal and Botswana. In addition, they have also been the most sought after professionals by these host nations (MOE Press Release, 2000, para. 5). According to Sim (2009), as many as 20 teachers have also volunteered to help and teach students in countries such as Laos, Cambodia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia (Sim, 2009, para. 1) since 2000.

The number of teachers expressing their desire and willingness to spend time teaching in developing countries is increasing. *Challenge*, an on-line magazine of the Singapore Public Service, reported that under the Internationalising Singaporeans banner and the enhanced Ministry of Education's (MOE) Professional Development Leave (PDL) scheme, some 8,000 Singapore teachers have been eligible to undertake purposeful professional development, including overseas teaching stints in partner schools. Already, teachers have taken advantage of the scheme by signing up for the Outreach Programme, a collaborative programme by MOE and the Singapore International Foundation (SIF), which aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of Singapore's foreign counterparts in developing countries (Challenge, 2007, para. 1-2). With the number of Singaporean teachers who are now leaving

their nation's shores to teach Indigenous students in the developing South East Asian nations, it becomes a grave concern as to how well prepared or effective a Singaporean teacher can be, teaching Indigenous children or those from a different ethnic background when he or she has little knowledge in these areas. As Howard (1999) so aptly remarked, "We can't teach what we don't know". I fully agree with this statement and if I may add to what Howard has said, "We can't even share what we don't know either". Current literature on Indigenous or Aboriginal education is replete with calls for non-native teachers "to learn as much as possible about the background and culture of the [Indigenous] students" (Fríesen & Fríesen, 2002, p.26) and this advice has been reiterated for the past three decades (Wolcott, 1967; Fríesen, 1977; Fríesen, 1985; Elofson and Elofson, 1988; Reyhmer, 1992; Battiste and Barman, 1995; Duquette, 2000). Likewise, the literature has repeatedly called for teachers to embrace a culturally responsive pedagogy (Artiles, et al., 2000; Brown 2007; Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Richards, Brown & Forde, 2007; Taylor, 2010). If indeed the Singaporean teachers want to make a significant contribution to the surrounding developing countries, either by teaching in the rural schools or sharing their expertise with native educators, they need to prepare themselves. Adequate preparation includes heeding and acting on these calls for culturally responsive teaching so that they can leave the nation's shores as fully prepared volunteer teachers who can contribute in a meaningful way to the developing nations that have opened their doors to them.

A number of Singapore's *faith based organizations* (FBOs) have set up schools in the surrounding countries in South East Asia. The Anglican Diocese has established schools in both Batam (Indonesia) and Cambodia and the Methodist Missions Society, a missions agency of the Methodist Church, has set up a Methodist School in Cambodia. For both

organizations, our local educators have been deployed to either teach or provide teacher training. Two of my former colleagues who have retired as teachers from Singapore's Ministry of Education have been recruited by the Anglican Diocese to teach in Batam and Cambodia. Like me, they too had been trained locally by the Institute of Education (now the National Institute of Education) to teach mainstream students in Singapore. They, like many others, are passionate about serving in schools set up by FBOs but, may be unaware that transferring what they know about mainstream "'Western' education structures and contents have little meaning for Indigenous communities" (Hanemann, 2005, p.8). Mainstream education systems advocate curricula and teaching methodologies that are "based on a world view that does not always recognize or appreciate Indigenous notions of an interdependent universe and the importance of place in their societies" (UNESCO Institute for Education as cited by Hanemann, 2005).

There is also another retired school principal that I know who has been asked to be involved in the setting up of FBO schools in Cambodia at this present moment. Like my two former colleagues, he too may be unaware of the repeated calls made by native people from different parts of the world, including Asia, to indigenize their education. Likewise, he may not be familiar with Article 14 in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples*, which asserts the right of Indigenous people to access education in their own culture and language (United Nations, 2007, p.7). In the Philippines, FBOs have undertaken "to provide education interventions" (Episcopal Commission On Indigenous People, 2008, p.114) to Indigenous communities in the mountainous areas. They have realized the need to address the "impact of mainstream education system on the Indigenous communities" and introduce more "culturally-sensitive educational interventions" (Episcopal

Commission On Indigenous People, 2008, p.118). Amongst one of the interventions is indigenizing the formal education. What the Filipino FBOs have done has significant implications for the Singapore FBOs. If the latter is to make an impact, they too, like the Filipino FBOs, must not be heavily influenced by the colonial view that education is a means to civilizing or assimilating Indigenous people into the mainstream culture. Rather, in setting up schools and providing an education for Indigenous children, they must learn to journey together with the Indigenous people and learn to see education "from the viewpoint of the Indigenous people themselves" (Episcopal Commission On Indigenous People, 2008, p.115). Only then can they help to "nurture their tribe, communities and culture" (Episcopal Commission On Indigenous People, 2008, p.125). Otherwise, much harm can come upon the Indigenous communities if the FBOs do not view education in a similar perspective as the Indigenous communities. An example of this is seen in Thailand, where the educational work of the FBOs has been reported to threaten the existence of the Akha identity, a hill tribe that is living in northern Thailand (Macan-Markar, 2003).

There are also our local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Mercy Relief and Singapore International Foundation. The former was established in response to the human tragedies in Asia. Officially launched by Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in September 2003 to promote a civic life of compassion, care, and volunteerism amongst Singaporeans, it undertakes long term development projects "to uplift the lives of the impoverished and disadvantaged" (Mercy Relief, 2011, para. 1) by focusing on many areas that include education. Serving the less fortunate and needy, Mercy Relief has been educationally involved in developing countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Vietnam. In Indonesia for instance, Mercy Relief undertook a professional development

project that started in November 2009 and ended in October 2010. Native teachers and school leaders from Riau and South Sumatra province were "exposed to best practices and latest trends in teaching pedagogical skills, classroom management, leadership skills, curriculum development and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)" (Mercy Relief, 2011, para. 3) by Singaporean trainers. In Myanmar, a team of youth volunteers was sent to Grace Home in Bago to set up a computer lab and formulate a syllabus in basic computer skills for 150 children.

The Singapore International Foundation (SIF) also works with communities in Asia to promote *sustainable development*, which is defined by the Brundtland Commission as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, 2007, para. 2). It was set up in 1991 and education is one of its five core areas. At present, it recruits two groups of educators – Ministry of Education (MOE) teachers and non-MOE teachers - and sends them on in-field SIV (Singapore International Volunteers) assignments that last between 6 months and 2 years. The volunteers live in the community, teach the children, "transfer their skills and strengthen the capabilities of their overseas counterparts" (Singapore International Foundation, 2009, para. 2) at the same time. Currently, the SIF is looking for a pre-school English teacher to teach preschool classes as well as "guide the teachers in curriculum planning and to develop an English Club" (Singapore International Foundation, 2009, para. 1) at the Faculty of Early Childhood Education of Vietnam's National College of Education. For these two NGOs, volunteers share the same profile as those that have been mentioned for myself and my colleagues – they have been

educated to teach the mainstream students, with little preparation for the cultural needs of Indigenous students.

It is evident that there is a gap that must be addressed in terms of professional knowledge for these groups of Singaporean educators because it does not appear that the National Institute of Education in Singapore or the FBOs and NGOs provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills required to teach effectively and sustainably in Indigenous schools. Although it is heartening to see the number of Singaporeans wanting to make a difference in Indigenous communities, I also have fear in my heart anticipating the possible negative effects that may occur as they unknowingly transfer the dominant culture to these communities and expect classroom behaviours coherent with their mainstream and westernized experience.

To the best of my knowledge, I believe that there is no such professional learning manual for teaching in Asian Indigenous schools at this present moment. Hence, I have resolved to create this manual so as to address this gap that I see amongst those who are currently teaching or are about to teach the Indigenous children living in the region surrounding Singapore. Such a manual is also intended to inform those who are planning to set up schools for the Indigenous communities and to support their ongoing reflective practice. By closing this gap for my fellow educators, I am confident that they will be able to make a positive difference to the communities that they serve as well as give Indigenous children the hope for a future they need and deserve. Additionally, this manual will address the repeated calls made for non-Native teachers to learn as much as possible about the background and literature of the Indigenous students and embrace culturally responsive teaching.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to develop a professional learning manual for Singaporean educators who are considering or preparing to teach in Indigenous or rural schools in South East Asia as well as non-profit organizations which are planning to or have set schools in this region. The manual will serve as a resource guide that educators can refer to, to help them to acquire an initial understanding about the Asian Indigenous communities, and enable them to adapt the information to specific contexts through further reflective practice (Schön, 1983; York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Montie, 2001; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). The manual will also be a toolbox containing suggested strategies that they draw upon and use to help them to conduct culturally responsive lessons as well as draw up a holistic curriculum. There will be references to additional readings and website links so as to assist users in undertaking further self-exploration about Indigenous education and Indigenous communities. Finally, I hope that the manual will challenge and provoke users to undertake a journey of reflective practice. As an aspect of lifelong learning and professional development, reflective practice aims to enable the users to gain new insights into the meaning of teaching events and develop metateaching skills, that is, the ability to think about the thinking of teaching (Blase & Blase, 2004, p.87) so that they can make the necessary adjustments to cater to the needs of the Indigenous communities.

My intention is to anchor the manual in current research, theory, and practice in Indigenous education, culturally responsive teaching, intercultural inclusive education, and reflective practice. It will include practical, accessible information that users will find helpful as they set up their classroom, interact with students and the community, design their lesson

plans, and engage the community in the holistic education of the children. It will also inform both policy makers and instructional leaders of these promising practices as well.

At present, the first draft of the manual, which I created during the Aboriginal Learners course that I took in the Winter session at UNBC this year, has been sent to an interested former colleague of mine. Having perused it and seeing its relevance, applicability and transferability, she has asked for my permission to share it with the FBOs in Tanjong Pinang, an Indonesian island, the Philippines and Nagaland, a state in the far north-eastern part of India. It is my hope that upon my return to Singapore to share this professional development manual with the FBOs that have already set up schools in the developing countries. I also intend to approach the Social Service Training Institute (SSTI), that runs training workshops for the social service and non-profit sectors in Singapore, to suggest for the inclusion of *Teaching In Asian Indigneous Schools* to their existing list of programmes so as to give the NGOs the opportunity to send their volunteers to attend this workshop prior to their departure for Asian destinations. Last but not least, it is my hope to find generous donors who are willing to sponsor the publication of this manual so that it can be distributed to other groups, including those overseas organizations that have similar calling to the FBOs or NGOs in Singapore. Through this distribution, I hope to eventually see a collaborative partnership develop amongst the local FBOs and NGOs and between the local and foreign FBOs and NGOs.

How I Identify With The Project

I have been involved with education all my life. I first started teaching in the mainstream schools in Singapore. After more than 20 years, I left the mainstream and went to serve as a Vice-Principal in a special education school because I wanted to take on new

challenges. Other than the administrative work of a Vice-Principal, I also conducted a few professional development workshops for both my staff and the staff of another school that was under the umbrella of the Association for Persons with Special Needs (APSN), the organization that I worked for. After serving as a school administrator for three years, I took a leave of absence for my own professional development, in the hope that I will be able to share current trends and research in education with local and Asian educators upon my return to Singapore. Hence, my current enrolment in the Master of Education course at UNBC.

It was not until I was required to take a course on Aboriginal learners that I began to learn about the First Nations people of Canada – their history, their pain, their struggles and their hopes. When I began to develop a learning manual for Singaporean teachers to teach in Asian Indigenous schools as part of my course requirement, I became intimately acquainted with the issues and plight of the Asian Indigenous people. Like the First Nations people of Canada, they too are fighting for their rights – the rights of self-determination; the right to assert their own identities as linked to their territories and ancestral domains; the right to control their lands as the foundation of their existence; customary laws and Indigenous social systems; the right to revitalize their traditional institutions; to speak their language and live according to their world view and to educate their children on these (Kluwer Law International, 2000, p.166-167). However, unlike the First Nations people of Canada who struggled to free themselves from Western colonialists, the Asian Indigenous people have had to struggle with two colonialists - the Western or Japanese in the last centuries and the Asians in this century. Between the two, the Asian Indigenous people have experienced "the worst forms of colonialism from fellow Asians" (Kluwer Law International, 2000, p.166) who have pushed them to extinction "not only through invasion …but also through the

efforts of dominant Asians to assimilate [them], to impose languages, religions and political concepts which are alien to [them]" (Kluwer Law International, 2000, p.166).

Because I aspire to work with the rural school leaders in Asia in the near future, these words spoke directly to my heart and I knew that as an educational leader with a moral purpose (Kaser and Halbert, 2009), I had to find a way to address this issue. Otherwise, both my fellow Singaporeans and I, who share a similar calling and who have been bred, raised, and educated in the dominant culture, will not be able to serve the Asian Indigenous communities effectively by sharing our existing knowledge and western style of teaching. Instead of being regarded as allies who have come to work hand in hand to promote sustainable development in their communities, we will be viewed as one of the Asian colonialists who have come to do more harm. After writing a paper exploring the effects of residential schools, it is my desire not to see the Asian Indigenous people subjected to a similar fate as the First Nations peoples under the Western colonists. They, like any other nationals in the country, deserve the right to articulate and define their education. We, on the other hand, should only come as collaborative partners to assist them in building a sustainable society through education. By sharing with them what we know and in helping them to develop a vision, they will be empowered to carry the torch that will give the children in their community a hope to achieve their dreams and aspirations. This will be our greatest gift to them and the "lasting legacy" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, p.10) we will leave behind when we depart from their land and return to ours.

Twenty four years of experience as an educator and the knowledge and skills I have acquired from university studies, in particular the course that I did on Aboriginal learners and their peoples' history, culture, and ways of knowing, have prepared me for this work. I

believe that I am in a privileged position to create a professional learning manual that will address issues pertinent to Indigenous education so that I can begin to equip myself and fellow educators with the relevant skills and knowledge that we need to serve effectively and contribute meaningfully to the Asian Indigenous communities. My colleagues and I come from a nation that has greatly invested in our professional development. Yearly, Singaporean teachers are expected to complete as much as 100 hours of professional development training. Having thus received so much, there is also much that we can give in return to our surrounding developing nations. What we lack, this manual will now begin to address, so that we can answer to an inner calling or a moral purpose to go forth and serve selflessly and meaningfully and be a great blessing to the Asian developing nations whilst keeping the Singapore flag flying high. By sharing our knowledge and expertise and collaborating with the Indigenous colleagues and community, we will not only help to provide the Indigenous learners with the highest possible quality learning experience, but we will also significantly improve the life chances of their learners, thus giving the latter hope for a better future. This, according to Kaser and Halbert (2009), is the moral purpose of education. According to Fullan (2002), it is the "moral purpose of the highest order" as the Singaporean educators are acting with the intention of "making a positive difference" (p.415) in their own social and international environment.

I also see this project as an opportunity for my own personal growth and development. As I continue to research this subject to refine the existing manual, I will also gain knowledge and understanding concerning Indigenous education, which will help me to be a consultant to the FBOs and NGOs, should such opportunities present themselves upon my

return to Singapore. I believe this study will facilitate the work that I hope to undertake with the Asian Indigenous educators and school leaders.

Relevance to Mainstream Education in Singapore

Of the four main ethnic groups in Singapore, the Malays are known to perform dismally in schools (Ali, 1996; Tan, 1997; Rahim, 1998; Wan Hussin, 1990; Tan & Ho, 2001 and Tan, 2007). As a result of this, repeated calls have been made to narrow the educational disparity between the Malays and the other ethnic communities in Singapore, such as the Chinese, Indians, and Eurasians. Although the Malay students have reportedly made significant improvements in their educational achievements over the years, they are lagging behind the other ethnic communities in Singapore (Tan, 2007, p.53).

Having once taught this group of students and now studied the situation for Aboriginal learners in Canada, I see similarities between the Aboriginal learners and the Malay students in Singapore. Historically, the Malays, have been considered the original settlers in Singapore. Hence, that makes them the natives or Indigenous people of the land. In the course of my research, I began to see that the Malay students have characteristics and learning preferences similar to their Indigenous counterparts in other parts of the world. Like the First Nations students in Canada, Malay students often prefer working in groups, are more often visual and kinesthetic learners, and dislike competition. The contents in the manual I plan to prepare will thus encourage Singaporean teachers to engage their Malay students more effectively, so that the learning gap between the Malays and the other ethnic communities in Singapore can be bridged. The relevance of this project for teachers of Indigenous students within Singapore is confirmed in the literature by Hashim (1996), who

asserted that culture plays a role in shaping the minds of the younger Malay generation and influencing their academic achievement.

As it is Singapore's aim to increase her population, she has therefore opened her doors widely to immigrants. Since the end of 2005, her population has increased by about 810,000 people (Adam, 2011, para. 19). With a variety of immigrants arriving and placing their children in local schools, the Singapore schools are becoming more ethically diversified. Singaporean teachers may soon encounter the challenges of an increasingly diverse student population that prompted Gay (2002) to define and promote culturally responsive pedagogy. As a result of this, I see the potential of this manual to complement the existing teacher education programme offered by our National Institute of Education.

Overview of the Project

The outcome of this project will be a professional learning manual designed for a specific audience that includes educators working with Indigenous students within Singapore and the neighbouring developing nations and the FBOs and NGOs aiming to promote the development of Indigenous communities. My purpose in this manual is to inform and prepare readers and workshop participants with the information and inquiry mindset (Kaser & Halbert, 2009) that will enable them to serve Indigenous students effectively.

The project will be presented in two parts. Part I will consist of three chapters that include a problem statement, literature review, and description of the development and intended use of the manual. These chapters present my rationale for such a manual to support and facilitate the work of Singaporean educators, FBOs and NGOs. I will review current literature that supports the design of the manual. Part II will consist of the manual, as it will be presented to participants in a two-day workshop. In its current draft form, the manual

consists of 14 sections: introduction, objectives, background information, a different worldview, the Indigenous student, the curriculum, classroom setting and instructional strategies, the community, rewards and challenges, areas for consideration, a glossary of terms, appendices, references, and a feedback form.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the problem and purpose of this project. I have also explained how I have identified with it and I have demonstrated the relevance of the proposed professional learning manual for the education of Indigenous students in Singapore as well as in neighbouring developing nations. In the next chapter, I will review literature from four areas: Indigenous education, culturally responsive teaching, intercultural inclusive education, and reflective practice. The Indigenous or Aboriginal literature will provide insights into what Indigenous or Aboriginal education will entail. The literature on culturally responsive teaching will provide a conceptual framework that will help teachers to embrace the practice of culturally responsive teaching. The literature on intercultural inclusive education will bring classroom concerns to the international stage and provide a broader conceptual framework. A review of work on reflective practice will help to explain why inquiry-based experimentation during implementation of educational innovations is an important component to teachers' professional growth and performance. The final chapter will describe methods pertaining to the development and intended use of the manual.

CHAPTER TWO: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will review literature pertaining to Aboriginal or Indigenous education, culturally responsive teaching, intercultural inclusive education, and reflective practice for educators. The first purpose of reviewing these strands of literature is to anchor this manual in theory and research so as to give it credibility, and the second is to inform the design of the manual contents. (A description of how the literature contributes to the manual contents will be included in Chapter Three.) Because there has been little written concerning Asian Indigenous education, the literature review for Aboriginal education will primarily draw upon studies pertaining to the First Nations people in Canada. Wherever possible, I have included literature relevant to the Indigenous people in New Zealand, Australia, and particularly Asia to confirm insights from Canada and strengthen their application to more global context.

Aboriginal Education

A review of literature concerning Aboriginal education has shown that the use of a non-native, in particular, Eurocentric educational model for the Aboriginal people of Canada has had a "long and conclusive history of failure" (Hampton, 1995, p.7). Failure has resulted primarily because Eurocentric educational practices have largely "ignored or rejected the *world-views*, languages, and values of Aboriginal parents in the education of their children" (Battiste, 1995, p.viii). As a result, there has been a "gradual loss of these world-views, languages, cultures…in the Aboriginal communities" (Battiste, 1995, p.viii). Such an experience of rejection and loss is also seen amongst the Aboriginals in countries like Australia, New Zealand, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Pacific nations (Kanu, 2011, p.3). In Asia, similar experiences have been reported in the Philippines (Episcopal Commission on

Indigenous Peoples, 2008). With these losses, there have been calls to *"decolonize* Aboriginal education and improve the educational attainment of Aboriginal students by including Aboriginal cultural knowledge/perspectives into the school curricula and other schooling processes" (Kanu, 2011, p.3). At present, Canadian Aboriginal communities are searching beyond the old models of Eurocentric education to help them transform and revitalize their languages and cultures (Battiste, 1995).

According to Battiste (1995), it is difficult to define Indian education but it is a "significant process to all Aboriginal parents and communities" (Battiste, 1995, p.vii). The search for a definition raises the question of what it means to be an Aboriginal person and addresses key issues of education in a multicultural state: "What should education achieve for Aboriginal peoples?" (Battiste, 1995, p.vii). Battiste (1995) stated that the "various answers to these questions form the concept and processes of First Nation education" (Battiste, 1995, p.vii).

A review of literature has shown that there are indeed numerous perspectives given concerning Indian, Aboriginal, or First Nations education in Canada and Native American education in the United States. According to Battiste (1995), the Aboriginal communities have defined their educational ideal as "salvaging Aboriginal languages, cultures, and societies, and of transmitting those cultures, with their unique understanding of North American ecology and their distinct world-views" (p.viii–ix). For Ermine (1995), Aboriginal education has "a responsibility to uphold a world-view based on recognizing and affirming wholeness and to disseminate the benefits to all humanity" (p.110). This is because the Western world subscribes to a "fragmentary self-world view" (Ermine, 1995, p.110) that is detrimental to Aboriginal worldview or epistemology.

Subjecting Aboriginal children to Western education systems that promote "the dogma of fragmentation" (Ermine, 1995, p.110) will indelibly harm their capacity for holism and impede their progress towards inwardness that their ancestors would see as essential learning. Ermine believes that insights into truth can be achieved only through subjectivity and the Aboriginal language and culture are their touchstones for achieving these insights (Ermine, 1995, p.110). For Ermine, it is critical for the Aboriginal children to "take up the cause of [their] languages and cultures because therein lies Aboriginal epistemology, which speaks of holism. With holism, an environmental ethics is possible" (Ermine, 1995, p.110). Leavitt (1995) acknowledged these fundamental differences in the world-view in Aboriginal and English Language and highlighted the importance of "the integration of different levels of Native culture and thought in the classroom strategies and events with and for Native children" (p.xviii).

For Hampton (1995), Indian education "must enhance Aboriginal consciousness of what it means to be Indian, thus empowering and enriching individual and collective lives" (p.xv). In his very comprehensive essay, *Towards a Redefinition of Indian Education*, Hampton (1995) gave five different meanings to the term *Indian education*: "(1) traditional Indian education, (2) schooling for self-determination, (3) schooling for self-assimilation, (4) education by Indians, and (5) Indian education *sui generis*" (p.8). The latter is "Indian education as 'a thing of its own kind' (National Advisory Council on Indian Education, 1983), a self-determined Indian education using models of education structured by Indian cultures" (p.10). Using the medicine-wheel typology as an organizing tool, he also discussed the principles and boundaries in the redefinition theory of Indian education. He has identified twelve standards or strands of unity that embrace Indian education. Using these central

standards of First Nations education, he examined "the different transformative paths that schools and communities have taken from *assimilation* to self-defining and culturally transmitting models that build on the recognition of unique First Nations cultures, communities, and elders" (Battiste, 1995, p.xv). The 12 standards are as follows:

Spirituality: "Indian education orients itself around a spiritual centre that defines the

individual as the life of the group" (p.21).

Service: Education is to serve the people and not individual advancement or status (p.21).

Diversity: The standard for diversity necessitates recognition of and respect for cultural

diversity amongst the First Nation peoples (MacIvor, 1995, p.77). It also requires

"self-knowledge and self-respect, without which respect for others is impossible"

(Hampton, 1995, p.26).

Culture: Indian cultures "have ways of thought, learning, teaching, and communicating that

are different from, but as valid as, those white cultures. These thoughts-ways stand

at the beginning of Indian time and are the foundations of [their] childrens' lives.

Their full flower is being one of the people" (p.28).

Tradition: "Indian education maintains continuity with tradition. [Their] traditions define

and preserve [them]. It is important to understand that this continuity with

tradition is neither a rejection of the artifacts of other cultures nor an attempt to

'turn back the clock'" (p.29).

Respect: Indian education "demands relationship of personal respect" (p.31).

History: Indian education has a "sense of history and does not avoid the hard facts of the

conquest of America" (p.32).

Relentlessness: Indian education is "relentless in its battle for Indian children. [They] take

pride in [their] warriors, and [their] teachers are warriors for the life of [their]

children" (p.32).

Vitality: Indian education "recognizes and nourishes the powerful pattern of life that lies

hidden within personal and tribal suffering and oppression. Suffering begets

strength. [They] have not vanquished" (p.35).

Conflict: Indian education "recognizes the conflict, tensions, and struggle between itself and

the white education as well as with education generally. Western education is in

content and structure hostile to Native people. It must be straightforwardly realized

that education, as currently practised, is cultural genocide" (p.35).

Place: Indian education "recognizes the importance of an Indian sense of place, land, and

territory" (p.40).

Transformation: Indian education "recognizes the need for transformation in relations

between Indian and white as well as in the individual and society" (p.41).

For MacIvor (1995), these 12 standards have helped to serve as a "comprehensive and

holistic framework for envisioning and organizing thoughts on curricular change" (p.75) and

she has used them to reflect on science education and subsequently argue for a more

inclusive science education. MacIvor has called for locally developed cultural content to be

integrated holistically into all areas of curricula. Her emphasis on science highlights the

under-representation of Aboriginal peoples in sciences and the pressing need to develop

scientific and technological skills within their community.

Like MacIvor, Archibald (1995) also favoured integration. She described how Sto:lo

cultural content, concepts, and skills could be integrated in provincial curriculum and band-

operated schools and stressed the importance of community participation, especially from the

elders, to help revitalize the education of the Aboriginal communities. This theme of integration is also taken up by Kanu (2011), who strongly calls for Aboriginal cultural knowledge and/or perspectives to be integrated across the school curricula and teacher education programs in Canada. The assumption is that the "integration of Aboriginal cultural socialization processes, especially if based on an understanding of the Aboriginal communities where Aboriginal students live their lives and how they are culturally socialized to participate in routine practices in these settings, will create links between the home and school cultures and motivate Aboriginal students to learn" (Kanu, 2011, p.5). In integrating Aboriginal perspectives into a mainstream, regular curriculum, Kanu proposed layering at five levels of classroom practice: "(a) as student learning outcomes for each unit and lesson; (b) as instructional methods/strategies; (c) as curriculum content and learning resources /materials; (d) as assessment of student learning; and (e) as the philosophical underpinning of the curriculum" (p.102).

In the area of teacher education, Kanu (2011) stated the need for the faculties of education and schools to provide opportunities for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers alike to increase their efficacy beliefs and confidence. Teachers had, in his research, expressed their "lack of Aboriginal cultural knowledge and understanding for effective integration....The non-Aboriginal (dominant culture) teachers [have] repeatedly mentioned their lack of knowledge about Aboriginal content/topics/issues, the cultural characteristics of their Aboriginal students and Aboriginal ways of learning" (p.176). As a result of this lack of familiarity with Aboriginal approaches to teaching and learning, integration is affected because the teachers do not have the "pedagogical content knowledge (i.e. the useful forms of knowledge representation, analogies, illustrations, and examples from Aboriginal culture)

to make the curriculum comprehensible [and accessible] to Aboriginal students" (p.176). Kanu (2011) added that this diminished "teacher capacity seriously compromised [the] teachers' ability to act as 'cultural brokers' (Stairs, cited in Aikenhead & Huntley,1999) negotiating and moving back and forth between the two cultures (Aboriginal culture and the Eurocentric culture of school and curricula), and helping pupils deal with cultural conflicts that might arise; it also undermined teachers' efficacy beliefs vis-á-vis the integration of Aboriginal perspectives" (p.176-177). Concurring with Kanu on the need to improve the teachers' capacity for integrating Aboriginal perspectives are Morgan (2010), Bishop, Berryman and Richardson (2002), Kanu (2002) and Couture (1988).

Although MacIvor (1995), Archibald (1995) and Kanu (2011) have advocated for Aboriginal content to be integrated into the curricula, Fríesen and Fríesen (2002) have called for a different kind of integration. They have proposed integrating outsiders into Aboriginal ways of thinking and behaving, in the belief that the Aboriginal ways have much to offer to the non-natives. However, this integration has to be undertaken by Aboriginal educators and leaders (p.17) and should be the "primary goal of contemporary Aboriginal education today" (p.17). In profiling Aboriginal education in Canada, Fríesen and Fríesen (2002) stated that adjustments are required to include a number of complex frontiers. These include "obtaining the services of culturally knowledgeable and culturally sensitive teachers; incorporating language learning into school curricula; acknowledging and teaching towards traditional Aboriginal learning styles; developing locally-relevant curriculum materials; and, incorporating Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum, preferably by enhancing the role of elders in the classroom" (p.26). Most of these components are also reflected in a consolidated

report written by the Filipino Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples (2008) in its attempt to introduce culturally-sensitive educational interventions.

It is evident from the literature that Aboriginal education in Canada is an evolving and complex affair. Battiste (1995) stated that "there are no easy answers to the complex world of First Nations education in Canada" (p.xx). In the literature cited here, each writer has contributed to a vision of Indian or Aboriginal education. Collectively, the literature has revealed some fundamental threads about Aboriginal education. Essentially, I have identified six themes to inform a manual for educators in Indigenous Asian settings:

(a) Rooted in Indigenous peoples' history, culture, values and heritage

(b) Includes Indigenous peoples' worldview (ways of knowing, learning, and thinking)

(c) Advocates a holistic or integrated and culturally relevant curriculum

(d) Advocates culturally compatible teaching and assessment methods

(e) Involves community participation, especially by Elders as the gatekeepers of
    Indigenous knowledge

(f) Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers require support to deliver Indigenous
    content and pedagogy so that they can integrate Indigenous perspectives into the
    curriculum as well as deliver culturally appropriate lessons.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

With the dramatic demographic shift seen in American schools over the past few decades, many researchers (Jordan, 1985; Erickson, 1987; Ladson-Billings, 1990; Au & Kawakami, 1994; Gay, 2002;) have challenged educators to search for innovative ways to work with students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds to ensure that they receive a high quality and equitable education (Phuntsog, 1999; Brown, 2007). As

educators tried to develop a close fit between students' home cultures and the culture of the school, the result has been a modified approach to instruction that literature has referred to as *culturally compatible* (Jordan, 1985), *culturally congruent* (Au and Kawakami, 1994), *culturally relevant* (Ladson-Billings, 1990), and *culturally responsive teaching* (Erickson, 1987) (Brown, 2007, p.57). For this study, I have chosen to focus on culturally responsive teaching (CRT).

Gay (2010) has defined the term culturally responsive teaching as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students" (p.31). It is the behavioral expressions of "knowledge, beliefs, and values that recognize the importance of racial and cultural diversity in learning" (p.31). It is based on the assumption that "when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly" (Gay, 2002, p.106). This meaning, interest, and motivation will, in turn, improve the ethnically diverse students' academic achievement as they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995; Foster, 1995; Hollins, 1996; Kleinfield, 1997; Gay, 2000, 2010). In addition, researchers have asserted that modifying the way the classrooms are structured and transforming the school's policies and practices will enhance the learning of the students.

According to Taylor (2010), the current literature is replete with calls for the need for more culturally competent teachers to embrace culturally responsive teaching (Artiles, et.al. 2000; Brown, 2007; Ford, 2007). Teachers have been found to be lacking in awareness of

their own limited cultural competence concerning the minority and diverse students. Hence, the use of effective practices with students and families from diverse backgrounds has been inhibited (Correa, Blanes-Reynes, & Rapport, 1996, cited in Taylor, 2010). In addition, Taylor (2010) stated that "what teachers perceive, believe, say, and do can disable or empower multicultural students with or without disabilities" (p.24). In light of these points, there is therefore a need to elevate the cultural awareness amongst the teachers so that they can teach more effectively in a multi-cultural classroom.

Generally, culturally responsive teachers believe that culture deeply influences children's learning (Stoicovy, 2002). In teaching students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, the teachers' attitude must reflect an appreciation of the cultural, linguistic, and social characteristics of each student (Sparks, 1994). Often, this appreciation is difficult to establish because the students' cultural characteristics are so vastly different from the teacher's. For a teacher to be effective, it is generally agreed that there must be a mastery of both content knowledge and pedagogical skills (Brown, 2007). Part of the knowledge that the teacher must have includes understanding the cultural characteristics and contributions of different ethnic groups (Pai, 1990; Hollins, King & Hayman, 1994; King, Hollins and Hayman, 1997; Smith 1998). Gay (2002) stated that "culture encompasses many things, some of which are more important for teachers to know than others because they have direct implications for teaching and learning. Among these are ethnic groups' cultural values, traditions, communications, learning styles, contributions, and relational pattern" (Gay, 2002, p.107).

To prepare teachers to be engaged in culturally responsive teaching, Gay (2002), has identified five essential elements: "developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity, including ethnic and cultural diversity content in curriculum, demonstrating caring and

building learning communities, communicating with ethnically diverse students, and responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction" (p.106).

In developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity, Gay (2002) stated that the knowledge teachers need to have "goes beyond mere awareness of, respect for and general recognition of the fact that ethnic groups have different values or express similar values in various ways" (p.107). In fact, teachers must acquire detailed factual information about the cultural particularities of the specific ethnic groups and knowledge about the contributions of the different ethnic groups to a wide variety of disciplines (p.107). This is needed so as to make schooling more "interesting and stimulating for, representative of, and responsive to ethnically diverse students" (p.107).

When designing culturally relevant curricula, Gay (2002) asserted that teachers need to learn how to convert the knowledge base that they have acquired about the different ethnic groups into culturally responsive curriculum designs and instructional strategies. She identified three kinds of curricula present in the classroom. The first is the formal plans for instruction approved by the policy and governing bodies of the educational system. The second is the symbolic curriculum that includes "images, symbols, icons, mottos, awards, celebrations, and other artifacts that are used to teach student knowledge, skills, morals, and values" (p.108). The most common forms of symbolic curricula include bulletin board decorations, images of heroes and heroines, ethical principles and tokens of achievements. Therefore, classroom and school walls are valuable space because students learn from what are displayed there (p.108). The third is the societal curriculum. This is "knowledge, ideas, and impressions about ethnic groups that are portrayed in the mass media" (p.109).

Culturally responsive teachers teach students how to be discerning consumers of and resisters to ethnic information disseminated through the societal curriculum.

Related to the third component, culturally responsive teachers must create a classroom climate that is conducive to learning. According to Gay (2002), teachers must know how to use cultural scaffolding – "that is, using their [students'] own cultures and experiences to expand their intellectual horizons and academic achievements. This begins by demonstrating culturally sensitive caring and building culturally responsive learning communities" (p.109). In the former, the teachers do not only care for the students but for their achievements as well. Gay (2000) stated that culturally responsive caring also places "teachers in an ethical, emotional, and academic partnership with ethnically diverse students, a partnership that is anchored in respect, honor, integrity, resources sharing, and a deep belief in the possibility of transcendence" (p.52). In the area of building culturally responsive communities, Gay (2002) stated that culturally responsive teachers are aware of how conflict between different work styles can affect academic efforts and outcomes and they know how to design more communal learning environments. In building culturally responsive communities of learning, Gay (2002) stated that the emphasis should be on holistic or integrated learning. In holistic or integrated learning, "students may be taught their cultural heritage and positive ethnic identity development, along with math, science, reading, critical thinking, and social activitism" (Gay, 2002, p.110). Other than learning about their own, they also learn about the heritages, cultures, and contributions of other ethnic groups. Culturally responsive teachers generally help their students to understand that "knowledge has moral and political elements and consequences, which obligate them to take social action to promote freedom, equality, and justice for everyone" (Gay, 2002, p.110).

As to communicating with ethnically diverse students, Gay (2002) believes that for teachers to communicate effectively, they must understand the communication styles of different ethnic groups because they reflect cultural values and shape learning behaviours. Components of learning style include "knowledge about linguistic structures of various ethnic communication styles as well as contextual factors, cultural nuances, discourse features, logic and rhythm, delivery, vocabulary usage, role relationships of speakers and listeners, intonation, gestures, and body movements" (p.111). Of the many components of communication styles, Gay (2002) highlighted too that teachers need to understand: (a) protocols in participation in discourse and (b) pattern of task engagement and organizing ideas amongst the various ethnic groups. Understanding the latter will help the teachers to avoid violating the cultural values of their students in instructional communication and decipher their students' intellectual abilities, needs, and competencies (p.111-112).

Finally, Gay (2010) stated that for teachers to be effective, they need to understand how their ethnically diverse students learn. This understanding is necessary because the processes of learning used by these students are influenced by their cultural socialization (p.174). Citing Bennett (2007), Gay added that "characteristics of learning styles are pedagogically promising to the extent that they illuminate patterns of cultural values and behaviors that influence how children learn, and they provide functional directions for modifying instructional techniques to better meet the academic needs of ethnically diverse students" (p.174). Hence, learning styles are tools for improving the school achievement of the ethnically diverse students as they help to create "more cultural congruity in teaching-learning processes" (Gay, 2010, p.174). Culturally responsive teachers will therefore match instructional strategies to the diverse learning styles of their students as it is "a way to build

bridges among various cultures and communities of practice for students from different ethnic groups" (p.174-175).

Montgomery (2001) added that to prepare teachers to be culturally responsive, the teachers must first take "an honest look at their own attitudes and current practice" (p.4). She proposed doing a self-assessment followed by a self-reflection so that teachers can reflect on what they have learnt from the self-assessment and make the necessary decisions regarding ways to constructively embrace diversity and, thus, create learning environments that respond to the needs of their students (p.5). Agreeing with her are Ford (2010) and Taylor (2010). Taylor stated that through self-reflection, teachers can rid "themselves of those biases, thereby beginning to build trusting relationships with their students. Those trusting relationships will yield greater opportunities for student success" (p.26). From my own personal experience and awakening of moral purpose pertaining to this topic, I fully agree with the assumptions that educators have biases that can be identified and addressed through self-reflection. It is therefore critical that Singaporeans identify their cultural biases so that they can build trusting relationships with both the Indigenous students and the students' home community.

Intercultural Inclusive Education

A new concept, *intercultural inclusive education* is defined as "consideration of difference among students, and access to differentiated instruction and support to students to accommodate the cognitive, emotional, physical, developmental, and cultural attributes of individual learners" (Webber & Lupart, 2011, p.3). Using an international action-research-like process to elicit cross-cultural dialogue about facets of intercultural inclusive education, Webber and Lupart (2011) drew up a conceptual framework for intercultural inclusive

education (Figure 1). The framework is premised on several key assumptions. The first is the notion that "education is the basic right and schools must base teaching and learning on tolerance, respect, and the honouring of diversity" (p.9) The purpose of intercultural inclusive education is "to increase participation in learning and in the community, and to reduce exclusion from full life within society" (p.9). Intercultural inclusive education is also "in the service of a civil society characterized by respect for difference" (p.9) and Lawton, Philport and Furey, who are amongst the researchers for the study on intercultural inclusive education, have noted there are social benefits investing in education as are the "correlations among education, good citizenship, and health" (p.9). Hence, equity is essential to intercultural inclusive education and they are stated priorities of many local and national governments including those in Canada and United States (Webber & Lupart, 2011).
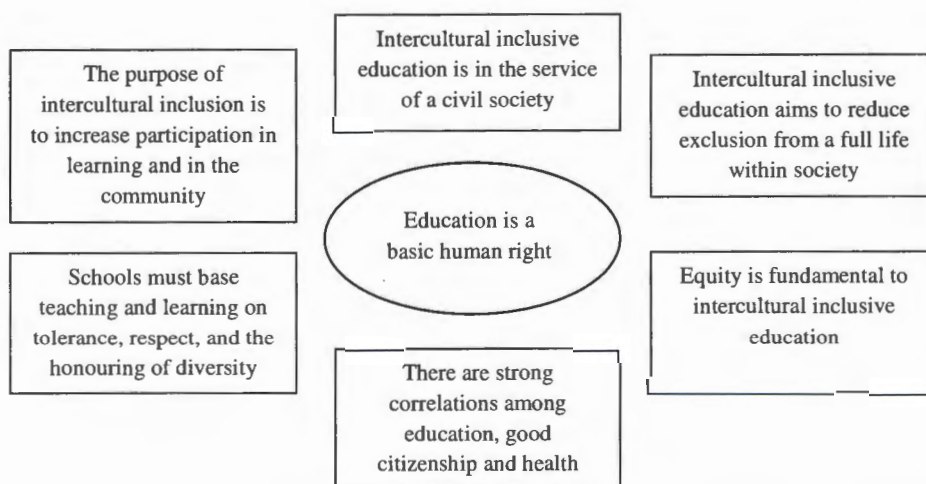
Figure 1. Conceptual framework for intercultural inclusive education by C.F. Webber, and J Lupart, 2011, *International Studies in Education Administration*, *39*(1), p.9.

In many ways, the conceptual framework for intercultural inclusive education is consistent with the pedagogical approach described in culturally responsive teaching. Both challenge educators to search for innovative ways to work with culturally diverse students to

ensure that these students receive high quality and equitable education. Both acknowledge the importance of culture in influencing student learning. Both value respect and tolerance and advocate that teaching and learning reflect these values. In ensuring cultural congruity in the teaching and learning processes, both ideas express the belief that students' learning and classroom participation can be enhanced. This in turn will improve student achievement and increase their life chances and opportunities as they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters.

Other areas of similarity between intercultural inclusive education and culturally responsive teaching include the need for educators to reflect on their assumptions, beliefs, and biases so that actions and decisions are consistent with the principles and values of equitable education and participation in society. Also, both seek to build a learning climate that facilitates intellectual and psychological safety and cultural tolerance. Both recognize the need for teachers to be adequately prepared. The failure to prepare a teacher for intercultural inclusive education "can lead to professional incompetence and unethical practice" (Webber & Lupart, 2011, p.14) while the failure of culturally responsive teachers to adequately develop their knowledge base about cultural diversity will hinder them from both embracing and meeting the "educational needs of [their] ethnically diverse students" (Gay, 2002, p.107).

There are also overlaps between intercultural inclusive education and Aboriginal education. Both are anchored on values such as respect, tolerance, diversity and service – all of which are amongst Hampton's twelve Aboriginal education principles. Both also acknowledge the importance of community. Webber and Lupart (2011) encouraged intercultural inclusive school leaders to "garner adequate community support for [their]

schools" (p.12) while Friesen and Friesen (2002) have called for the enhancement of the role of elders in the classroom.

This demonstrated compatibility between intercultural inclusive education and Aboriginal education and culturally responsive teaching firmly supports the rationale for this project as well as provides a conceptual framework for the intended manual. Additionally, it affirms the relevance of culturally responsive teaching for an international context. Finally, it provides a scholarly audience for this work among educators who are working towards inclusion and equity in various world locations and contexts.

Reflective Practice

Learning is the foundation for both individual and organizational improvement (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Argyis, 1977). According to Steffy, Wolfe, Pasch & Enz (as cited by York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Montie, 2001), it requires reflection and it facilitates "learning, renewal, and growth throughout the development of career educators (p.1). When reflection and renewal are absent from educators' work, "teaching can become too automatic, which can undermine its effectiveness" (Corcoran & Leahy, 2003, p.30). Schön (1983), cited by Corcoran and Leahy (2003), "described a 'knowing-in-practice' (practical knowledge) that becomes increasingly tacit, spontaneous, and automatic (overlearned) that teachers develop a narrowness and rigidity that affects their understandings of situations" (p.30). To address this problem of overlearning, Schön recommended reflection. By engaging in reflective practice, teachers can "surface and criticize the tacit understandings that they have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness which [they] may allow [themselves] to experience" (Schön, 1983, p.61). Successful teachers generally are fully engaged in reflective

processes and they make time to consider what they do day-to-day to improve their own performance (Corcoran & Leahy, 2003). According to Wellington (1991), reflective practice reminds educators that the "roots of our profession lie in service to people rather than to systems. It heralds renewal, reclamation, and change" (p.5).

My review of the origins of reflective practice in education and its evolution to the present day has shown substantial attention to this issue in the literature. Those who have contributed to this body of literature are largely theorists, researchers, and teacher educators. Dewey (1933) is often been recognized as the foundational 20th century influence on reflection in education. He identified three attributes of reflective individuals: open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness – all of which are relevant for teachers today (Farell, 2008, p.1). In recent years, it has been the work of Donald Schön (1983, 1987) that is recognized for having sparked interest in reflective practice in the field of education (York-Barr et al., 2001, p.3).

Amongst those who have made significant contributions to this area are Smyth (1989), Osterman and Kottkamp (1993), Sparks-Langer and Colton (1993), Langer and Colton (1994) and Butler (1996). Each has either added or extended a significant consideration to educators' understanding of reflection and reflective practice. Taken as a whole, the literature on reflective practice has revealed some common themes. Reflection is seen as an "active thought process aimed at understanding and subsequent improvement. Both personal and contextual variables influence the reflective process and outcomes. Reflection can occur in different ways and for different purposes. Reflection that considers social, moral, and ethical perspectives has the potential to affect community values and action" (York-Barr et al., 2001, p.3).

Generally, reflective practice is defined as an "inquiry approach to teaching that involves a personal commitment to continuous learning and improvement" (York-Barr et al., 2001, p.3). The literature reveals numerous perspectives on reflective practice, however, each with a slightly different emphasis. Killion and Todnem (1991), for instance defined reflective practice as "the practice or act of analyzing our actions, decisions, or products by focusing on our process of achieving them" (p.15). Lasley (1992), on the hand, defined it as the "capacity of a teacher to think creatively, imaginatively and in time, self-critically about classroom practice" (p.24). Dewey, as cited in *Reflective Practice To Improve Schools*, described it is an "active and deliberative cognitive process, involving sequences of interconnected ideas which take into account underlying beliefs and knowledge" (p.6). Bright (1996), as cited in *Reflective Practice To Improve Schools*, has defined it as a "genuinely critical, questioning orientation and a deep commitment to the discovery of analysis of positive and negative information concerning the quality and status of professional's designed action" (p.6). York-Barr et al. (2001) have provided the most comprehensive definition: reflective practice is a

> deliberate pause to assume an open perspective, to allow for higher-level
>
> thinking processes. Practitioners use these processes for examining beliefs,
>
> goals, and practices to gain new or deeper understandings that lead to
>
> actions that improve learning for students. Actions may involve changes in
>
> behaviour, skills, attitudes, or perspectives within an individual, partner,
>
> small group, or school. (p.6)

Generally, they see reflective practice as occurring in a spiral manner.

This reflective practice spiral is built on the assumption that the place to begin to initiate change lies with oneself. In the York-Barr et al. (2001) model, there are four levels:

individual, partner, small group or team, school wide. "The spiral that moves through the levels represents the interconnectedness among the levels, resulting in cumulative effect on schoolwide practices" (p.12). At the individual level, reflection, when implemented effectively, provides the individual with the following gains: improvement in educational practice; increased student learning and learning capacities as a result of improvements in personal practice; increased personal capacity for learning and improvement; restored balance and perspective following a time-out for reflection and subsequent learning and renewed clarity of personal and professional purpose. With a partner, the gains can include expanded learning and confidence about one's own practice; increased professional and social support and decreased feelings of isolation at work; an increased sense of who we are and how things work in the school and greater commitment to work and work environment. As a small group, the potential gains are: enhanced learning and resources for learning about practice; increased professional and social support, more effective interventions for individual students or groups of identified students, emerging sense of hope and encouragement that meaningful and sustained improvements in practice can happen as members in a group are working and learning together. On a schoolwide basis, the potential gains include: greatly expanded learning opportunities, resources, and the potential to achieve schoolwide improvements in educational practice; increased professional and social support through expanded network of relationships and understanding of others' experiences at work and increased possibility for meaningful and sustained improvements in practice, given expanded awareness of the commitments and talents of a broad network of people in the school (York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere & Montie, 2001 p.13-16). In this project, I will

consider the use of the reflective practice spiral model. However, modifications will be made to suit the intended goals of the manual.

Chapter Summary

In summary, the literature on Indigenous education has provided insights that appear relevant for an international context. Although the Indigenous communities around the world may differ in their cultural practices and beliefs, they share some common goals concerning education. Primarily, they desire to establish their own educational system, provide education in their own languages, in a manner that is appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning (United Nations, 2008, p.7). This is also congruent with intercultural inclusive education that adheres to the idea that education is a fundamental human right and that schools must base their teaching and learning on tolerance, respect and honouring of diversity. The literature on culturally responsive teaching shows how teachers can be prepared to teach in a cultural responsive manner. Although the context provided is in a multicultural setting, culturally responsive teaching is equally relevant for the Indigenous setting as well. There are clear overlaps between the literature on Aboriginal education and culturally responsive teaching. Generally, both see culture being important and deeply influencing children's learning. Both also emphasize the need for culturally sensitive and knowledgeable teachers, culturally relevant curriculum, and culturally appropriate pedagogy. These overlaps indicate that these are critical areas that need to be factored into the manual's content. Similarly, there are also similarities between intercultural inclusive education and culturally responsive teaching, thus affirming the relevance for the latter for an international context. Likewise, there are similarities between intercultural inclusive education and Indigenous education. Both articulate the need to recognize and respect cultural diversity of

the learners, prepare educators to be culturally sensitive and literate, use a curriculum that is respectfully appropriate and sustain diversity and garner community support for the school. Finally, the literature offers insights on how reflective practice can help the individuals to examine their beliefs, goals, and practices so as to gain new or deeper understandings that lead to actions that improve learning for students. With new awareness of Indigenous perspectives and understanding of cultural responsiveness at the classroom and decision-making levels, educators venturing out of Singapore may be more fully prepared. However, the concept of reflective practice invites them to apply this new knowledge with a critical and curious mind in spirals of action-based inquiry that will deepen understanding over time.

CHAPTER THREE: DEVELOPMENT & INTENDED USE OF MANUAL

A review of the literature on Aboriginal education, culturally responsive teaching, intercultural inclusive education, and reflective practice has provided insights and a conceptual framework that will be the foundation of the proposed manual. It is evident from the review that culture is at the heart of Indigenous or Aboriginal education and there are clear overlaps between Aboriginal education, culturally responsive teaching, and intercultural inclusive education. As culture permeates into every area such as curriculum, instruction, assessment and administration (Gay, 2010), it is therefore essential for non-Aboriginal educators to be both knowledgeable and culturally sensitive so that they can be culturally or interculturally responsive teachers who can relate to and meet the educational needs of their Indigenous learners. The proposed manual will attempt to accomplish these by using a conceptual framework for intercultural inclusive education. Adaptations however have been made so as to achieve the purpose – to prepare Singaporean educators to teach in Asian Indigenous schools.

This chapter will give a more detailed description of the method and process for designing the manual as well as recommendations for using it. It will provide background information concerning the manual, illustrate and explain the modified conceptual framework on which the manual is based on, provide an overview of the manual, show how it is informed by the different strands of literature and suggest its intended use. A summary completes the chapter.

Background Information Concerning The Manual

The initial step that I took in designing the manual was to look at samples of what a manual or handbook might look like in general. I have looked at two samples. One was

entitled the *Preschool and Kindergarten Vision Screening Training Manual* (2009) and another, a *BC Health Guide* (2000) handbook. Although neither sample was related to my chosen subject area, they were nevertheless sufficient as they provided me with a clearer idea of possible format and content.

My other preliminary work included an internet search for the initial contents of the manual, in addition to assigned and supplementary reading in my Aboriginal Learners course. My search led me to many website sources but the following sources have greatly influenced the design and contents of the intended manual:

Issuu

Issuu is a leading digital publishing platform for individuals, companies and institutions to publish their digital documents. At this website, I found two comprehensive publications – one of them defined who the Asian Indigenous people were and the other described their plight and concerns. As most Singaporean educators have little knowledge about Asian Indigenous people and their concerns, these two digital publications will provide them with some essential and useful background knowledge about the Asian Indigenous people's way of life and their current conditions.

Teaching in a First Nations school: an information handbook for teachers new to

First Nations schools

The First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) has created this handbook to assist teachers who are considering or preparing to work in a First Nations school in British Columbia for the first time. As its content is both practical and applicable, it helped me envision the essential content that would be included to better prepare and equip the Singaporean educators who are planning to teach in Asian Indigenous schools.

Our Words, Our Ways: Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit Learners

This is an on-line resource guide developed by Alberta Education to help Alberta's classroom teachers to better serve the needs of their Aboriginal students. The authors advocate the use of culturally relevant approaches to serve the learning needs of the Aboriginal learners effectively and offer information about Aboriginal cultures and perspectives, practical ideas, and sample strategies that teachers can use to meet the needs and recognize the gifts of Aboriginal students. As its content is in full alignment with Aboriginal education and culturally responsive teaching, this resource provided me with ideas for the manual's table of contents, chapter headings and sub-sections heading.

I have also discussed this course-based project with my supervisor who is experienced in this field and a friend who was once an educator in an Aboriginal reserve school in British Columbia. From them, came suggestions for possible workshop activities so as to make the workshop more activity based. There was also a suggestion for a glossary page so as to facilitate the readers' understanding of the intended manual.

Last but not least, I looked at several books. Specifically, two books provided me with added ideas for the manual's design and possible workshop activities. They were Battiste's and Barman's (1995) book, *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds* and Sandner's, Fatkin's, Lacy's, Martha's, Milross's and Naso's textbook, *BC Science 10*. Taylor's (1995) article, found in Battiste's and Barman's (1995) book gave me the idea of including case studies related to the concerns of non-native teachers working in Canadian native communities. *BC Science 10*, on the other hand, provided me with the possibility of adding a *pause and reflect* section to every chapter for the purpose of enabling the readers to make connections between the chapter topics and their personal experiences.

A Conceptual Framework For The Manual

The conceptual framework that I am proposing for the manual has been adapted from the Webber and Lupart (2011) framework for intercultural inclusive education. I have chosen to use this framework because of its compatibility in many areas with Indigenous education, culturally responsive teaching and reflective practice. However, I have made some modifications to the framework to align it closely with the context and scope of my project. In my adaptations, I am taking up Webber's and Lupart's (2011) suggestion - that readers who utilized their findings adapt and re-interpret what they have written as they seek to "lead intercultural inclusive schools in their communities and / to provide leadership development to colleagues within their professional network" (p.15).

My adapted definition of intercultural inclusive education is premised on several key assumptions that provide for the modified conceptual framework for the manual (see Figure 2). Like Webber and Lupart (2011), I have adhered to the notion that education is a basic human right. However, I have expanded on this premise by adding that culture is at the heart of education as Gay (2010) stated that culture counts and it is "at the heart of all we do in the name of education" (p.8). Moreover, as I see equity permeating all aspects of teaching and learning, I have combined Webber's and Lupart's (2011) assumptions made on equity, and teaching and learning into one. Incorporated into this modified assumption is Webber's and Lupart's (2011) assumption on the need to reduce exclusion from a full life within society Hence, my modified assumption is this - schools must base their teaching and learning on tolerance, respect, honouring of diversity, and equity so as to improve students' life chances. Because authors who write about culturally responsive teaching and intercultural inclusive education recognize the value of reflective practice for educators, I also expanded on one of

Webber's and Lupart's assumptions to include this feature. The modified assumption is now this - Intercultural responsive and inclusive education is performed in the service of a civil society. I have also included a new assumption – *schools must aim to actively involve the community in the holistic development of the learners*. This is because the literature review on Indigenous education and intercultural inclusive education has shown the importance of community involvement with the schools. I have also modified this assumption – "The purpose of intercultural inclusive education is to increase participation in learning and in the community" (Webber and Lupart, 2011, p.9) by adding the word *responsive* to it. I have deleted one of Webber's and Lupart's assumptions that is not within the scope of my project – "There are strong correlations among education, good citizenship and health" (p.9).

To show educators how the model is operationalized, I have included an explanation of each component beneath the conceptual framework. I have also added headings to four of the components to reflect what intercultural responsive and inclusive education entails in a succinct manner. These headings will serve as the manual's framework. I have renamed the modified framework and called it *intercultural responsive and inclusive education*. The inclusion of the word *responsive* shows the compatibility of the intercultural inclusive education with culturally responsive pedagogy.
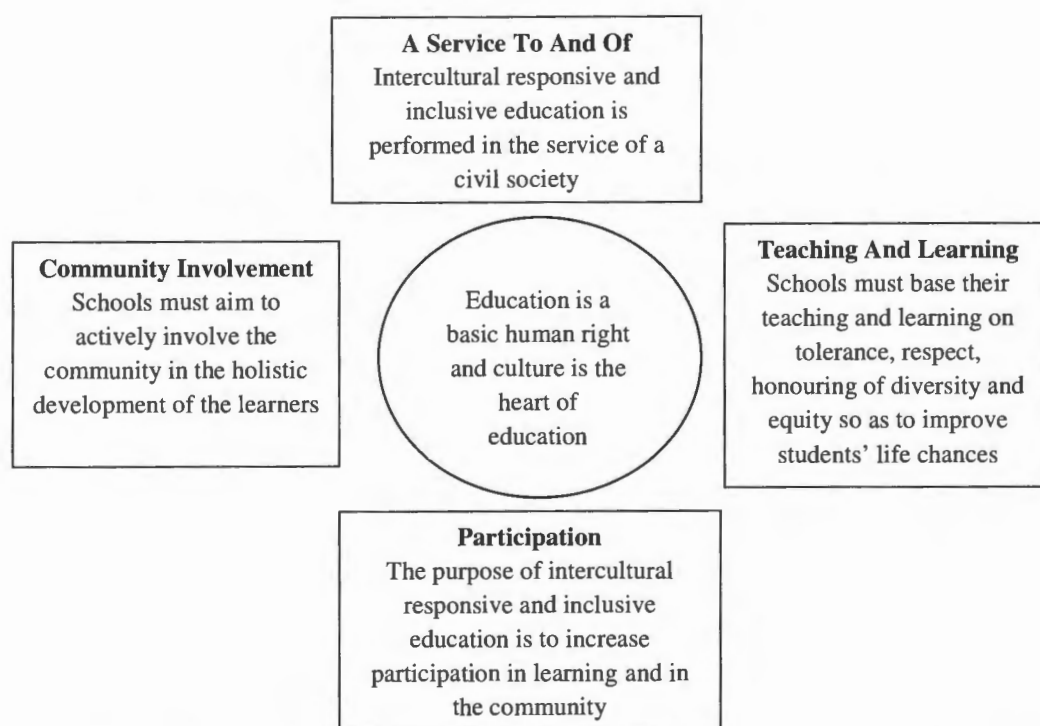
Figure 2. Modified conceptual framework for intercultural responsive and inclusive education. Adapted from Webber and Lupart (2011, p.9).

Education is a basic human right and culture is the heart of education refers to the human right of every child, including the Indigenous child, to enjoy "access to [culturally relevant] education of good quality, without discrimination or exclusion" (UNESCO, 2011, para.2).

A Service To and Of refers to the need for educators to professionally examine and reflect on their own attitudes, current practices, assumptions and biases so that they can make some critical decisions regarding ways to embrace diversity constructively, and, thus, create learning environments that culturally respond to the needs of students (Montgomery, 2001, p.5). An orientation to service also requires educators to accord both tolerance and respect for the differences of their learners in terms of their worldview, culture, language, their learning

needs and styles, communicative styles, and the community they live in. Teachers are also responsible to "acquire detailed factual information about the cultural particularities of specific ethnic groups" (Gay, 2002, p.107). By developing their cultural diversity base, educators can thus make schooling more "interesting and stimulating for, representative of, and responsive to [Indigenous] learners" (Gay, 2002, p.107).

Teaching and Learning refers to the need for educators to design culturally relevant, integrated, and equitable curricula and forms of assessment to ensure that every learner has the opportunity to succeed and have full participation in society. To accomplish these, academic content and skills taught will be "situated within the lived experience and frames of reference of students" (Gay, 2002, p.106) so that learning has more meaning and appeal for the learners.

Participation refers to the need for educators to create a caring classroom climate that is conducive to learning as well as use instructional strategies that match the learners' learning styles so that learners can be empowered to participate actively in their classroom community.

Community Involvement refers to the need for educators to network closely with the community, which has much to offer to enrich school programmes and support cultural continuity. This emphasis also requires teachers to have an understanding of the challenges and rewards of teaching in Indigenous community so that they can manage their own expectations and work collaboratively with the local people to make a positive difference in the lives of their learners.

Overview Of The Manual

The manual is a reference tool or document for Singaporean educators who are considering or preparing to teach within Singapore and in Indigenous or rural schools in developing Southeast Asian countries. It may be a resource for non-profit and faith based organizations that are planning to or have established schools in this region. The manual will contain the following topics: *knowing oneself, background information, a different worldview, the Indigenous students, the curriculum, classroom setting and instructional strategies, the community, rewards and challenges* and *areas for consideration*. Some of the topics are further subdivided into sub-topics. Each topic is organized under one of the following headings: *A Service To and Of, Teaching and Learning, Participation*, *and Community Involvement*. I have placed both the introduction and objectives of the manual under this heading: *Education is a basic human right and culture is the heart of education*. The figure below shows how the topics and sub-topics have been grouped under the respective headings.

Headings	Topics	Sub-Topics
Education is a basic human right and culture is the heart of education	1. Introduction	
	2. Objectives	
A Service To and Of	3. Knowing Oneself	
	4. Background Information	4.1 Definition of Indigenous people
		4.2 The Indigenous people of Asia
		4.3 Their concerns
	5. A Different Worldview	
	6. The Indigenous Student	6.1 Their family, culture and language
		6.2 Their needs
		6.3 Their learning styles
Teaching and Learning	7. The Curriculum	7.1 Aboriginal content
		7.2 Assessments

Headings	Topics	Sub-Topics
		7.3 Resources
Participation	8. Classroom Setting & Instructional Strategies	8.1 Classroom Setting
		8.2 Instructional Strategies
Community Involvement	9. The Community	9.1 Parent Involvement
		9.2 The Role of Elders
		9.3 Cultural Protocols
	10. Rewards & Challenges	
	11. Areas for Consideration	
	12. A Glossary of Terms	
	13. Appendix	13.1 Alberta Gomes' article
		13.2 Case Studies
		13.3 Graphic Organizers
	14. References	
	15. Feedback form	

Figure 3. Overall organization of topics and sub-topics under the respective headings

A glossary is also included in the manual. This is to facilitate the understanding of Singaporean educators who are perhaps unacquainted with some of the technical terms associated with Indigenous education.

Other features include recurring *Pause and Reflect* and *Suggested Reading* sections. The former is found at the end of each topic and sub-topics and the latter is only at the end of each topic. The purpose of the *Pause and Reflect* section is to invite "opinions, discussions, and critical reflections about its contents" (Kanu, 2011, p.26). It is also to remind educators that the "roots of [their] profession lie in service to people … It heralds renewal, reclamation, and change" (Wellington, 1991, p.5) and this aligns with one of Hampton's twelve standards that embrace Indian education – Service. In this standard, he stated that "Education is to serve the people and not individual advancement or status. Webber and Lupart (2011) have likewise suggested reflective practice for intercultural inclusive education school leaders so that they can "interrogate and disrupt social justice within schools and education systems"

(p.14). I believe this notion of disruption can be extended to include teachers so that they can create equitable classrooms and promote equity in their teaching and learning.

The *Suggested Reading* section provides users with a list of web and print resources to encourage further readings or exploration in the content area. It is necessary to list additional resources because the information in this manual is generic and not specific in nature, acknowledging that differences exist amongst the Indigenous people in Asia. Hence, users are encouraged to initiate further exploration on the specific Indigenous group that they are intending to serve. Moreover, it is also intended to build up the cultural diversity knowledge base of the teachers - a key component in Gay's (2002, 2010) culturally responsive teaching. Finally, the inclusion of this section will make this manual a valuable resource or tool for teachers, FBOs, and NGOs. They can use it to design culturally relevant and equitable curricula, establish a relationship with their learners and community, and address the needs of their learners cum the challenges of establishing intercultural responsive and inclusive schools in Asia.

As a reference tool, the manual also provides samples of instructional strategies which teachers can use with their learners and these are found in the appendix. Attached to the appendix are case studies for participants at the workshop to discuss. These have come from Taylor (1995) and have been adapted to give it a local context that users can identify with. The purpose of these case studies is to raise the awareness of non-Native teachers about the community and culture where they teach and live. Hampton (1995) stated that culture, tradition and place are among the key strands to Indian education and the "more aware teachers are, the more effective they can be in their jobs. Increased awareness of the community will lead to culturally appropriate teaching styles and materials" (Taylor, 1995,

p.241). This emphasis on connecting with the community is also found in Gay (2002, 2010) and Fríesen and Fríesen (2002).

Others considerations that have contributed to the design of this manual are practicality, user friendliness and accessibility. As Singaporean educators, like all other adult learners, want tools and resources that are immediately applicable and relevant to their own setting, I have ensured that the suggestions made are practical, useful and will benefit them. These I have placed in the *Areas For Consideration* section. To ensure that it is user friendly and accessible, I have used simple, user-friendly language throughout the manual.

The Manual's Anchors

This section shows how each strand of literature presented in Chapter 2 has been used to inform the manual. It will give a brief description of the topics and their sub-topics that have been classified under their respective headings. It will then show how these topics and their sub-topics have drawn on the relevant strands of literature presented in my literature review.

Introduction states the aims of this manual in preparing the Singaporean educators to teach in the Indigenous schools in South Asia and suggests the need for users to make necessary adaptations according to the needs of their work place and community. The manual's aim is aligned to culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002, 2010; Brown, 2007; Taylor, 2010), intercultural inclusive education (Webber and Lupart, 2011), and Aboriginal education (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Fríesen & Fríesen 2002; Kanu, 2011) literature. All have highlighted the need to prepare teachers adequately to teach in a culturally responsive way. The need for users to make adaptations comes from Webber's and Lupart's (2011) suggestion that readers utilizing their findings need to adapt and reinterpret what they have

written as they lead or serve in intercultural inclusive education in their communities. The manual calls for the users to do likewise because of the prevailing diversity amongst the Asian Indigenous communities.

Objectives list the eight objectives that the manual hopes to achieve. They essentially reflect what is generally discussed in the literature on Aboriginal education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and intercultural inclusive education – the need to respect cultural differences, recognize the unique worldviews of the Indigenous communities, use culturally appropriate teaching and learning materials and strategies, garner the support of the community, and understand the cultural protocols so as to accord respect and enhance one's relationship with the community.

Knowing Oneself is about the need for educators to engage in reflective practice by inviting educators to undertake a diversity self-assessment test. This is a response to Montgomery's (2001) call for culturally responsive teachers to do a self-assessment test before they create culturally responsive and inclusive classrooms. Webber and Lupart (2011) have also suggested that intercultural inclusive education requires school leaders to engage in reflective practice so that they can address social injustice in their schools. *Knowing Oneself* also aligns with one of Hampton's (1995) Aboriginal education principles – diversity. In this principle, he stated that diversity also "requires self-knowledge and self-respect, without which respect for others is impossible" (p.26).

Background Information is essentially about the Asian Indigenous people and their current plight. Because the literature on both culturally responsive teaching and intercultural inclusive education calls for teachers to develop a cultural diversity knowledge base or cultural literacy, this topic and its sub-topics will provide users with some valuable

background knowledge about the Asian Indigenous people and their struggle. According to Gay (2002), this knowledge is essential because it will enable teachers to design culturally relevant curricula. Because it highlights the history of Indigenous Asians, their native land, culture, practices and struggles, inclusion of this topic follows Aboriginal education principles identified by Hampton (1995) – history, vitality, conflict, tradition, and place.

A Different Worldview and *The Indigenous Student* largely examine the Indigenous students' family, culture and language, and their world views. The first topic is mainly derived from Ermine's (1995) discussion of the responsibility of Aboriginal education – "to uphold a world-view based on recognizing and affirming wholeness and to disseminate the benefits to humanity" (p.110). The second is also derived from Aboriginal education literature. Both topics, like the preceding one, continue to build the teachers' cultural knowledge base and cultural literacy so that they can appropriately design culturally relevant curricula, engage in cross cultural communications with their students, and ensure cultural congruity in their classroom instructions. All are key areas that are discussed in the literature on culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002, 2010). Some of these overlap with the literature on Aboriginal education (Battiste & Barman, 1995; Ermine, 1995; Fríesen & Fríesen 2002; Kanu, 2011) and they align with some of Hampton's twelve Aboriginal education principles – spirituality, diversity, culture, tradition. Reiterating what Hampton (1995) had said earlier - diversity not only "necessitates recognition of and respect for cultural diversity" but it also "requires self-knowledge and self-respect, without which respect for others is impossible" (p.26). The *Pause and Reflect* section found at the end of the topic and sub-topics will enable Singaporean educators to acquire the realization that there are distinct differences between them and their students that necessitate respect and tolerance

for diversity. Both respect and tolerance are values that are consistent with intercultural inclusive education. The literature on culturally responsive teaching only calls for respect to be demonstrated.

The Curriculum focuses on Aboriginal content, assessments, and resources. Aboriginal education literature, along with culturally relevant pedagogy and intercultural inclusive literature, has continually emphasized the need to include or integrate Aboriginal culture or perspectives into the school curricula to decolonize Aboriginal education and improve the educational attainment. This topic addresses the need to design curricula that fits the learning needs of the Indigenous learners. It shows educators how to integrate Indigenous perspectives into the curricula. This intention is aligned to the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy and Aboriginal education as both emphasized holistic or integrated learning. At the same time, it shows educators how to select appropriate resources and assess the learners equitably and appropriately, which reflects Hampton's (1995) Aboriginal education principles of diversity, culture, tradition, respect, history, vitality, conflict, place and transformation.

Classroom Setting and Instructional Strategies describe how to create a classroom climate to promote teaching and learning. It also suggests the types of strategies that are congruent with the learning styles of Indigenous learners, such as co-operative group learning. The topic is aligned to the literature on culturally responsive teaching that calls for the need to create "more communal learning environments" (Gay, 2010, p.10) and to ensure cultural congruity in classroom instruction. To achieve the former, the literature also suggests using cooperative group learning because it fits "well with the communal cultural systems of African, Asian, Native, and Latino American groups" (Gay, 2010, p.112). Kanu (2011) has

also listed other Indigenous learning approaches – "learning through stories and anecdotes, learning by observing and emulating, learning through visual sensory modalities, learning through scaffolding, and learning through community support" (p.63-64). These too have been incorporated into the *Instructional Strategies* sub-topic. Because these topics focus on creating a culturally responsive and inclusive classroom, they uphold Hampton's Aboriginal education principle on culture and tradition.

The Community provides a description of who the community members are. It also discusses their roles and the cultural protocols that need to be observed. Additionally, this section highlights the rewards and challenges of working within the school community as well as suggests the kind of preparation and actions educators can possibly undertake to ease their transition into their new work environment and community. The topic content for this is largely derived from the Aboriginal education and intercultural inclusive education literature. Generally, both strands of literature stress the importance of community involvement. Aboriginal education literature (Battiste, 1995; Fríesen & Fríesen, 2002; Kanu, 2011) in particular emphasizes the role of the *Elders* in helping to promote effective learning in the classrooms. Recognized by their communities and the Creator as keepers of knowledge and wisdom, they "hold in their hearts many important lessons that they are willing to share with others to make their community a better place…Their most important task is to pass on their knowledge so that the culture of their people can stay vital and responsive to changing times and contexts" (Kanu, 2011, p.151). The inclusion of this topic adheres to Hampton's Aboriginal education principles of spirituality, service, culture, tradition, respect, history, vitality, conflict, place and transformation.

From Print To Practice

The manual can be used as either a stand alone resource guide for independent study and reflection or to support a two day workshop. As a stand alone guide, it serves as a resource and companion for daily lesson planning, collaborative curriculum planning, and professional development sessions. When the manual supports a workshop, it will be used as part of the workshop activities. The activities are aligned to what have been advocated in the four stands of literature used to support the manual. They include the following four features:

a. completion of the KWL Chart – a graphic organizer. This is to show how the use of

   graphic organizers support the learning styles of Indigenous learners who have been noted

   in the Aboriginal educational literature to be visual learners (Kanu, 2011).

b. collaborative group work on Gomes' (2004) article on *The Orang Asli of Malaysia* and the

   four case studies found in the appendix of the manual. This is to illustrate how Kagan's

   (1994) cooperative learning strategies also support the learning styles of Indigenous

   learners, and help build up learning communities in a culturally responsive, inclusive

   classroom whilst empowering the students and maximizing their classroom participation.

c. designing an integrated and culturally relevant lesson plan using Fogarty's (1991) model

   found in the manual. This is to enable the participants to design a holistic or integrated

   curricula that is culturally relevant, inclusive, and uphold the values of culturally relevant

   pedagogy and intercultural inclusive education as well as reflect Hampton's principles of

   Aboriginal education.

d. self-reflection using the questions that are found in the *Pause and Reflect* section.

   Adopting what is written in the reflective practice literature, this activity will be completed

   in a spiral manner. It will begin at an individual level and gradually move to the group

level. Other than enhancing professional practice, my aim in this activity is to increase professional and social support amongst the participants.

Overall, the purpose of the activities are seven fold:

(a) to engage the participants in active discussion and participation during the workshop

(b) to demonstrate some of Kagan's cooperative learning strategies such as KWL and jigsaw (used for the case studies) to benefit those participants who are unfamiliar with the use of these strategies

(c) to provide participants with hands-on experience preparing a holistic or integrated, culturally relevant lesson plan

(d) to promote reflective practice so that participants are continually reminded that education is a service to people (Wellington, 1991)

(e) to provide participants with an opportunity to share their personal thoughts, anxieties, challenges, and experiences

(f) to promote bonding and networking and social support amongst the participants

(g) to consolidate participants' understanding of the principles and practice of intercultural responsive and inclusive education.

Chapter Summary

The manual is a synthesis of information from many sources, including personal experiences. It is intended to begin to prepare Singaporean educators who are planning to work with the Asian Indigenous communities in the field of education for culturally relevant, responsive and inclusive teaching or leadership. It is a resource guide that provides Singaporean educators with the initial knowledge and skills needed to work with the Indigenous communities and help them develop sustainably through education. As an

introduction to the issues and principles of intercultural inclusive education and culturally responsive teaching, the manual is intended to prompt an ongoing sense of curiosity and experimentation about how ideas can be implemented well.

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Teaching In Asian Indigenous Schools

A Professional Learning Manual

February 2012

Acknowledgement

This manual began with a vision to give the Asian Indigenous children a future and a hope in their respective nations. For helping me to realize this vision, I wish to acknowledge and thank the following:

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Community Involvement

Education Is A Basic Right

And

Culture Is The Heart Of Education

1. Introduction

This professional learning manual is developed primarily for both trained and non-trained Singaporean educators who are considering or preparing to teach in Indigenous or rural schools in South East Asia as well as non-profit organizations which are planning to or have set up schools in this region. Generally, it will provide background information about the Indigenous people. It will also highlight common features of Indigenous worldviews and how they differ from the Western European thinking, suggest effective teaching and learning methods for classrooms, and provide insights into the communities. At the same time, it encourages every participant to undertake a journey of reflective practice. According to Wellington (1991), reflective practice serves to remind educators that the "roots of our profession lie in service to people rather than to systems. It heralds renewal, reclamation, and change" (p.5).

Two things must be noted in this professional learning manual. Firstly, the term "Indigenous" is used interchangeably with "Aboriginals" or "hill tribes". Secondly, the information provided in this manual is general in nature because differences do exist amongst the Indigenous people. While this professional learning manual hopes to provide participants with a better understanding about Indigenous people, assist them in establishing a good relationship with their students and parents as well as ease their transition into their new teaching environment, participants are also strongly encouraged to make the necessary adaptations according to the needs of their work place and community. At the same time, further self-exploration of the subject matter is also encouraged as this will better prepare participants to enter into their new work environment, help them to contribute meaningfully

to the communities that they serve in and make a significant difference to the lives of the Asian Indigenous children so that they can have a hope and future that they so deserve.

2. Objectives

1. To appreciate and understand concerns of Indigenous people

2. To understand the unique worldviews of the Indigenous communities

3. To recognize cultural differences

4. To be aware of how the influences of family, culture and language affect the learning strengths and needs of each student

5. To be aware of students' learning styles so as to adapt one's teaching styles to promote classroom learning

6. To be aware of the role of the community

7. To understand the importance of protocols for communicating with the Elders in the community

8. To be aware of the challenges of working in Indigenous communities

3. Knowing Oneself

Howard (1999) once remarked that "We can't teach what we don't know" and research has confirmed that many non-Aboriginal (dominant culture) teachers have expressed their "limited understanding of cultures other than their own and the possibility that this limitation will negatively affect their students' ability to become successful learners" (Montgomery, 2001, p.4). Similar findings have also been made by Kanu (2011). In his research, he noted that non-Aboriginal (dominant culture) teachers have "repeatedly mentioned their lack of knowledge about Aboriginal content/ topics/ issues, the cultural backgrounds and other characteristics of their Aboriginal students" (p.176). He also added that the teachers' lack of familiarity with Aboriginal approaches to teaching and learning seriously impeded their ability to integrate Aboriginal perspective into the school curriculum because it meant that the teachers "did not have the pedagogical content knowledge (i.e., the useful forms of knowledge representation, analogies, illustrations, and examples from Aboriginal culture) to make the curriculum comprehensible [and accessible] to Aboriginal students" (p.176). This diminished "teacher capacity seriously compromised [the] teachers' ability to act as 'cultural brokers' (Stairs, cited in Aikenhead & Huntley, 1999) negotiating and moving back and forth between the two cultures (Aboriginal culture and the Eurocentric culture of school and curricula), and helping pupils deal with cultural conflicts that might arise; it also undermined teachers' efficacy beliefs vis-á-vis the integration of Aboriginal perspectives" (p.176-177). To address this issue, Montgomery (2001) has called for teachers to critically assess their relationships with their students and their understanding of students' cultures. He has suggested the use of self-assessment as a tool to help them examine "their assumptions and biases in a thoughtful and potentially productive way" (Montgomery, 2001, p.4). Once this is

completed, teachers are required to take the time to "reflect on their responses (what they have learned [or uncovered] about themselves) and make some critical decisions regarding ways to constructively embrace diversity [or cultural differences] and, thus create learning environments that respond to the needs of their students" (Montgomery, 2001, p.5). According to Egbo (2008), the uncovering of contradictions in the teachers' personal and professional beliefs is "critical for [them] since these may contribute to the reinforcement of the status quo" (p.126). According to Price (as cited in Egbo, 2008), "knowing who they are enables teachers to unleash their personal power – the 'spiritual' internal force that every person is born with that enables him or her to know that he or she can indeed create positive change for himself or herself and others" (p.127). Adds Price,

> a teacher's interaction with students depends on how she or he decides to
>
> use this personal power, which can add to, subtract from, divide, or multiply
>
> her or his students' school success. Obviously, teachers who choose to use
>
> their personal power positively will empower their students – especially those
>
> who come from marginalized backgrounds. (p.127)

Self Assessment Or Self Reflection Tool

A review of literature has shown that there are seven areas that need attention for conducting an effective self-reflection. They are "personal history and values, pedagogical beliefs and approaches, knowledge of diversity issues, knowledge of students, assumptions about learning, assumptions about knowledge, and beliefs about society" (Egbo, 2008, p.127). These areas are discussed briefly below.

Personal History and Values: The purpose of this is to examine one's personal history as well as one's "core beliefs that underlie his or her practice" (Egbo, 2008, p.127).

Pedagogical Beliefs and Approaches: The setting of the tone and direction of any school programme are usually based on the educators' beliefs. Their beliefs impact their practices. Put aptly by Ladson-Billings (as cited in Egbo, 2008):

> Teachers who believe that society is fair and just believe that their students are participating on a level playing field and simply have to learn to be better competitors than other students. They also believe in a kind of social Darwinism that supports the survival of the fittest....Teachers who [are] culturally relevant assume that an asymmetrical (even antagonistic) relationship exists between poor students of colour and society. Thus, their vision of their work is one of preparing students to combat inequity by being highly competent and critically conscious. (p.128)

Knowledge of Diversity Issues: Culturally literate teachers are in a better position to respond to the diverse groups of students. To understand diversity, teachers must have both theoretical and practical knowledge of the issues pertaining to diversity (Egbo, 2008, p.128).

Knowledge of Students: This is an "integral part of effective teaching" in any context. However, it is "imperative in contexts of student diversity" (Egbo, 2008, p.128).

Assumptions About Learning: Generally, what a teacher does in the classroom stems from basic assumptions about teaching and learning. In a culturally diverse classroom, it is equally important for teachers to understand how students come to know so that they can match their instructional strategies to their students' learning systems (Gay 2002).

Assumptions About Knowledge: An analysis of the teachers' assumption about knowledge will help them decide how best to make adaptations to the curriculum so that the knowledge taught is culturally relevant to students' prior knowledge and worldviews (Egbo, 2008, p.130).

Beliefs About Society: Teachers' beliefs about how society works will influence their practice. Such beliefs are uncovered by questions such as "'Who controls power, and who should control power and resources in society? Who is disadvantaged in… the society and why are they at the bottom of the social hierarchy? What are my feelings about the social position of [those who are] disadvantaged?'" (Egbo, 2008, p.130). A teacher "who views the working society from a consensus perspective will most likely adopt pedagogical strategies that are different from those teachers who subscribe to interrogative perspectives with the latter being better positioned to adopt transformative educational practices" (Egbo, 2008, p. 130).

Below, is a checklist with suggested questions that teachers can use to conduct their own self-reflection and analysis before going to teach in the various Asian Indigenous communities.

Table 1.0: Checklist For Conducting Critical Self-Reflection And Analysis

Area of Self-Reflection		Suggested Questions
1.	**Personal History**	• In what ways do my personal history and worldviews affect my teaching practices? • What are the privileges or oppressions that come with my identity? • In what ways does my background facilitate or hinder my success in my own society? • What are my personal beliefs about diversity and equity issues? • What are my perceptions of students from different or ethnic groups? With language or dialects different from mine? With special needs? • What are the sources of my perceptions (e.g. friends, relatives, television, movies)? • How do I respond to my students based on these

Area of Self-Reflection		Suggested Questions
		perceptions?
		• Have I experienced others' making assumptions about me based on my membership in a specific group? How did I feel?
2.	**Pedagogical Beliefs & Approaches**	• What is my basic approach to teaching?
		• Does this approach best serve the interests of culturally diverse students? If not, in what ways do I make my instructional programme responsive to the needs of the diverse groups in my classroom?
		• In what ways do I create space for promoting democratic values in my classroom?
		• How often do I reflect on my classroom practices?
		• What kinds of resources do I use in my everyday practice?
3.	**Knowledge Of Diversity Issues**	• How knowledgeable am I about diversity?
		• What does research say about diversity?
		• How can I be culturally literate?
		• What cross-cultural competencies do I have?
		• What do I know about the following groups: a) Indigenous or Aboriginal people, b) People with disabilities?
4.	**Knowledge Of Students**	• How well do I know my students?
		• To what extent do I interact with members of diverse communities?
		• In what ways do I support first language maintenance among my students?
		• In what ways do I collaborate with other educators, family members, and community groups to address the needs of all my students?
5.	**Assumptions About Learning**	• What are my basic assumptions about learning?
		• What are my beliefs about learning styles?
		• To what extent is learning style socially and culturally influenced?
		• Am I meeting the instructional needs of my students?
		• What are my expectations for my students?
		• To what extent am I contributing to the success of all?
		• How relevant are my expectations to the life

Area of Self-Reflection		Suggested Questions
		experiences of all my students?
6.	**Assumptions About Knowledge**	• What are my basic beliefs about schooled knowledge? • What should Indigenous students learn in school? • Who controls this knowledge? • Whose knowledge do Indigenous students currently learn? • To what extent is this knowledge inclusive? • To what extent do I question and engage curricular materials?
7.	**Beliefs About Society**	• What are my beliefs about how society functions? • Who controls power in society and how do I feel about this? • To what extent do I share in that power dynamic? • Do I believe that equity and social justice are marginal or important issues in Indigenous communities? • Who determines educational policies, and how do I feel about this? • What are my beliefs about the link between education and society?

Source: Adapted from Egbo (2008) and Bromley (as cited in Montgomery, 2001).

Pause & Reflect

What have you uncovered about yourself from the above self-assessment or reflection that will influence how you teach or relate to Indigenous students?

What questions does the self-assessment or reflection raise for you?

"Reflective practice serves to remind educators that the "roots of our profession lie in service to people rather than to systems. It heralds renewal, reclamation, and change" (Wellington, 1991, p.5).

What is your response to Wellington's quote?

Suggested Readings :

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A Service To And Of

4. Background Information

4.1 Definition of Indigenous People

In different countries, Indigenous people may be referred to as Indigenous ethnic minorities,"

"aboriginals," "hill tribes," "minority nationalities," "scheduled tribes," or "tribal groups"

(The World Bank, 2005, para. 3).

To date, there has been no universal agreement on the definition of Indigenous people. This

is because individual Indigenous communities reflect tremendous diversity in their cultures,

histories and current circumstances. In different countries in Asia, the relationships between

Indigenous peoples and the dominant or mainstream groups of society vary. Despite the

diversity, there are several definitions which are widely accepted as guiding principles for the

identification of Indigenous peoples. For the World Bank, the term "Indigenous people" is

used in a "generic sense to refer to a distinct, vulnerable, social and cultural group possessing

the following characteristics in varying degrees:

(a) self-identification as members of a distinct Indigenous cultural group and recognition of
     this identity by others;

(b) collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories in the
     project area and to the natural resources in these habitats and territories

(c) customary cultural, economic, social, or political institutions that are separate from those
     of the dominant society and culture; and

(d) an Indigenous language, often different from the official language of the country or
     region" (The World Bank, 2005, para. 3-4).

As for the United Nations, it has used the working definition given by Jose R. Martinez

Cobo, the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and

Protection of Minorities. Considered as "one of the most cited descriptions" (SOCHUM, 2011, p.9) of the concept of the Indigenous, Cobo, defines it as follows:

"Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.

This historical continuity may consist of the continuation, for an extended period reaching into the present of one or more of the following factors:

a) Occupation of ancestral lands, or at least of part of them;

b) Common ancestry with the original occupants of these lands;

c) Culture in general, or in specific manifestations (such as religion, living under a tribal system, membership of an Indigenous community, dress, means of livelihood, lifestyle, etc.);

d) Language (whether used as the only language, as the mother-tongue, as the habitual means of communication at home or in the family, or as the main, preferred, habitual, general or normal language);

e) Residence on certain parts of the country, or in certain regions of the world;

f) Other relevant factors.

On an individual basis, an Indigenous person is one who belongs to these Indigenous populations through self-identification as Indigenous (group consciousness) and is

recognized and accepted by these populations as one of its members (acceptance by the group).

This preserves for these communities the sovereign right and power to decide who belongs to them, without external interference." (Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2004, p.2)

Even with this, the definition of Indigenous peoples has been left largely to the jurisdiction of the respective member nations. According to the United Nations (2006), some countries preferred to use other terms such as tribes, first peoples / nations, Aboriginals, ethnic groups, *adivasi, janajati.* Occupational and geographical terms like hunter-gatherers, nomads, peasants, hill people also exist and these can be used interchangeably with "Indigenous peoples" for all practical purposes (p.2). In many cases, the term "Indigenous" has negative connotations. As a result of this, some people have chosen not to reveal or define their origin. Whatever their choice may be, others are encouraged to respect it.

4.2 The Indigenous People of Asia

The largest and most diverse group of Indigenous populations can be found in Asia. It is estimated that as many as 260 million Indigenous people live in the South, Southeast and East Asia (SOCHUM, 2011, p.4-5). In general, the Indigenous people of Asia find the term "Indigenous" foreign to them as they cannot translate it into their own language. Some governments in Southeast Asia have collectively referred to them as "ethnic minorities", "hill tribes", "native people". But they still prefer to use the names that their ancestors have given to them (Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, 2010, p.2).

Typically, the Indigenous people live in rural villages. Their societies tend to be based on agriculture, gathering or hunting. There are some who are nomadic. Generally, they possess distinct language, culture, customary laws and social and political institutions and live alongside dominant people who wield both political and economic powers in their respective countries. On several occasions, they have been forced to leave their lands and move to other countries like Thailand, Vietnam or Laos due to political conflicts. In these nations, they strive to maintain their way of life, traditions and practices and they see themselves as Indigenous rather than natives of the land (Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, 2010, p.2).

While the Indigenous people of Asia may differ greatly from each other, they still have some commonalities. Amongst them are strong cultural attachment to and the dependence on the land, forests, sea or natural resources for their livelihood. Their way of life, spirituality and identity is very much attached to their land. Any displacement from their land or territories threatens not only their livelihood but also their identity and their existence.

As Indigenous people, they have collective rights that are recognized by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007. Amongst them are "the right to self-determination" (Article 3), the right to their "lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired" (Article 25 and 26), the "right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture" (Article 8) and the "right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, the Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining

health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions" (Article 23).

4.3 Their Concerns

There are several and specific issues involving the Indigenous peoples and they include the following:

Non-recognition as Indigenous Peoples

After the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the UN General Assembly, several Asian governments reiterated their reservation with regards to the application of the concept of Indigenous Peoples to their respective countries due to the lack of a formal definition of the term "Indigenous people". Some governments have even refused to recognize the validity and application of the concept in their countries. As a result of this, the Indigenous people in these nations felt that they have been denied protection against the discrimination and injustices that they are faced with. While many Asian nations no longer have any explicit assimilation policy, some of the government's programs such as compulsory education, relocation or infrastructure programmes that are meant to develop and benefit their communities, have inevitably led to the loss of their culture and identity.

In Thailand for instance, nearly half of the Indigenous population does not have citizenship because they do not have adequate documents such as birth registers to produce as evidence. As a result of this, they become very vulnerable to human rights violations (Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, 2010, p.6).

Violations Of Land, Territories and Resources

The concept of land and territories has many dimensions that are vital to Indigenous peoples' collective identity. Other than historical connection, they have deep affinity to their land and territories which they have controlled and managed in their own sustainable ways. The land is also their source of life. Hence, they tenaciously fight for their rights over their land and territories. As many of the Indigenous peoples also occupy areas that are extremely rich in natural resources, they have inevitably become targets of resource extraction and development programs by both governments and multinational companies. In the name of modernization, progress and development, projects have been implemented without prior consultation and consent of the Indigenous people. This has led to massive displacement of the Indigenous communities and their loss of their livelihood, culture and identity. Evidences of this can be seen in Asian nations such as Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia. Below are two extracts taken from "ASEAN Indigenous People" (2010) that illustrate the extent of violation:

"In Cambodia, Economic Land Concessions (ELCs) for commercial plantations such as rubber, cassava, [and] corn for biofuel have been granted on Indigenous communities' lands. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), as of May 2010, ELCs have been given to 85 companies covering a total land area of 956,690 hectares located in 16 provinces. There are many reported cases of forced eviction of Indigenous communities as a result of the granting of ELCs. The number of concessions for mining is also increasing. Since 1996, Indigenous Peoples in Ratanakiri, Mondulkiri and Stung Treng provinces have experienced devastating social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts from

hydropower projects being built and operated upstream on the Sesan, Srepok and Sekong rivers in Vietnam and Lao PDR" (p.8).

"In the Mekong Region, the implementation of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Program involving six countries – Cambodia, China (specifically Yunnan and Guangxi provinces), Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam – has contributed to the rapid economic growth in most of these countries but has negatively impacted Indigenous communities. The project is funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and [was] started in 1992 with an ambitious vision of integrating the six countries into a single borderless economy. It also aims to enhance poverty alleviation, the protection of the environment, sustainability and human resources. The GMS Program [has] resulted in the building of roads, bridges, dams, airports, ports, hotels and casinos across the region and has brought about international agreements on trade, energy, tourism and environment between the various Mekong governments. While it has undoubtedly contributed to the economic growth, it has also led to increased socio-economic inequality, deforestation, decline in health of rivers, and loss of biodiversity. As the Participatory Poverty Assessment of the ADB for Laos PDR in 2006 has shown, in many rural areas, the poor are generally either the same or worse off than before. The conclusion drawn in the poverty assessment report for Laos very much apply to Indigenous areas elsewhere in the GMS program area as well as the ASEAN region in general: The survey showed 'that poor villagers increasingly experience difficulty in providing food for their families. Natural resources were said to be seriously depleted in almost all locations and many people are casting aside traditional religious values and aesthetic appreciation of natural systems in a competition for the remaining forest products and wildlife. Cultural checks and balances are being replaced by monetarily grounded

attitudes of 'first come first serve' and 'live for today'. Ecologically sound livelihoods are being replaced by ecologically destructive ones that involve a high degree of risk. Subsistence economies are being replaced by economies of survival'" (p.9-10).

Non-Recognition of Indigenous Traditional Livelihood Practices

Amongst the many traditional economic practices, shifting cultivation, which is one of the most common forms of land use among Indigenous peoples in the entire Southeast Asian region, has come under increasing pressure by restrictive government policies. Colonial and post-colonial governments in Southeast Asia have for more than a century devised policies and laws that seek to eradicate shifting cultivation. Many arguments have been put forward against shifting cultivation - an agricultural system in which plots of land are cultivated temporarily and then abandoned when the soil loses its fertility. Amongst the most common ones are that it is both an economically inefficient and ecologically harmful practice.

It has been cited that in Laos, "the eradication of shifting cultivation for forest conservation has become one of the justifications for the government's large-scale resettlement program which is severely affecting Indigenous communities" (Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, 2010, p.10). In other countries, Indigenous farmers are fined or arrested for practicing shifting cultivation. In 2008, two Karen farmers were imprisoned for preparing their shifting cultivation fields. While their cases have been dismissed this year, both farmers experienced serious traumatization and like other Indigenous shifting cultivators, they live in constant fear of reprisals from the authorities while they continue pursuing their traditional livelihood practice (Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, 2010, p.10).

Migration and Forced Resettlement

Both state repression and violent conflicts have resulted in migration. Since the 19th and 20th century, Indigenous peoples from China and Myanmar have abandoned their villages respectively to seek for peace and security in their neighbouring countries.

Extreme poverty is another reason for migration among the Indigenous peoples. They either move to another part of the country or abroad. Due to the increasing scarcity of land and resources, many have been forced to migrate to urban centers and take up menial jobs because of their lack of education, language and skills. Others, especially those from the Philippines and Thailand, have opted for employment overseas to augment income to support their families. As a result of migration, their communities back home experience a lack of manpower. Due to this, both the elderly and the children are not sufficiently cared for.

In addition to these, many also are forced to resettle. In many Asian countries, forced resettlement of Indigenous communities is occurring in conjunction with large infrastructure programs. In Laos for instance, the government has launched a comprehensive, country-wide resettlement program which has affected many Indigenous people. Its aims is to eradicate shifting cultivation and the production of opium, and provide the resettled people with better access to services and market as well as improve their standard of living, health, food productivity and food security. Studies however have shown that the resettlement programs have led to increased poverty, malnutrition, a higher mortality rate and a general deterioration in the health of affected villagers. In addition to these, there has also been reports of negative effects on the environment (Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, 2010, p.11–12).

Violations Of The Rights Of Indigenous Women

Both women and children are most vulnerable to their society and they continue to have their rights violated by the State and communities. Violence such as bride kidnapping, forced marriages and domestic violence against Indigenous women still exist in some Indigenous communities. In the rural areas, women are hit the hardest by poverty compared to the men as the former are expected to provide for the family.

Pause & Reflect

What implications do the above issues have on classroom teaching and learning?

Suggested Readings :

- Asian Indigenous People General Resources. Retrieved from
  http://www.archaeolink.com/asian_Indigenous_people_asia_soc.htm

- Indigenous People – The World Bank Group. Retrieved from
  htttttp://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIAL
  DEVELOPMENT/EXTINDPEOPLE/0,menuPK:407808~pagePK:149018~
  piPK:149093~theSitePK:407802,00.html

- International Labour Organization (2011). Indigenous and tribal people. Retrieved from
  http://www.ilo.org/Indigenous/lang--en/index.htm

- International Labour Standards Department. (2009). Indigenous and tribal peoples'
  rights in practice. Retrieved from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_
  norm/---normes/documents/publication/wcms_106474.pfd

- Specific government websites

- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Retrieved from
  http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/drip.html

- United Nations Human Rights. Website : http://www.un.org/en/rights/index.shtml

5. Different Worldview

Like mainstream students, Indigenous students vary in terms of their academic and intellectual abilities. However, regardless of whether they are gifted, bright, average or struggling, they come to the classroom with histories and worldviews that are unique. The way they perceive and understand the world is indeed very different from us or their counterparts who are studying in the mainstream schools. In "Our Words, Our Ways" (2005), five common aboriginal worldviews have been identified. They are "a holistic perspective, the interconnectedness of all living things, connection to the land and community, the dynamic nature of the world and strength in "power with" (p.14).

A Holistic Perspective

Although Western education focuses on verbal thinking and uses an analytical approach to learning, Aboriginal worldviews, on the other hand, "address the whole person that encompasses their mental, physical, emotional and spiritual capabilities in relation to all living things" (Alberta Education, 2005,p.14).

Aboriginal worldviews assume that all forms are interconnected and the survival of each life form is dependent on the survival of all others. Moreover, they also acknowledge that there is a knowable spiritual realm and an unseen force (Alberta Education, 2005). This unseen force or immanence is known to "give existence and forms…It is a mysterious force that connects the totality of existence – the forms, energies, or concepts that constitute the outer and inner world" (Ermine, 1995, p.103). According to Bohm (1980), this way of looking at the totality can be described as "undivided wholeness in flowing movement" (p.11).

Aboriginal worldviews also see a "unified vision, rather than an artificial fragmentation of concepts. These worldviews assert that all life is sacred and that all life forms are connected. Humans are neither above nor below others in the circle of life. Everything that exists in the circle is one unity, one heart" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.15).

Western education on the other hand often separates learning into discrete subject areas. It also views the world objectively. Ermine (1995) states that in "viewing the world objectively, Western science has habitually fragmented and measured the external space in an attempt to understand it in all its complexity" (p.103). The fragmentation of the universe has thus resulted in a "fragmentary self-world view" (Bohn, 1980, p.11). An Aboriginal perspective however takes an integrated approach. For instance, in making a star quilt in an art class, the teaching of geometry can be brought in and a quilt maker from the community can be invited to teach the class about quilt making, thereby allowing the class to learn cultural teachings regarding the quilt and the star pattern. As quilt making is regarded as a communal experience, this meeting with a member of the community will also provide the class with an opportunity to learn about the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with those in their own community (Alberta Education, 2005, p.15).

The Interconnectedness Of All Living Things

Aboriginal worldviews acknowledge the interconnectedness of all living things and the spirit that exists within each. Matters like spirituality, personal health, community health and the health of the environment are understood to be interrelated (Alberta Education, 2005, p.16).

For Aboriginals in well-functioning communities before the devastating effects of colonization, all individuals assumed responsibility for themselves. They did not operate in

isolation. Instead, they related to one another. Be it in a community or group, each individual was expected to participate and contribute. However, cooperation and sharing were vital (Alberta Education, 2005, p.16). In the Western education system however, the spirit of individualism and competition are encouraged. According to MacIvor's (1995) article in "First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds", competition and individualism may be an "affront to cooperation and social cohesion" (p.80).

Connection To The Land and Community

The Aboriginals have a sacred relationship with the land. To them, the well-being of the Earth is critical for survival. "Growing out of this connection to the Earth, Aboriginal worldviews encompass a fluid sense of time and the cyclical nature of change - day and night, the seasons, life and death" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.17). For Western society however, time is seen in a linear manner and is normally cut up into segments (Harris, 2000, p.3).

Additionally, by making a connection to Earth, the Aboriginals also learn about the importance of place and belonging. For them, the Earth "provides the land on which people build communities - land and community dictate a way of life" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.16-17). According to Harris (2000), there is a degree of relatedness between "places, people, kinship and religious belief and expression" (p.3). This however contrasts the Western worldview which compartmentalizes all things. Hence, topics like land, kinship and spirituality are treated as separate entities (Harris, 2000, p.3).

The Dynamic Nature Of The World

Aboriginal cultures are generally seen to be "dynamic, adaptive and adapting" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.17) and are not confined to the past. In Aboriginal worldviews,

everything that spans from people, relationships to situations is seen as dynamic. Individuals undergo change, and Aboriginal cultures evolve and adapt accordingly. In the light of this, learning is thus recognized as a "creative process from which new structures, forms and practices evolve" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.17).

Strength In "Power With"

In Aboriginal cultures, worldviews reflect "power with," rather than "power over" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.18). A circle is the image used to illustrate this concept. Within the circle, all living things are viewed as having equal status. "Power with" is a dialogue that involves everyone standing on the ground, face to face. The image for "power over" is a pyramid. At its pinnacle, are those who wield the greatest power. In contrast, "power over" is a hierarchy. Here, there are a few who stand above the many (Alberta Education, 2005, p.18). This generally typifies many of the Western societies today and Harris (2004) explains that the "Westerners want hierarchical bureaucracies and [they] see governing as the power to make laws and have them obeyed" (p.4). Unlike Western societies, Aboriginal societies are organized by "religious or ritual authority and by affections and obligations of kinship; authority is nurturance, to 'look after' in all aspects of living" (Harris, 2000, p.4).

Other than the above five, there are other differences and Harris (2000) has highlighted the following :

Religion vs Positivist Thinking

In Aboriginal worldview, there is no separation between the sacred and the secular. Everything is seen to be alive and have spiritual connotations. This however contrasts the Western worldview where things are seen through positivist thinking. In the positivist view

of the world, science is seen as "the way to get at truth" (Trochim, 2006, para. 4). The world and the universe are deterministic – "they operated by laws of cause and effect that we could discern if we applied the unique approach of the scientific method" (Trochim, 2006, para. 4). Deductive reasoning is used to postulate theories that can be tested. If the theories do not fit the facts well, revision can be made to better predict the reality. The positivist also believes in empiricism – "the idea that observation and measurement was the core of the scientific endeavor. The key approach of the scientific method is the experiment, the attempt to discern natural laws through direct manipulation and observation" (Trochim, 2006, para. 4).

Being vs Doing

The Aboriginal worldview emphasizes "being rather than doing; maintaining rather than developing, changing, making or storing. The Aboriginal way is to fit into what is happening, rather than to make things happen; learning must be experiencing, participating, not just cognition" (Harris, 2000, p.3). The Westerners however, stress on doing and purposeful behavior.

Contrasting Views Of Work And Economics

According to Harris (2000), "Western perceptions of time, evolution and the value of progress have turned into a moral imperative to work - to make a better future for oneself and others" (p.3). The Aboriginals on the other hand believe that a perfectly acceptable social order is already present and there is therefore no need for further evolution or progress. For them, "work is only a means to social or religious ends and never in itself a moral matter or matter of identity" (p.4) and participation is deemed more important than productivity (Harris, 2000, p.4).

As non-Aboriginal (dominant culture) teachers, it is important to recognize that there is "always other ways of interpreting the world. Different ways of interpreting the world are manifested through different cultures, which are often in opposition to one another" (Bear, 2009, p.77). As a result of this, teachers are strongly encouraged to get acquainted with the worldviews of the Aboriginal or Indigenous communities that they serve in as worldviews can differ from one Aboriginal group to the next.

Pause & Reflect

Do all your students who you are working with hold similar worldviews? If no, what worldviews do they embrace? List some examples.

What strategies would help to foster the different Aboriginal or Indigenous perspectives in the classroom?

What implications do the differences between Western and Indigenous worldviews have on teaching and learning?

Suggested Readings :

Battiste, M. & Barman, J. (Eds.). (1995). *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Battiste, M. (2002, October). *Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy in First Nations education a literature review with recommendations*. Paper presented to National Working Group on Education and Minister of Indian Affairs, Ottawa. Ontario. Retrieved from http://www.yorku.ca/hdrnet/images/uploaded/Battiste_review.pdf

Battiste, M. (Ed.). (2009). *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Harris, S. (1990). *Two way aboriginal schooling: Education and cultural survival*. Canberra : Aboriginal Studies Press.

6. The Indigenous Student

6.1 Their Family, Culture & Language

According to the holistic worldviews of Indigenous communities, a teacher "is teaching not only the child who comes to school but also the child who is a member of a family, a community and a culture" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.30). In the light of this, a teacher, who is keen to know about his or her students, needs to be better acquainted with the students' family, culture and language.

Family

Generally, most Indigenous children will start their learning at home. They can either be taught by their parents, grandparents, uncles or aunties and like all mainstream students, their family life can affect their experiences in school. While each family may differ from one another, there are some common identifiable threads that may run through the family experiences of many students. Being aware of these will certainly help teachers to better understand the lives of their students under their respective charge:

- Many students will come from a large extended family background. "Their "close" relatives may constitute people who in other cultures may be considered "distant" relatives" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.31).

- Other than the students' parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, older siblings can be involved with the school.

- As family events and gatherings are deemed very important, students may not attend school for several days as they are expected to attend these events or gatherings.

- Indigenous families usually prefer to use a nondirective approach to guide their children. This is linked to their worldviews where the individual's decision is to be respected. This non-interference may sometimes be perceived by non-natives for a lack of concern

or permissiveness. But, this is a "deliberate parenting approach that expects children to mature and determine their own actions from an early age. Non-interference also reflects a preference for experiential learning" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.31).

- Older children may occasionally be required to assist at home and take care of their younger siblings thus affecting their ability to complete and submit assignments on time and their participation in co-curricular activities held after school hours.

- Oral traditions are a strong part of Indigenous culture. As a result of this, students have very little reading materials at home and may view reading as unimportant to literacy development (Alberta Education, 2005, p.32).

Cultural Identity

In Indigenous communities, it is very common for people to ask other people who they are, who their family is and where they come from. By answering these questions, a person's language, traditions and customs are often revealed. Often, asking such questions help to establish a relationship. In order to find out more about the students' background, teachers are also encouraged to initiate conversations with their students. They can always take the first step to share stories and information about themselves. This will provide the students with a model which they can follow when they are later called upon to talk about themselves and their cultures. Usually, most students prefer to share on a one-to-one basis rather than to share in a group (Alberta Education, 2005, p.32). In initiating a conversation, the following questions can be considered:

- "How do the students perceive themselves?

- Do the students or their family members speak their native language?

- How much do students know about their own history and cultural background?

- How do they view their families and community?

- What special events or ceremonies are being observed by their communities (Alberta Education, 2005, p.33)?"

These questions should provide teachers with a good insight into the lives of their respective students in class.

Language

For the Indigenous people, their language shapes the way they think. It is also their way of knowing and their culture. Generally, "language patterns are deeply woven into the lives of the Indigenous students, their families and their communities. In fact, language patterns tend to endure for three generations" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.34). For most Asian Indigenous students, their Indigenous language will often be their first language. Hence, when they are required to learn the English Language, it is not surprising to find them trying to constantly translate their thoughts. As the English Language can appear to be very linear and lacking in context to most Indigenous students, it is thus important to give them enough time to both think and articulate their thoughts. It has been noted that European people usually take less than 2 seconds to respond. But this is not so for the Indigenous people who need about 4 – 5 seconds. As a result of this, Indigenous students may find it relatively difficult to partake in class discussions with their mainstream counterparts as the latter will typically jump into the conversation as soon as the previous speaker has finished. To accommodate the learning needs of Indigenous students, teachers are strongly encouraged to increase the "wait time" - the thinking time they give to their students after asking a question and before expecting a response (Alberta Education, 2005, p.31).

Additionally, according to Kanu (2011), due to cultural differences in patterns of oral interactions, "classroom communication by teachers should offer clarity – preferably in clear,

directive language – about what is required (the product) from Aboriginal students in the classroom" (p.86). For instance, if teachers require students to read Chapter 4 of a textbook for a test, the students should be told so directly rather than indirectly as research has shown that some Aboriginal students may not always understand what is required or expected if the teachers speak to them using inferential language (Kanu, 2011, p.74).

Pause & Reflect

How might the knowledge about the students' family, culture and language be helpful to the teacher?

What other approaches can be used to obtain more information about the students' background?

6.2 Their Needs

To assess students' needs, two models are recommended. They are the Positive Youth Development approach and Maslow's hierarchy of needs approach.

Positive Youth Development Model

It is always good for a teacher to work from students' strengths. Once identified, they can be built on. Positive models, like the Positive Youth Development approach (Seita & Brendtro 2002), can be used to help identify the ways in which students cope successfully in different situations as well as the range of strengths that the students have but may not exhibit in a normal classroom setting (Alberta Education, 2005, p.34).

Aimed to create environments where students can grow and thrive, the Positive Youth Development approach uses the principles of connections, continuity, dignity and opportunity as a framework for assessment that emphasizes strengths. Extracted from "Our

Words, Our Ways" (2005), below are the guiding questions that can be asked in relation to the 4 principles:

Connections

- "Who are the significant people in a student's life?
- What are the student's relationships with family, friends and community?
- Who does the student rely on for support?
- What people strengths does the student have?

Continuity

- What life challenges does the student face?
- How is the student coping with these challenges?
- What difficulties has the student overcome?
- How does the student ask for help with these challenges?
- Who does the student ask for help?
- How can the student be helped with these life challenges?

Dignity

- How does the student feel about himself or herself?
- What are the student's hopes and dreams?
- Does the student feel in control of his or her life?
- How does the student treat others?
- How can the student be supported in developing self-respect and strength?

Opportunity

How can the student be supported in developing:

- a sense of belonging
- a sense of mastery
- a sense of responsibility and independence
- a sense of sharing, generosity and compassion" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.36)?

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Commonly used in the educational field, the key aspect of Maslow's model is the hierarchical nature of the needs. According to Maslow, a child's lower level or basic needs must be met first before he or she can move on to higher level forms of needs. In all, Maslow has identified 5 types of needs required to reach an individual's full potential, described as "self-actualization". They are as follow:

Physiological needs: They are the very basic needs and they have to do with the maintenance of the human body.

Safety needs: They are also basic needs and they consist of physical safety, which is freedom from physical harm and psychological safety.

Belonging needs: Humans need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance and this usually comes from being part of a large social group. They need to love and to be loved. In the absence of these elements, humans become susceptible to loneliness, social anxiety and clinical depression.

Esteem needs: All humans have a need to be respected and to have self-esteem and self-respect. Maslow noted two versions of esteem needs: a lower one and a higher one. The lower one entails the need for respect of others, the need for status, recognition, fame, prestige, and attention. The other entails the need for self-respect, the need for strength, competence, mastery, self-confidence, independence and freedom. Between the two, the latter is ranked higher as it rests more on inner competence acquired through experience. Deprivation of these needs can lead to an inferiority complex, weakness and helplessness.

Self-actualization needs: It simply means to become what you are capable of becoming (Changing Minds, 2011, para. 3).

Conversing with the students will usually enable teachers to assess where their students are on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Knowing where they are will allow teachers to better customize their lessons to meet the needs of their students.

Figure 1.0: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source : http://changingminds.org/explanations/needs/maslow.htm

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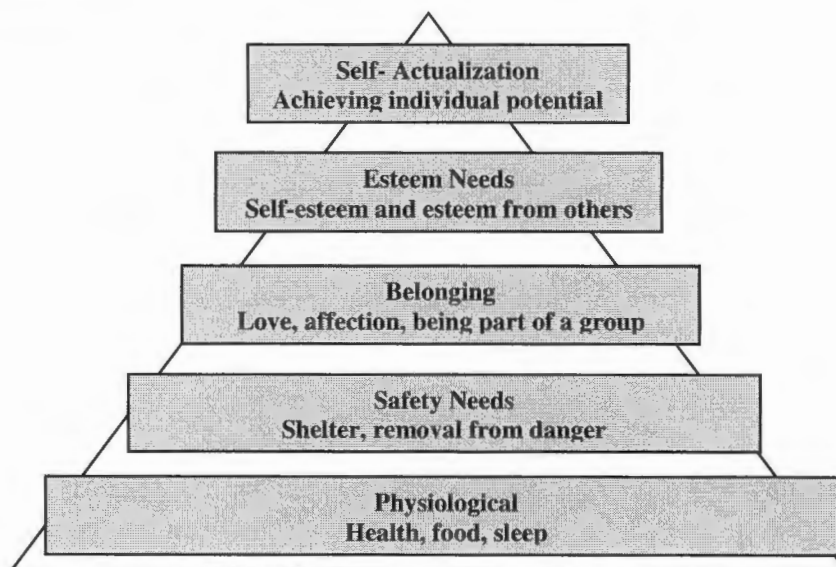
Pause & Reflect

What are some other ways of determining the students' needs and strengths?

How can students' strengths enhance their learning in the classroom?

What are some questions that can be asked for each of Maslow's hierarchy of needs?

6.3 Their Learning Styles

There is generally no unique Aboriginal learning style. According to Hughes and More (1997), there are however some recurrent learning styles (Section 3.2, para. 9). They are:

a. Learning through observation and imitation rather than verbal instruction

According to Hughes and More (1997), "one of the consistent findings is that much

Aboriginal learning is by observation and imitation, rather than through verbal

instruction" (Hughes & More, 1997, Section 5.1.1a). Most ethnographic accounts of

observation and imitation learning in traditional settings have suggested that the learner

"does not attempt to imitate until he or she is fairly certain that the imitation will be done

correctly" (Section 5.1.1a). According to Stairs (1995), "native learners develop concepts

and skills by repeating tasks in many different situations, such as hunting under varying

conditions of weather and animal movement and with various types of equipment"

(p.141). American Indian /Alaska Native students are seen to learn in this manner.

According to Pewewardy (2002), Indian /Alaska Native students learn by observing their

parents or elders. Generally, the children watch the skills that are demonstrated to them first

before imitating the skills (p.37).

b. The group is more important that the individual

This priority has an effect in two ways. First, the purpose of learning for many traditional

Aboriginal people, be they Australian Aboriginals, Inuits or American Indians, is to

primarily benefit the group and not the individual. Second, learning as a group process

seems to be more important than learning as an individual process. For the Aboriginals,

"knowledge is a shared resource acquired co-operatively" (Stairs, 1995, p.142).

c. Holistic (global) learning

Aboriginal learning is often holistic. That is, the learner concentrates on understanding

the overall concept or task before getting down to the details (Hughes & More, 1997,

Section 5.1.1, para. 9). Their observation is confirmed by Pewewardy (2002) who also

noted that "American Indian/Alaska Native students learn best when holistic strategies are

employed. They learn best when they are presented first with the big idea as they "readily

see the overall picture before they concern themselves with details" (para. 53). This

information is particularly of importance to teachers who prefer to present concepts step-by-step from small details. For the Aboriginal students, the teacher should be more concerned with whole emerging patterns. Using stories, parables, pictures, imitations, music, and poetry will help facilitate their learning (Pewewardy, 2002, para. 53).

d. Visual learning

Many Aboriginal learners are visual learners. As visual learners, they learn best when they are visually shown the materials they are expected to master. So, providing them with a wide variety of visual aids such as graphs, films, demonstrations, and pictures will certainly facilitate their learning (Pewewardy, 2002, para. 23).

e. Contextual learning

Aboriginal cultural groups learn best within specific contexts. Learning in a non-Aboriginal setting like the school for instance is deemed as decontextualized, that is, the learning is not usually done in its 'real life' context (Hughes & More, 1997, Section 5.1.1, para. 16).

f. Spontaneous learning

Spontaneous learning is characteristic of Aboriginal learning (Andrews & Hughes, 1988) and this contrasts with the structured learning that is more frequently seen in non-Aboriginal cultures (Hughes & More, 1997, Section 5.1.1, para. 18).

As research is "still inconclusive about some claims relating to specific or predominant Aboriginal cultural ways of learning" (Kanu, 2011, p. 89), teachers are therefore encouraged to discern the different learning styles that their Indigenous students may demonstrate in their classroom so that they can adapt their instructional strategies to match their student learning styles (Gay, 2002, 2010).

Pause & Reflect

What might some of the learning styles of the Aboriginal students in your classroom be?

Compare and contrast the learning styles of aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

How can mastery learning be promoted among the Aboriginal students? Give four examples of techniques that can be used to promote mastery learning in an Aboriginal classroom.

What changes would you have to make to your teaching style so as to accommodate the learning styles of Aboriginal students?

Suggested Readings :

Battiste, M. & Barman, J. (Eds.). (1995). *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Kleinfeld, J. (1994). *Learning styles and culture*. Retrieved from http://www.judithkleinfeld.com/ar_learningstyles.html

Hughes, P. & More, A.J. (1997). *Aboriginal ways of learning and learning styles*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane, Australia. Abstract retrieved from http://www.aare.edu.au/97pap/hughp518.htm

Pewewardy, C. (2002). Learning styles of American Indian / Alaska native students: A review of the literature and implications for practice. *Journal of American Indian Education, 41*(3), 25-56. Abstract retrieved from http://jaie.asu.edu/v41/index.html

Stairs, A. (1988b). Native models for learning (A reply to Lauren Resnick). *Educational Researcher, 17*(6), 4-6.

Teaching And Learning

7. The Curriculum

Generally, a curriculum includes "all the learning experiences a student is exposed to by the school. It includes what is to be taught, how it is to be taught, by whom it is taught, where it is taught, why it is taught and [how] teachers, parents and students can know that learning has been accomplished" (Harris, 1990, p.137).

The 'what' of the curriculum includes the contents or facts and the "control of those processes which may be an integral part of the knowledge, or whose procedures must be controlled in order for the knowledge to be applied in real life outside school" (Harris, 1990, p.137). The 'how' of the curriculum includes all the teaching pedagogies and contexts which must be used to enable students to learn most effectively. The 'who', 'when' and 'why' influence the curriculum "in both the overt and covert ways and are especially powerful in terms of the hidden curriculum" (Harris, 1990, p.137). Finally, there are evaluations and assessments involved. These are essential, but their purposes are to provide learners, teachers and parents with a sense of accomplishment, and to help teachers plan their lessons effectively. Evaluation should "locate the learning difficulties in the school context and teaching methodology rather than in the students" (Harris, 1990, p.137).

7.1 Aboriginal Content

Aboriginal content can occur in two ways. The first is as specific programs of study on Aboriginal content. These programs are specifically designed to focus on Aboriginal peoples, cultures, worldviews and contemporary issues and may start from kindergarten and continue until Grade 12 in countries like Canada. The second is via infusion of Aboriginal content into existing programs of study. It is not to be seen as an add-on but as an "integral, embedded and ongoing aspect of classroom experience" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.53). This inclusive

model usually includes infusion of Aboriginal perspectives across the subject areas at all grade levels. It also incorporates a holistic or integrated approach, "encourages observation, is experiential, is based in community resources and considers multiple perspectives" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.56).

Holistic Approach

Successful infusion encourages curriculum crossovers. For instance, using Aboriginal legends to introduce the concept of planet formation could be a part of a Science lesson while the discussion of the same legend could be a part of the language arts lesson. Using the same legend, students could also be made to draw the planets in the universe for their art lesson and be taught about geometric circles in their Mathematics lesson (Alberta Education, 2005, p.56).

Fogarty's (1991) webbed model can be used to help achieve this approach. In this model, a fertile theme is usually used to integrate the subject matter. When the theme is selected, it is used as an overlay to the different subjects. (Fogarty, 1991, p.63-64).

Figure 2.0 : Forgarty's webbed model
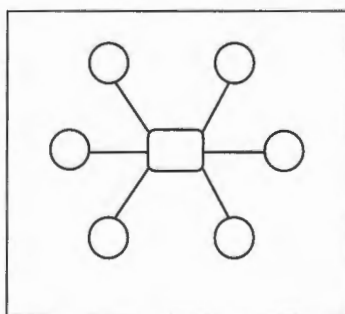
Source : http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_199110_fogarty.pdf

Observation

When students learn from modeling and demonstration, they observe others (experts) performing a task or solving a problem. According to Kanu (2011), the student watches the expert and the process at stake. If the processes are not easily observable by the students, the expert "explicates the decision processes and strategies underlying the problem-solving activities and gives an explanation of when and why particular strategies are useful" (p.66). The students reflect on the learning process "by rehearsing the task mentally and by so doing refine their initial representation (Bandura as cited by Kanu, 2011, p.6). This is considered to be effective because the emphasis in observational learning "lies in the rationale behind it as well as the procedure itself" (Kanu, 2011, p.66). According to Kanu (2011), there is a "close link between learning by watching and doing and some traditional child-rearing practices that have survived in many Aboriginal families" (p.67).

Experiential

Students learn by being hands-on. In other words, they learn by doing things. For example, they might be asked to create art and text styled on the works of an Aboriginal artist to explore and express family and community relationships (Alberta Education, 2005, p.56).

Based in the Community's Resources

Here, elders, parents, liaisons and community leaders can be tapped on as they bring a variety of traditions - oral, written, visual to complement classroom teachings. For example, inviting a guest speaker such as an Aboriginal lawyer to a social studies class to talk about his or her work in restorative justice will help to enhance learning (Alberta Education, 2005, p.56).

Considers Multiple Perspectives

The process of infusing Aboriginal content does not seek to polarize views. Instead, it reflects a "this AND that" point of view. In short, many viewpoints are to be considered (Alberta Education, 2005, p.56).

7.2 Assessments

Harris (1990) has suggested two kinds of assessments. The first is the out of school activities which simply involve the degree of parental approval in what is happening and this will be ascertained by the school council. The second is similar to those being used currently by the Western culture domain (p.141). At present, the main focus is on assessment for learning, where assessment is based on a variety of information sources such as students' portfolios and teacher's observation checklist. Included in this form of assessment is the use of rubrics which help to clarify tasks and set expectations for the students.

7.3 Resources

Ideally, the resources selected should fit the specific learning objectives and be culturally appropriate. Morrison (n.d.) states that the resources selected should also be:

a. Purposeful   - helps to achieve the set objectives

b. Concrete   - offers real and direct experiences

c. Challenging   - motivating, suited to age level & stimulating

d. Diverse   - catering to varied interests and varied learning styles

e. Clearly understood   - in both purpose and use

f. Carefully thought through and evaluated (p.52).

Pause & Reflect

What are some advantages of adopting a holistic or integrated approach?

What are some forms of assessment that can be used to assess students' learning?

What other criteria should be considered for the selection of teaching resources?

Suggested Readings :

Crouse, K., Everall, M. & Henderson, C. (1983). *The curriculum connection: A teacher's guide to curriculum design*. Toronto, Ontario: Professional Development Committee, O.S.S.T.F.

First Nations Steering Committee. (2011). *Publications*. Retrieved from http://www.fnesc.ca/publications/index.php

Fogarty, R. (1991). Ten ways to integrate curriculum. *Educational Leadership*, *49* (2), 61-65.

Kanu, Y. (2011). *Integrating aboriginal perspectives into the school curriculum: Purposes, possibilities, and challenges*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Participation

8. Classroom Setting & Instructional Strategies

A classroom is not just a room or a place for students to be. It should be an environment created by both the teacher and students together as a warm, safe, comfortable, inclusive and an inviting place. Mainstream students may also thrive in a classroom environment of this nature but Indigenous students need, upon entering a classroom, to sense "a foundation of recognition and respect - cultural continuity" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.41). In such an inclusive environment, they may be better prepared to participate in classroom learning activities, take more ownership for their own learning, and face and overcome challenges that may lie ahead (Alberta Education, 2005).

8.1 Classroom Setting

The early education of Indigenous children can take place at home or in the village or even in their environment. It is usually those who are intimate with them or those closest to them that instruct them. Learning for many is largely a matter of observation and imitation of the actions of the older people. Much of their learning is unstructured and takes place in concrete contexts.

For effective learning to take place in school, a teacher needs to look into the physical set up of the classroom. This is because the physical set up of the classroom can greatly affect the Indigenous students' learning outcomes. Physically organizing the classroom seating in a circular manner is most ideal as most Aboriginal students can generally identify with the circle shape. For them, the circle is both a familiar and sacred shape in their cultures. Basically, the circle represents "equality, interconnectedness, and continuity. [They] are non-hierarchal and inclusive, and are one of the main tenants of Aboriginal worldview and belief systems" (Heritage Community Foundation, n.d., para. 1). It encourages relationship,

discussion as well as cooperation. Hence, arranging the tables in one large circle or several small ones may help to create a sense of community and cooperation among the students in the class (Alberta Education, 2005, p.43).

Figure 3.0 : Suggested Classroom Arrangement Type I
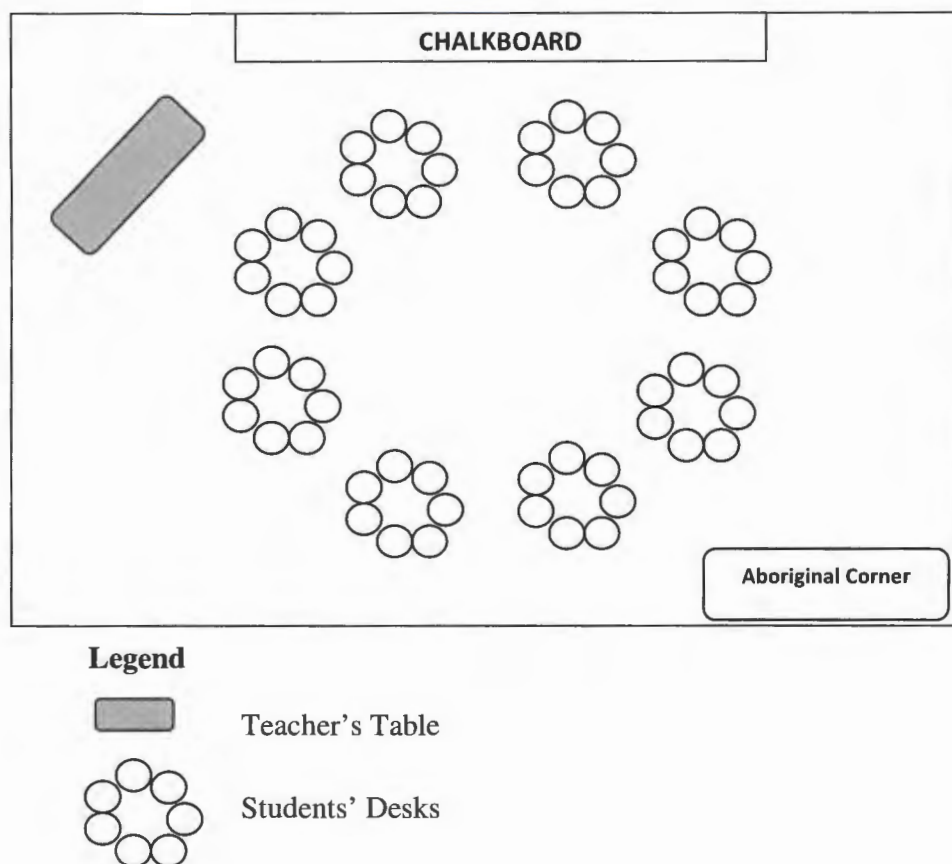
CHALKBOARD

Aboriginal Corner
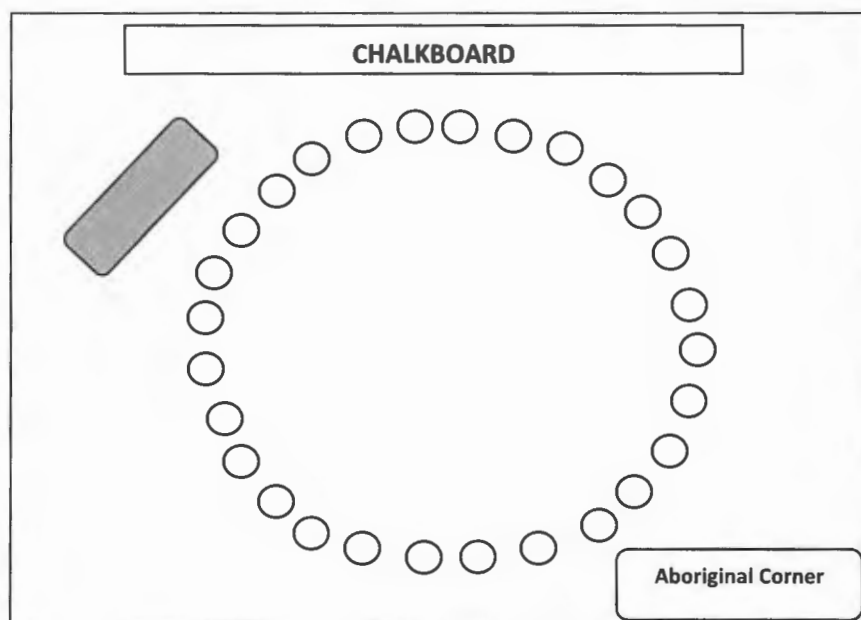
Legend

Teacher's Table

Student's Desk

Figure 3.1 : Suggested Classroom Arrangement Type II

While the above are only suggestions for consideration, teachers are greatly encouraged to think about or explore other forms of seating arrangements as the circle shape seating arrangement may not be identifiable to all Indigenous students. Alternatively, teachers can invite their students to tell them what makes them feel safe and comfortable in the classroom.

It has also been noted that the "creation of a sense of place for Aboriginal students at educational institutions can nurture them and contribute to their involvement in the wider educational environment" (Battiste & Barman, 1995, p.89). In the light of this, this sense of place can be enhanced in the classroom by putting up Aboriginal posters that are related to

the subjects. Setting up an aboriginal corner and displaying aboriginal artifacts will also help to create an identity – affirming atmosphere in the classroom.

8.2 Instructional Strategies

Instructional strategies are approaches or methods which a teacher uses to achieve the learning objectives. Essentially, instructional strategies should enable all students, including Aboriginal students, to become independent and strategic learners. To enable them to become one, a teacher can:

- deploy a variety of approaches and learning materials
- incorporate modeling, guided practice and independent practice into his or her teaching strategy
- create opportunities for students to transfer skills and ideas from one context to another
- help students make meaningful connections between skills and ideas, and real-life situations
- provide students with opportunities to work independently and allow them to display what they know
- teach students to self-monitor and self-correct
- provide students with the tools for reflecting on and assessing their own learning (Alberta Education, 2005, p.80).

The following instructional strategies can be used to promote effective learning amongst Aboriginal students:

Co-operative learning

Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy where students work in small teams and use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. As students have to

work in groups, it is thus an effective strategy to use with Aboriginal students because it lessens competition and helps them develop teamwork and pride in their group.

Generally, there are a variety of cooperative learning activities. For students who are unfamiliar with them, it is good to introduce them to the simple cooperative activities first before allowing them to engage in the complex ones. This is to ensure that they have acquired the necessary skills needed to participate in the more complex activities. The simple cooperative activities include the Think-Pair Share, Three-step Interview and Round Robin activities while the complex ones include the Jigsaw and Circle the Sage activities.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is inductive, learner centered, and activity oriented and it greatly emphasizes the process of learning more than the product. Experiential learning can be viewed as a cycle that consists of 5 phases:

- "experiencing (an activity occurs);

- sharing or publishing (sharing or publishing reactions and observations are shared);

- analyzing or processing (patterns and dynamics are determined);

- inferring or generalizing (principles are derived); and,

- applying (plans are made to use learning in new situations)" (Saskatoon Public Schools, 2009, para. 2).

Experiential learning activities can include the following:

- role playing

- games

- field trips

- storytelling

Storytelling

Storytelling is a cultural tradition for the Aboriginal people. In Indigenous or Aboriginal cultures, traditional stories, legends, songs and many other forms of knowledge are passed on among generations by "constant re-telling by elders who carry the knowledge of these spoken forms in their memories" (Kanu, 2011, p.64). Also, in many Indigenous cultures, stories and proverbs are "primary ways by which a great deal of Indigenous philosophical thought, knowledge, and wisdom has been taught. As there were no written records of the ancient past of many Indigenous peoples, all that has been preserved of their knowledge, myths, philosophies, liturgies, and songs has been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation" (Kanu, 2011, p.64). Often, the stories personify animal characters. In the stories, the peculiar trait of each animal is usually explained with the intention of transmitting the "virtues valued by the society" (Kanu, 2011, p.64).

A story is told by an Elder with the purpose of teaching about culture, ceremonies, and spirituality. People often sit in a circle to listen to the story being told.

Modified Talking Circles:

Traditional decision making also drew on the circle concept, with a ceremonial talking stick passed around to give each person an equal opportunity to speak. Today, the talking circle concept has been modified for use in the classroom setting. In this modified talking circle, the students sit in a circle and each student is given a turn to contribute. An object such as a stone or stick is selected to signify whose turn it is to speak. The teacher, who is the facilitator, ensures that the following guidelines are being observed:

- Comments made should be directed to the question or issue and not on another participant's comment.

- Try not to respond negatively or positively to participants' comments.

- Accept silence responses and do not impose a penalty for passing.

- Accord respect to the speaker by listening attentively.

- Forbid self-putdowns or putdowns of others.

- Give everyone a turn to speak (Saskatchewan Education, 2002, para. 14).

Throughout the session, the teacher should model respectful listening and speaking by participating in the talking circle (Saskatchewan Education, 2002, para. 15). When done in the correct manner, talking circle helps to "foster respect, enhance self-concept, nurture a sense of belonging and affirm identity" (para. 11).

The talking circle approach may also be used for other purposes such as:

- introducing new ideas/concepts of any subject

- teaching the significance of the circle for various Aboriginal cultures

- promoting respect for the opinions and ideas of others

- developing a trusting environment where students can freely express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings

- developing listening and speaking skills in a safe, affirming environment

- responding to literature, other media, or important issues (Saskatchewan Education, 2002, para. 11).

Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers are pictorial or graphical ways to organize information and thoughts for understanding, remembering, or writing. As Aboriginal students are largely visual learners,

these visual organizers can therefore help to enhance their learning and create a foundation for learning for them as well.

Generally, students can use the graphic organizers to help them to:

- "generate ideas

- record and reorganize information

- see relationships between concepts

- apply their learning

- show their thinking" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.81).

The common graphic organizers include flow charts, story maps, Venn diagrams, P-M-I charts, K-W-L charts, problem solution charts, fishbone chart and mind maps. (See Appendix C for the graphic organizers)

Service Learning

Service learning is "a method under which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that:

- is conducted in and meets the needs of a community;

- is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community-service program and with the community;

- helps foster civic responsibility;

- is integrated into and enhances the (core) academic curriculum of the students, or the educational components of the community-service program in which the participants are enrolled; and

- provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience " (Billig, 2000, p.659).

By participating in service learning, Aboriginal students can strengthen their academic knowledge and skills as they are applying what they have learnt to real situations. They can also build positive relationships with different types of people they work with and discover their new interests and hidden talents. Service learning also enables them to set their own personal goals which they can work towards achieving, teach them to work cooperatively as a group as well as learn the importance of individual responsibility. In addition, they can also take on leadership roles and learn the value of helping and caring for others. Above all, they can acquire a greater awareness of their community needs and concerns (Alberta Education, 2005, p.105).

Generally, for Aboriginal students, service learning "reflects the commitment to community that is traditionally a vital aspect of Aboriginal cultures" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.104).

Pause & Reflect

What seating arrangement will make your students feel comfortable in your class?

What are some others ways of creating a safe, warm and inviting classroom to enhance and facilitate classroom learning?

What other pedagogical approaches can be used to complement the Indigenous students' learning styles?

Suggested Readings

Archibald, J. (2008). *Indigenous storywork*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Armstrong, T. (2009). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom*. USA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Billig, S.H. (2000). Research on K-12 school-based service-learning: The evidence builds. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *81*(9), 658-664.

Heritage Community Foundation. (n.d.). *Alberta online encyclopedia and edukits*. Retrieved from http://www.edukits.ca/aboriginal/leadership/teachers/circle.htm

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. (n.d.). *Graphic Organizers*. Retrieved from http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/

Imbeau, M.B. and Tomlinson, C. A.(2010). *Leading and managing a differentiated classroom*. USA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Jacobs, G.M., Gan, S.L. & Ball, J. (1997). *Cooperative learning: A sourcebook of lesson plans for teacher education on cooperative learning*. USA: Kagan Cooperative Learning.

Saskatchewan Education. (2002). *Approaches to instruction*. Retrieved from http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/native10/Approaches_to_Instruction.html

Saskatoon Public Schools. (2009). *Instructional strategies on-line*. Retrieved from http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/experi.html

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom*. USA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Community Involvement

9. The Community

It is a known fact that the success of a child is dependent upon his parents' involvement in his or her education. This does not just apply to mainstream students but to Aboriginal students as well. As Aboriginal parents become involved in their child's education, the likelihood of the child succeeding in school is greatly increased. Hence, teachers should strongly encourage all parents to be involved with the school as soon as their child begins to go to school.

9.1 Parent Involvement

Most Aboriginal parents seek meaningful involvement with their child's learning. In "Our Words, Our Ways" (2005), Barbara Kavanagh (n.d.) provided several useful suggestions as to how to make parent involvement meaningful. These suggestions have however been adapted and they are as follows:

- Always acknowledge that parents have the full right to be involved in all decision making and activities. Successful parent involvement should be student-centred and ongoing and not only during meet the parent sessions that are conducted twice a year.

- Assist parents to understand their rights and the school policies. Also, help them to be familiar with the right procedures and protocols to follow if they do not agree with the school's decisions in any area.

- Work collaboratively with parents to develop strategies for the child. Encourage them to actively participate in decision making concerning their child and keep them updated of their child's progress on a regular basis. Home visits are encouraged if there is no telephone at home. When meeting with the parents, try to schedule the meeting around their availability.

- Never underestimate the parents' and families' abilities. Set high expectations for their involvement. Credit them for their strengths and commend them for the ways they

support their children's education and learning. If problems with involvement arise, try to look at the situation from the parents' perspective. Always recognize that differences in worldviews and issues such as economic and other stresses can prevent parents from becoming fully involved in their child's education. At all times, be adaptable and flexible so as to cater to their needs.

- Be familiar with the school's attendance policy and be ready to assist both the parents and students to understand the benefits of regular attendance. If attendance is an issue, work collaboratively to help develop strategies that will support and improve student's attendance.

- Know what support and programs are available in the community so that parents can be directed to them when necessary.

- Parent can be involved in many ways. In general, they have differing personal backgrounds related to school experiences, comfort levels, interests and strengths. A teacher should therefore look for ways to value them and tap on each of their unique insights and talents. Asking them how they would like to be involved is perhaps a good way to start.

- Capitalize on student-led conferences as they can enhance parent involvement. Teach and encourage students how to actively share their learning with their families at home. This is a way to get their families involved in their learning and school work at home (Alberta Education, 2005, p.64-65).

9.2 The Role Of Elders

In every community or tribe, there are Elders and they are accorded great respect and honour by members of their community. As keepers of knowledge and tradition, they have been recognized by both their communities and by the Creator because they "hold in their hearts many important lessons that they are willing to share with others to make their community a better place" (Kanu, 2011, p.151). Generally, the most important role is to pass on their

knowledge "so that the culture of their people can stay vital and responsive to changing times and contexts. Their credibility and continuity of their [communities] depend on such responsiveness. They are today's connection to the past, a living link to the customs and beliefs of the ancestors. They help to renew and perpetuate traditions which are rooted in a shared past and are crucial to the identity of the Aboriginal peoples today. They do this by passing their cultural knowledge, traditional languages, beliefs and sacred spiritual practices to the younger generations" (Kanu, 2011, p.151).

Other than conducting traditional ceremonies, Elders can be invited into the classroom to teach the young about their culture, traditions and spirituality. Research has shown that classroom visits by Aboriginal elders or even experts and role models from the Aboriginal community have motivated and enhanced the "pride of Aboriginal students in Aboriginal knowledge, culture and achievements, informed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students about Aboriginal issues, and created connections between curriculum topics and the real world of Aboriginal students" (Kanu, 2011, p.151). Apart from this, Elders can also serve as advisors to parents, students, teachers and school administrators. They can even be consulted for accurate information about Aboriginal heritage and communities and be made to serve as a "bridge between the school and community" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.71).

When inviting an Elder to the school or classroom, certain protocols or a code of etiquette that is appropriate to the customs of the people or community need to be observed. To contact an Elder or learn about protocol, it is advisable to contact the community or an Aboriginal liaison person serving that community. If there is none available, speak to someone senior in the community.

9.3 Cultural Protocols

Protocols refer to the standards of behaviour that people use to show respect to each other. To the Aboriginal people, this code of etiquette or protocol is taught from birth; it is and has been used for thousands of years and is based on the sacred teachings. Many of these teachings are still considered important and are used to this day.

For non-natives, it is especially important to know that the sets of protocol will vary from community to community as each community is unique by itself. At the same time, non-natives also need to acknowledge and incorporate the protocols of the Aboriginal people as it marks a sign of respect for their cultures, values and beliefs and helps to build and improve relationships with the community. It is always good to ask if you are unsure of the protocols used by the community that you are working in. When following protocols, it is helpful to keep the following Aboriginal beliefs and values that have been highlighted in "Our Words, Our Ways" (2005) in mind:

Respect

Understand and honour their protocols, expectations and unique qualities without stereotyping.

Diversity

Know that there are similarities and differences amongst the Aboriginal communities and they relate to languages, cultures and traditions.

Oral traditions

They are important to the community and are considered sacred.

Time

Learning about Aboriginal communities and their members takes time. So, learn to be patient.

History

Aboriginal communities have been shaped by their history.

Humility

Treat each person as an equal. Titles and positions, such as teachers and school administrators, may not be seen as authoritative positions in a community.

Family

Family, extended family and community obligations take precedence over all other things (Alberta Education, 2006, p.76).

Pause & Reflect

What are some ways to make parents and Elders feel welcome in your classroom?

What are some similarities or differences between the Indigenous people and your own cultural protocols?

What are some advantages of following cultural protocols?

Suggested Readings

Archibald, J. (2008). *Indigenous storywork*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Kulchyski, P.K., Angmarlik, P., McCaskill, D. and Newhouse, D. (1999). *In the words of elders: Aboriginal cultures in transition*. Toronto : University of Toronto Press.

10. Rewards and Challenges

As there are both rewards and challenges teaching in a mainstream school, there are also rewards and challenges teaching in Indigenous schools. Below are some of them.

Rewards

a. Opportunities for New Experiences

This comes as a result of working in a different environment and with a completely different culture. In a research project that was carried out in 2000 that surveyed non-native teachers teaching in First Nations schools, these teachers found their experiences to be "attractive, interesting, stimulating, and very beneficial" (Kavanagh, 2000, p.8). One teacher cited how the lives of both the students' and teachers' had been enriched by the cultural songs, dances and language that were into the classroom. Others highlighted how First Nations cultures had attracted them and how they had been made to feel comfortable in their work environment as there was acceptance, respect and healthy relationships (Kavanagh, 2000, p.8).

b. Flexible Work Environment

This is due to the small size of the schools. It has been found that small schools "are able to spend their fundings on programs and workshops that are of benefit to their children, and are able to effectively implement flexible education programs" (Kavanagh, 2000, p.9).

c. Making A Positive Contribution

This comes from being an active participant in the learning environment. Here, there are ample opportunities for non-native teachers to share their knowledge and expertise with the native teachers and be of help to them.

Challenges

a. Limited Staff Availability

Due to limited funding, there will usually be a lack of professional support and resource

people such as trained language and culture teachers or language therapists. At the same

time, there may also be a lack of administrative support staff.

b. Lack of General Facilities and Resources

Schools may lack a library or laboratories as well as teaching resources such as

textbooks, assessment materials, and audio visual aids. Internet connection may not be

available in the schools. It becomes more challenging if a teacher has to deliver

mainstream curriculum to the students.

c. Isolation

As schools can be situated in the remote parts of the country, teachers can feel isolated

and lose track of latest educational developments and trends. Also, due to limited

funding, opportunities to attend conferences or workshops for professional development

may be limited.

Pause & Reflect

What are some ways to overcome some of the challenges of teaching in Indigenous
schools?

Suggested Readings

Kavanagh, B. (2000). *First Nations schools: Challenging and rewarding places to teach.*
Retrieved from http://www.fnesc.ca/publications/index.php

Kavanagh, B. (2006). *Teaching in a First Nations school: An information handbook for teachers new to First Nations schools.* Retrieved from http://www.fnesc.ca/publications/ index.php

11. Areas For Consideration

Below are some key areas for consideration.

Before Leaving

✓ Read about the history and current reality of Indigenous communities and schools.

✓ Search the net or visit the embassy to obtain pamphlets or brochures about the community's history and culture.

✓ Read books about the school and the curriculum used and enquire about the cultural protocols of the community.

Upon Arriving At The School

✓ Ask to be introduced to the Principal and community staff.

✓ Ask the school for documents and resources that will tell you more about the community, school organization, vision and mission statements, school policies and procedures.

✓ Ask for an orientation tour of the school facilities and resources so that you may take advantage of them.

✓ Acquaint yourself with the school's vision and mission statements and ask questions if you are unclear.

✓ Ask for the curriculum, schemes of work, assessrnent guidelines for the subject or subjects that you will be teaching.

✓ Ask for a teacher mentor to provide you with guidance.

As A Member of The Staff

✓ Reach out to parents and work with them. Remember to exercise patience at all times.

✓ Conduct home visits to learn more about the students and their families.

✓ Work alongside native teachers concerning the school curriculum, the students and community.

✓   Demonstrate respect as it the most important value amongst the Indigenous people.

✓   Make time to talk to colleagues, community leaders and the Elders to find out why the school was created.

✓   Strive to understand how the community's values can be infused into the curriculum and school environment.

✓   Seize every opportunity available to participate in community and cultural events. This will help you establish a relationship with the community as well as learn more about the community's culture and traditions.

✓   Be open to new learning and new experiences.

✓   Be quick to listen and slow to speak.

✓   Be always helpful.

✓   Be humble at all times.

12. A Glossary Of Terms

Aboriginal People

In this manual, Aboriginal people or Aboriginal includes "Métis, Inuit and First Nations, regardless of whether they are 'registered' under the *Indian Act* of Canada" (Wesley-Esquimaux & Smolewski, 2004, p.1). In this manual, the term "Aboriginal" is capitalized much like other ethnic populations and organizations. Not doing this is regarded by Aboriginal people as being 'racist, offensive and belittling, a way of negating [their] identity and nationality" (NSW Department of Community Services, 2007, p.2). The term "Aboriginal" is used interchangeably with "Indigenous" in this manual. However, teachers are encouraged to learn about the cultures and traditions of their own Indigenous communities, which may differ considerably from Aboriginal communities in Canada. The Canadian literature on teaching Aboriginal children provides an example of the cross-cultural sensitivity that will be required in any situation where mainstream teachers work in Indigenous communities.

Assimilation

A 19th century idea that Indigenous people should be 'improved' by being 'civilized' and becoming Christians and learning how to work as Europeans did (Australian Museum, 2009, para. 2).

Culture

Culture refers to a system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning (University of Manitoba, n.d., para. 2).

Custom

Custom refers to a traditional Aboriginal practice.

Diversity

Diversity is a term used to describe the various forms of differences "among people, such as race, gender, ability, religion, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation. The term is also used to describe differences in the environment" (Egbo, 2008, p.231).

Elder(s)

Elders are Aboriginal persons who are respected and consulted by the community due to their experience, wisdom, knowledge, background and insight. The word "Elder" does not necessarily equate with age (Government of Saskatchewan, 2009, para. 16).

First Nations

First Nations is a Canadian term for Aboriginal or Indigenous people. According to Stiffarm (1998), "First denotes primacy, Nations indicates that the people were organized into social, political, and economic groups with distinct cultures and languages and land; and the plural form denotes diversity of these groups" (Stiffarm, 1998, p.viii).

Indian

The term "Indian" is "narrowly defined by the Indian Act. Indian peoples are one of three groups of people recognized as one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples in the Constitution Act, 1982. There are three legal definitions that apply to Indians in Canada: Status Indians, Non-status Indians and Treaty Indians" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2009, para. 21).

Indigenous People

Indigenous people refer to "all inhabitants who are natives to a particular country, including their descendants" (Alberta Education, 2005, p.154). To date, there has been no universal agreement on the definition of Indigenous people. In different countries, Indigenous people may be referred to as Indigenous ethnic minorities," "Aboriginals," "hill tribes," "minority nationalities," "scheduled tribes," or "tribal groups" (The World Bank, 2005, para. 3). For instance, the Maori are the Indigenous people in New Zealand and the Orang Asli and the Dayaks are the Indigenous people in Malaysia. In Singapore, it is the Malays. Politically however, it is unacceptable to call the Malays who are regarded as one of the ethnic races in

Singapore, Indigenous people. In this manual, the term "Indigenous" is also capitalized for the same reasons given for Aboriginals.

Inuit

Inuit refers to an "Aboriginal people in northern Canada who live above the tree line in the Northwest Territories, and in Northern Quebec and Labrador. The word means "people" in the Inuit language – Inuktitut" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2009, para. 28).

Kinship

Kinship is an important aspect of Indigenous cultures and values. It includes all relationships and being related to and belonging to the land.

Native

Native is a term used to "designate the inhabitants of a colonized country" (Battiste (Ed.), 2009, p.74). It is also a term used to refer generally to Aboriginal peoples. The term "Aboriginal person" is mostly preferred to "native" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2009, para. 18). The term is also used in other Indigenous countries.

Oral Traditions

Oral transmission refers to the oral transmission of folklore or stories from one person to another person and from one generation to the next generation over a period of time.

Worldview

The worldview of the Aboriginal cultures is distinct from the worldview of the mainstream culture in any country. This worldview presents humans who inhabit a universe that has been created by the Creator and who strive to live in respectful relationship with nature, each other and oneself. Each Aboriginal culture expresses this worldview in different ways, with different practices, stories and cultural products (Alberta Education, 2005, p.156).

Appendix A

The Orang Asli of Malaysia

By Alberto G. Gomes

In the eyes of the government, developers and investors, the Orang Asli (Malaysia's Indigenous peoples) are in the wrong time and place. Seen as lacking a sense of time, place or history, they are deemed backward peoples in need of assistance. In other words, they should be modernized. Their purported nomadism is unsettling to the government, which advocates their sedentarisation to resolve the 'problem' of their frequent mobility.

A Semai village located along the Tapah- Cameron Highlands

Orang Asli land is coveted by powerful interests: for its timber and minerals, for conversion into oil palm or rubber plantations, golf courses, hydroelectric power installations, the Kuala Lumpur International Airport and development projects to benefit the Malay majority population. The reasons behind *Orang Asli* relocation or displacement are often concealed from the public eye. Instead, for the *Orang Asli*, displacement is called development. Government policies aim to draw them into 'the mainstream of society', into the 'right' place and time.

Labels

The ethnic label *Orang Asli*, meaning 'natural people' in Malay, replaced the term 'aborigines' used by the British colonial administration. *Orang Asli* refers to the Indigenous peoples of Peninsular Malaysia who are not Malay Muslims, Malaysia's main ethnic group. The *Orang Asli*, together with the Malays and Indigenous peoples of Sabah and Sarawak,

form the category of Malaysians known as *bumiputera* ('sons of the soil') who make up 65.1 per cent of the population; the rest is of Chinese or Indian descent (http://www.statistics.gov.my/English /pressdemo.htm). The *Orang Asli* comprises 0.5 per cent of the population (Nicholas 2000:3) and are conventionally divided into eighteen ethno-linguistic subgroups.

Both ethno-labels – *bumiputera* and *Orang Asli* – imply indigeneity; Malays are classified as *bumiputera* but not as *Orang Asli*. In the eyes of non-Malay citizens, recognition of an Aboriginal people weakens the Malay claim to Indigenous status. Such views are not expressed openly, however; Malaysian law prohibits public discussion of the issue of Indigenous status, which is considered seditious. Occasionally, opposition politicians raise questions about indigeneity and rights of Indigenous minorities but these are quickly stifled by the ruling party, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO). When questioned by the media, Malaysia's first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman replied, 'there is no doubt that the Malays were the Indigenous peoples of this land because the original inhabitants did not have any form of civilization compared with the Malays...and instead lived like primitives in mountains and thick jungle' (Nicholas 2000: 90).

There is no doubt that *Orang Asli* ancestors settled on the 'Malay' Peninsula long before the predecessors of contemporary Malays. However, prior settlement does not accord the descendants political privileges. The musings of the former Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, are revealing: 'Aborigines are found in Australia, Taiwan and Japan...but nowhere are they regarded as the definitive people of the country concerned. The definitive people are those who set up the first governments.... In Malaya, the Malays without doubt formed the first effective governments.... The *Orang Melayu* or Malays have always been the definitive people of the Malay Peninsula' (Dentan et al 1997: 21-22). While the argument may explain Malay rule, it does not resolve the problem of the existence of a group of people who can be considered more Indigenous than the Malays.

Assimilation
To solve this problem, the government has pursued a policy of assimilation to turn *Orang Asli* into Malay Muslims and, in the process, eradicate the category of Aboriginal peoples in

Malaysia. In a recent policy statement, the government announced its strategy 'to increase efforts at introducing a value system based on Islam for the integration of the *Orang Asli* with the wider society in general and Malays in particular' (Nicholas 2000: 98). Such a policy was tacitly adhered to in earlier days of government intervention; since 1993, it has been in the open. The policy not only facilitates Islamic conversion; it also prevents *Orang Asli* from converting to other religions, thus curtailing their religious freedoms. Islamic conversion would mean the *Orang Asli* would no longer have the wrong status as Indigenous peoples. However, for resource managers, particularly forestry managers, many *Orang Asli* are still in the wrong place.

Forest dwellers

Evidence suggests that, in the first millennium AD, the *Orang Asli* were the primary suppliers of forest products such as rattan, bamboo, resins, ivory, and other animal parts in the maritime trade that linked Southeast Asia to markets in China, India and the Middle East (Gomes 2004: 2). Due to the settlement and encroachment of other peoples and interests onto their territories, *Orang Asli* peoples are losing control of the forests. In the contest for resources, they are often on the losing side (Nicholas 2000). During the 'opening up' of the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, forests were treated as if they were weeds to be cleared, and transformed into plantations and tin mines. After the Second World War, the *Orang Asli* and their forest abodes became strategically important in the fight against communist insurgents, who mostly operated from jungle camps. The push for economic development accelerated the conversion of forests into plantations, mines and land developments. The construction of roads and dams destroyed large tracts of forest and, with them, *Orang Asli* livelihoods. Timber became an important export bankrolling Malaysia's development.

Between logging and preservation

Paradoxically, the growing middle class produced by Malaysia's economic success began to clamour for the protection of forests and the creation of forest parks for recreation. The *Orang Asli* became an obstacle to two conflicting interests: commercial logging and forest preservation. Their 'shifting cultivation' was deemed wasteful and damaging to forests and resources. This perception was not new; in 1958, the Chief Forester blamed *Orang Asli*

shifting cultivation for the destruction of valuable forest resources and recommended that 'it would be foolhardy to jeopardize the future of a nation by "preserving" a way of life for 50,000 people... when an opportunity, as a result of the Emergency, exists today to start settling them permanently'. Such sentiments have spurred the government's push to resettle *Orang Asli* away from their forest bases and to open the land for exploitation.

The Aboriginal Peoples Act (1974) permits the *Orang Asli* to collect minor forest products but, under the Forestry Act of 1935, the Forestry Department has regulatory rights. The Act requires traders to obtain licenses to purchase or trade forest products and to pay levies and taxes on commodities. By such means the Department can regulate trading and control *Orang Asli* access to the forests. While *Orang Asli* are not permitted to collect forest products from national parks, this restriction is not always enforced. As Colin Nicholas (2000: 134), Director of the NGO Centre of *Orang Asli* Concerns has observed, personnel of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks even act as middlemen in the trading of minor forest products gathered by *Orang Asli* from Taman Negara National Park.

It is more than the contest for resources that concerns government officials. In an attempt to ban tourists from visiting an *Orang Asli* community in Taman Negara, a government minister in 1997 remarked, 'Although it is natural for women of the tribe to live half naked in the village, their photographs may give a wrong impression that Malays here are dressed in that manner' (Nicholas, 2000, p.134). One may conclude that the *Orang Asli* are not only in the wrong place and time, they are, in their marginal position, also a wrong people in Malaysia.

Source : Alberto G. Gomes, 2004, *IIAS Newsletter*, 35, p.10. Retrieved from
http://www.iias.nl/nl/35/IIAS_NL35_10.pdf

Discussion

a. What are the concerns expressed in this article?

b. What implications do these have for classroom teaching and learning ?

Appendix B

Case Studies

Case Study 1

Alice Lee is a single 25 years old lady who has just graduated with a teaching degree from the National Institute of Education. When a vacant teaching position for a rural school in Northern Thailand appeared in the classified page of the local newspaper, she applied for it and was subsequently offered the job.

Like most teachers, Alice is dedicated to her students. For two years, she has given the students under her care excellent instruction. She works tirelessly. She is in school from 7.30 am until 6.00 pm in the evening from Monday to Friday. She also works for half a day on Saturday and Sunday. While she finds it challenging to teach her students, her dedication to their teaching has been questioned by none.

Alice lives alone in a little apartment beside the school. As she has no car, she walks to school daily. Generally, she does not interact with the community and only visits one or two non-native teachers occasionally. She usually isolates herself from the community although it is a socially active one.

The reason for her seclusion is risk avoidance. She once indicated that she did not feel safe going out. She also said that she did not want to do anything or be seen in places that were deemed inappropriate.

Adapted from John Taylor' article, "Non-Native Teachers Teaching in Native Communities" in Battiste & Barman "First Nations Education In Canada: The Circe Unfolds"(1995)

Discussion:

What are some of the key issues presented in the above case?

What implications do these issues have on her relationship with the community?

What suggestions can be given to her?

Case Study 2

John and Mary Tan are a non-native couple teaching in an Indigenous school in Borneo. They have lived in the community for several years and have continually found fault in the community around them. Often, they will verbalize their complaints to their other non-native colleagues, in the hope of receiving affirmation that some things in the community are inadequate.

For several years, they have planted flower beds around their house and have found fault in others for not doing so. They simply cannot accept the fact that the particular community does not plant flower beds and that it does not matter to them whether they do or don't do it.

Adapted from John Taylor' article, "Non-Native Teachers Teaching in Native Communities" in Battiste & Barman "First Nations Education In Canada: The Circe Unfolds"(1995)

Discussion:

What are some of the key issues presented in the above case?

What implications do these issues have on their relationship with the community?

What suggestions can be given to them?

Case Study 3

Tom Chan runs a student organization that receives very little support from the students' parents.

As a teacher of the school, he has made little attempt to be involved in the community. Neither has he made an effort to get to know the people or the students' parents for the past three years.

Faced with minimal support from the parents, Tom, who was unable to refrain himself from passing judgement, decided to lash out at the students during assembly one morning by saying, "What is wrong with your parents?"

Tom's remark offended many native staff members. It also struck a blow at the students' self-image.

Adapted from John Taylor' article, "Non-Native Teachers Teaching in Native Communities" in Battiste & Barman "First Nations Education In Canada: The Circe Unfolds"(1995)

Discussion:

What are some of the key issues presented in the above case?

What implications do these issues have on Tom's relationship with the community?

What suggestions can be given to Tom?

Case Study 4

Following a soccer game one day, two non-native teachers came into direct verbal confrontation with some members of the community. When the confrontation was over, Jean Yip, a non-native teacher remarked to her colleague Matthew, "Don't worry about it, they are not going anywhere for their vacation!"

On another occasion, when Jean was in the staffroom with Mathew, she openly said, "Why can't our native colleagues explain themselves more fully or clearly? It drives me insane when they keep quiet during school meetings and provide little input whenever their views are being solicited."

Having been at the school for one and a half months, Jean also told Matthew that her students had given her a single line answer in class and had written in their journals that she spoke too quickly and loudly in the classroom. They had also expressed their disappointment with her when she recently turned down their invitation to attend a community event.

Adapted from John Taylor' article, "Non-Native Teachers Teaching in Native Communities" in Battiste & Barman "First Nations Education In Canada: The Circe Unfolds"(1995)

Discussion:

What are some of the key issues presented in the above case?

What implications do these issues have on her relationship with the community?

What suggestions can be given to her?

Appendix C

Flow Chart

Write your topic at the top. List steps or events in time order.

Topic:

Source : http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/

Story Map

Write notes in each section.

Setting	Time	Place

Characters :

Problems :

Plot / Events :

Resolution :

Source : http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/

Venn Diagram

Write details that tell how the subjects are different in the outer circles. Write details that

tell how the subjects are alike where the circles overlap.

Differences   Similarities   Differences

Source : http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/
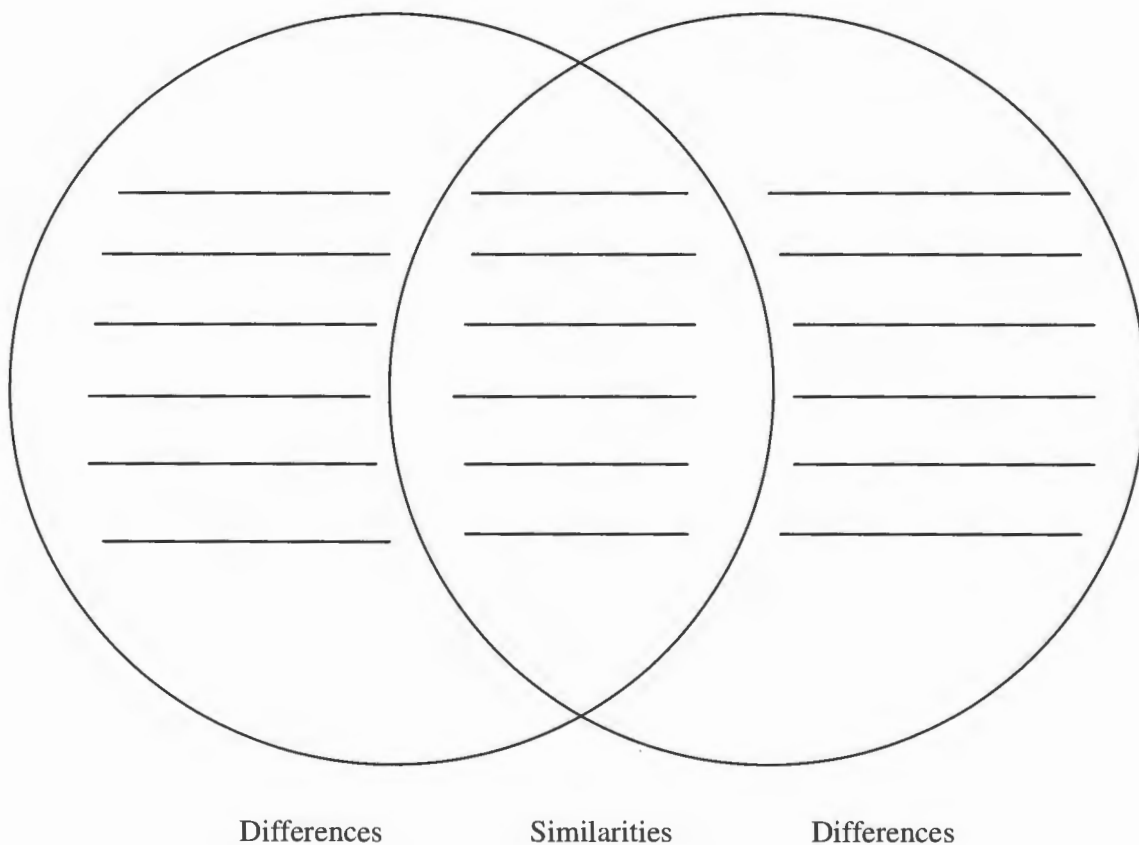
KWS Chart

Add details to each column.

Topic		
What I Know	**What I Want To Learn**	**What I Have Learnt**

Source : http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/

PMI Chart

Topic		
Plus	**Minus**	**Interesting Information**

What do I think? Why?

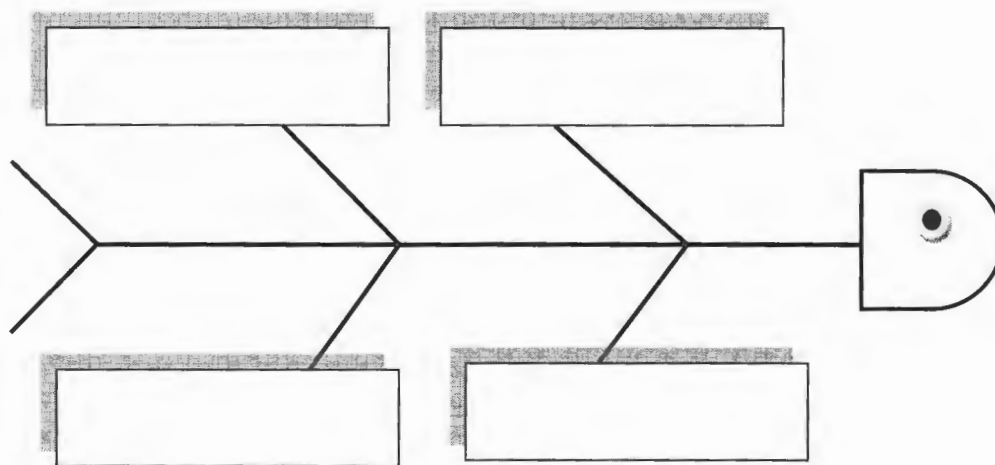Now that I have considered all the information, my thoughts on this topic are:

Source : *Our words, our ways : teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners*. Alberta: Alberta Education, p.174

Problem Solving Solution

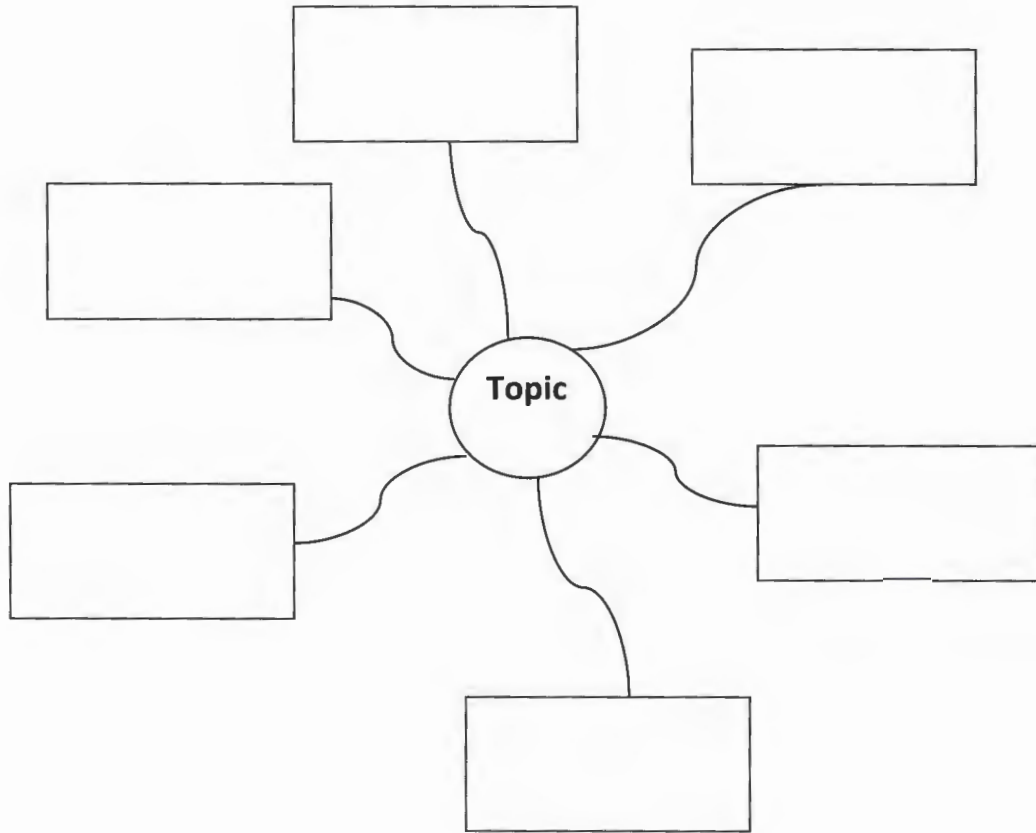List the story problems in the first column. List the solutions in the right column.

Possible Problem	Possible Solution

Source : http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/

Fishbone Chart

Source : *Our words, our ways : teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners*. Alberta: Alberta Education, p.171

Mind Map

Topic

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Feedback Form

Please tick in the appropriate boxes and delete wherever is inapplicable.

SA : Strongly Agree   **A** : Agree   **D** : Disagree   **SD** : Strongly Disagree

A	Course Objectives	SA	A	D	SD
1.	The objectives were clearly stated.				
2.	The objectives were achieved.				
B	Course Content				
3.	The course was relevant & interesting.				
4.	I have learnt useful ideas / skills.				
5.	I can apply the ideas / skills learnt in my work area.				
C.	Presentation				
6.	The explanations were clear.				
7.	The pace of the presentation was just right				
8.	There was a good balance of activities.				
9.	The trainer was well prepared.				
10.	There was a good interaction between the trainer & participants.				
11.	The handouts were useful.				
D.	Organization				
12.	The session(s) was / were well-organised.				
13.	The duration of the workshop was just right.				
E.	Overall				
14.	I am satisfied with the course / workshop/ seminar.				

15. What are the strengths of the course/ workshop/ seminar?

_____

_____

_____

16. What areas can be improved?

_____

_____

_____

17. Three things I have learnt:

_____

_____

_____

18. Two things I will apply in class :

_____

_____

_____

19. Other comments :

_____

_____

_____

Name of Participant : _____   Date: _____